

HORTICULTURE

Harvesting Raspberries

Chas. F. Spott, New Westminster Dist., B. C.

In harvesting the raspberry too much care cannot be given to make the package attractive. The crates should have the name of the grower and his address printed on them, if possible.

If the crate be clean and the boxes well filled with sound ripe fruit, the grower will find that his fruit will always sell. Probably before the day's shipment arrives in town the dealer will have orders booked ahead. In all likelihood the fruit will command a higher price than that of other people, who do not take any particular care. As soon as the fruit is finished, clean up the patch, cutting out all useless wood, new and old, and burning it at once.

A few hollow-crown parsnips and roots of salify, put in the cellar with other vegetables in the fall, ad variety to the winter table, and are easily grown and stored.

My Strawberries

E. F. Eston, Colchester Co., N. S. "I wish we had strawberries like those," said a friend of ours who stopped for dinner recently. That friend was like too many other people who wish for things when they are in season but do not start to prepare for them out of season.

One needs to start a year ahead to grow strawberries. The bed may be planted any time from the end of May to the middle of July. We first work the land up thoroughly, harrowing several times, and apply a good dressing of wood ashes. We do not like to apply barnyard manure to the prospective strawberry ground, as the manure is apt to contain a good supply of weed seeds, and if there is anything on the farm that is hard to weed it is strawberries once the rows have become well matted.

From our old bed we select young plants that rooted the previous season, trim off the most of the leaves, and then set in rows four feet apart and 18 inches apart in the row. In setting the plants we drive a spade into the soil and make a hole by a rocking motion. The roots of the young plants are then spread out flat against one side of the hole and the earth drawn in around them with the hand.

No fruit is expected the first year. All blossoms or green berries are nipped off. All the energy of the plant is then devoted to producing runners, which are trained in a matted row 18 inches to two feet wide.

We take great pains to keep the strawberry bed thoroughly cultivated and free from weeds the first season, as there is no opportunity to either cultivate or weed the second season. A small point but an important one in cultivating is always to cultivate each row the same way. This pulls the runners into the centre of the row, while if we cultivated both ways we would be pulling first one way and then another, and the runners could not set plants properly.

Summer Pruning

E. M. Straight, MacDonald College, Que.

Pinching or stopping is a method of summer pruning whereby robust shoots are checked at any desired height by removing their extreme points with a pinch between the finger and thumb. This process retards for a time the extension of such shoots and induces the more active growth of laterals. For the control of some plant diseases pruning

is effective. Fire blight of apple trees may be controlled by cutting out diseased branches and cannot be done in any other way.

Only a few tools are necessary for pruning. A knife makes a nice smooth wound, which heals readily, but may be used only on very small limbs. A pair of shears is a necessity for small branches, and a pair of lopping shears for larger branches is equally necessary. One or more saws, fine toothed and of such construction that they may be worked to advantage among the branches, will be found essential. The numerous pruning devices worked by compound levers, which are found on the market, are failures for the most part. Better let them strictly alone.

Judicious pruning facilitates the work of cultivation and spraying and determines to a large extent the fruiting habit of the tree, by making annual bearers of trees which formerly bore once in two years. The grower is ever tempted to cut and prune to lose, yet he should become accustomed with the habit of growth of different varieties, so that he may work more intelligently. The upright varieties may be spread somewhat by pruning to the outside laterals, and the spreading kinds may be contracted by cutting to those which have an inward direction.

Money-Making Varieties

N. Stone, Northumberland Co., Ont. "I have had as much as 1,100 barrels of apples from my 12 acres, and part of that area has not yet reached the best bearing age. My principal varieties are Ben Davis, Peewaukee, and Russet. Sometimes people smile at the first two varieties, but while we may not regard them as desert apples in this country, they are good paying varieties. The Ben Davis, as we all know, is a heavy bearer and a hardy tree. The Peewaukee is a heavy bearer, an annual bearer, and one of the hardiest trees in existence. The Ben Davis is a heavy bearer, and marketing apples there is not much interference in price paid for various varieties. For instance, Dr. Rolston recently sent a car of Ben Davis and Russets to England. For Ben Davis he received 12½¢ and for the Russets 19¢ a barrel. With prices such as these, which is the most profitable variety? Those who have orchards of what are usually considered inferior varieties such as mine need not abandon them. They can make just as much money as the best with the Spy orchard."

Careful Handling of Fruit

Careful handling of the fruit that goes into storage is perhaps the most important part in the handling of the keeping quality, if it is planned to hold it in cold storage. Fruit that is in any way injured in picking, packing or handling will have poor keeping qualities. In handling fruit we must avoid every possible chance of breaking the skin. As soon as the skin is broken, the fruit is at once infected with germs that spring into activity and begin to develop. So long as the skin is not injured there is little danger of decay.

The emptying of the fruit into utensils used in picking into the baskets, boxes or barrels should be carefully done. All baskets used for picking should be lined with cloth or burlap. Some apple growers use burlap for picking, but they are not to be recommended, as the constant moving about of the fruit in the baskets disturbs the fruit with the stems and this is equally true with baskets unless care is taken in handling and emptying.

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