

Success with Strawberries

By A. P. Stevenson



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On the large majority of farms in the prairie provinces there is a garden patch where vegetables and small fruits of various kinds are raised. These are usually grown for home use and any addition to this garden in the way of new varieties of vegetables or fruits adds another item to the appetizing charm attributed to the table of farmer housewife. To the garden rightfully belongs all small fruits, and among the small fruits there is none so delicious, so universally popular as the strawberry. Why is it then, that on so many farms in our prairie provinces, we fail to find a good strawberry bed? And why is it that so many farmers will tell you that they have had no success in strawberry raising? I believe the chief reason is a lack of knowledge in the culture and management of the strawberry plant and on this account it is very often entirely neglected.

For a number of years I have had the opportunity of visiting a large number of farms in Manitoba and Saskatchewan, and I have found few localities where strawberries could not be grown for home use. There should be a good berry patch in every farmer's garden and in order to encourage this, every farmer should know something about growing them.

We all learn by experience, and ours has taught us that in order to be successful we must start right. If possible the site for the strawberry patch should be chosen so that the snow will lie in winter. Good natural drainage is necessary. Any soil that will grow good crops of grain or roots will usually grow strawberries. Land should be well summer-fallowed the year previous to planting. The best fertilizer for strawberries is well-rotted barnyard manure, which should be used in large quantities and should be applied and thoroughly mixed with the soil the season before planting. There is no fear of using too much. All plowing and harrowing should be done in the fall. Further, it is absolutely necessary that the plants should be sheltered from the wind and the garden well fenced against hogs and hens.

Plant Them in the Spring

There is no question we have to answer so often, as "When should I plant strawberries, spring or fall?" Spring is the proper and only time to set out strawberry plants in this country.

Strawberries are grown by two methods, the hill and the matted row system. The latter system is the one best adapted to our conditions on the prairies and is the one treated here. If the plants for setting out are obtained from a distance, they should be ordered to arrive as early in spring as possible. Plants are liable to heat and should be unpacked as soon as received, and if not planted out at once, they should be heeled in in a shady place, until ready to set out. Plant in rows four feet apart and 18 inches apart in the row. Strawberries require considerable care in planting. The crown must be just even with the surface, for, if planted deeper, they usually smother and die. Do not expose the roots to the sun or allow them to dry out while planting.

All dead and wilted leaves should be removed before planting and if the weather is dry, shade for a time with a few boards or old shingles, and water occasionally with slough water. Give good cultivation between the rows all summer, and as the runners shoot out and young plants form on them, throw a little earth over the runners to hold them in place. This is very necessary with us here. Our summer as a rule is dry and windy and the young plants will not readily strike root without this assistance. This is important as all the young plants that become rooted are the ones that will bear the crop the following season. It is also necessary to go over the bed occasionally and pick off all blossoms as soon as they show. This enables all the strength of the parent plant to go towards developing strong, healthy young plants that will bear the crop the following season.

When the ground freezes sufficiently hard in the fall to bear up a wagon, cover the plants with a mulch of clean wheat straw to a depth of six inches. Do not cover with manure, as on account of its weight it is likely to smother the plants.

Spring Care of Strawberries

We usually begin to uncover as soon as growth starts in the spring. Do this gradually, but always leave a portion of the chaffy straw around the plants. This is to keep the fruit clean and off the bare ground as it is easily soiled by heavy rains. The hoe is the implement used and not much of that, until after the crop is gathered. Hand pick the weeds while the plants are fruiting. Two crops, or at the utmost, three, are all that can be profitably taken off the same bed. It should then be plowed up, but a new bed should be planted the previous year. Of varieties to plant suitable to our western conditions I would recommend Senator Dunlop, Bederwood, Sharpless, Lovett, and Minnesota No. 3. These are all perfect flowering varieties and have been in bearing on our own grounds for many years.

Everbearing Strawberries

A few words may be said about this new breed of strawberries. We have had them growing and bearing on our grounds for the last eight years, and to my mind they are certainly the coming variety for our conditions. They do not appear to be a success south of Iowa. From there north they are at their best. A few of the points in favor of the Everbearers are: They give a good crop the first year they are planted. A frost in June does not materially injure the crop, as the bloom is soon renewed again; they will bear fruit from July until the first hard frost and the fruit is of excellent quality and size. Their management is very much the same as the July bearing varieties, only in setting out a patch in spring, it is of the utmost importance that all blossoms and runners be kept cut off until the middle of July. After that the vines will bear fruit until killed by frost in the fall. American, Superb, Progressive and No. 1017 of the Minnesota Fruit Breeding Station are the best varieties and are mentioned in order of merit. We have grown these and other varieties on our grounds, but the above mentioned are the best so far tested.

ONTARIO CO-OPERATIVE CO.

A meeting of the directors of the United Farmers Co-operative Co., Ltd., was held on Friday, November 23, when

arrangements were made for the annual meeting of the company.

The financial statement for the year's business was presented. It was most satisfactory in character, showing total sales for ten months of \$918,197.00, an increase over last year which comprised twelve months, of over \$400,000. The profits on the year's business were sufficiently large to enable the directors to declare a dividend of 7 per cent., which leaves a surplus of about \$800 to be devoted to reserve account.

The annual meeting of the company will be held on Friday, December 21, and a very interesting program has been prepared for it.

During the past few weeks 180 shares of stock, amounting to \$4,500, have been sold.

The new prospectus of the company is about completed and will be ready for distribution at an early date.

The possibility of opening a retail store in Toronto to sell goods direct to the consumer from the farmer was considered. The following committee was appointed to look into the matter: Messrs. Lick, Blatchford and Morrison.

The directors present were: Messrs. Tucker, Halbert, VanAllen, Good, Lick, McCrae, Powers, Schurr and Messrs. Morrison and Blatchford as officers of the company.

The annual meeting of The United Farmers of Ontario will be held on December 19 and 20.—Farm and Dairy.

THE HALIFAX DISASTER

It is estimated that about 3,000 people were killed, 8,000 were wounded, and 20,000 were rendered homeless as the result of an explosion in Halifax Harbor when the outgoing Norwegian steamer Imo collided with the munition ship Mont Blanc just before 9 o'clock on the morning of December 6. Seventeen minutes after the collision the fire which broke out reached the high explosives stored in the hold of the ship. The detonation which followed caused the greatest catastrophe that has ever visited a Canadian city. So terrific was the force of the blow-up that the main part of Richmond, only a short distance away, almost immediately appeared a mass of flames. So extended was the conflagration that it was several hours before the flames were got under control and by then street after street had been reduced to ruins and one of the greatest death lists in the history of Canada piled up. Hospital accommodation is entirely inadequate to meet the needs of the stricken city. Telegraph and telephone communications were demoralized, but as soon as news of the disaster spread, offers of assistance began to pour in. The first city to respond was Boston which dispatched special trains with doctors, nurses and medical supplies on board. An appeal for \$25,000,000 has been made to the people of Canada by the mayors of Halifax and Dartmouth, these figures being taken as a percentage part of the material damage done by the explosion. A preliminary million dollars has been given to the local relief committee by the Dominion Government. A searching inquiry as to the cause of the disaster has been ordered by the department of marine.

At a mass meeting, women voters at Hamilton, December 5, Major-General Mewburn, minister of militia, read a cable received from the military authorities in England, stating that there were 142,000 Canadians in France and 31,000 in France and England available for immediate reinforcements. The minister stated that the total number of enlistments in Canada had been 440,000, and the total casualties 142,000. Between October 21 and November 21 there were 16,882 casualties in the ranks of the C.E.F.

A fire which originated in the pattern shops of the Polson Iron Works in Toronto on December 6, completely destroyed the building. Three large ocean freighters of 3,500 to 4,000 tons displacement were under construction as well as two trawlers. One of the freighters was badly damaged.

GENERAL MISCELLANEOUS

WANTED—THREE SALESMEN CAPABLE OF earning \$1,500 to \$2,300 selling strictly high grade seeds direct to farmers. Good opening for reliable farmer or man with knowledge of farming and not afraid of hard work. Give full particulars in first letter. All correspondence confidential. Address Box 9, Grain Growers' Guide, Winnipeg. 471f

AGENTS WANTED TO SELL OUR FAMOUS Hop-Malt Extract to make genuine delicious beer at home. Strictly conforming to Temperance Act. Big money for live men. Write for particulars to Department 1, Hop-Malt Company, Hamilton, Ont. 471f

A LOCAL AGENT WANTED IN EVERY COM- munity for "Digest of Canadian Mercantile Laws." \$5.00 a day easily cleared. No book like it in Canada. Splendid commission. Address, W. H. Anger, 97 Brunswick Ave., Toronto, Ont.

DOMINION EXPRESS FOREIGN CHEQUES are accepted by Field Cashiers and Paymasters in France for their full face value. There is no better way to send money to the boys in the trenches. 49-4

BECOME AN AUCTIONEER—TERM SOON. Circular free. Sargent's International Auction School, G. F. Sargent, President, 401 5th St. Sioux City, Iowa. 148-4

NEEDLES, REPAIRS—FOR ALL MAKES OF machines. Dominion Sewing Machine Co. (Accessory Dept.) 300 Notre Dame Ave., Winnipeg. 1f

EXPERIENCED FARMER (CANADIAN) WANTS Fully Equipped Farm on Shares. O'Neil, 288 Spence St., Winnipeg. 49-3

COAL—SCREENED LUMP, BEST COAL FOR stove and furnace. Prompt shipment. Apply, Tebeck Coal Co. Ltd., Tebeck, Alta. 451f

DENTISTS

DR. GORDON D. PETERS, 504 BOYD BUILD- ing, Winnipeg, two blocks west Eaton's. 461f

CALGARY ARTIFICIAL LIMB FACTORY 625-4055 ST. CALGARY ALTA.

WILSON'S MESSAGE

Washington, D.C., Dec. 4.—A definite statement to the world of America's war aims and of the basis upon which peace will be considered was made today by President Wilson in an address to congress in which he urged immediate declaration of a state of war between the United States and Austria-Hungary, Germany's vassal and a tool. As to Turkey and Bulgaria—also tools of the enemy—he counselled delay because "they do not yet stand in the direct path of our necessary action."

To win the war, the president declared, is the immediate and unalterable task ahead. He urged congress, just beginning its second war session, to concentrate itself upon it. The president sharply dismissed the possibility of premature peace, sought by German intrigue and debated here by men who understand neither its nature nor the way it may be attained. With victory an accomplished fact, he said, peace will be evolved, based on "mercy" and "justice" to enemy and friend—with hope of a partnership of nations to guarantee future world peace.

The war will be deemed won, he declared, "when the German people say to us, through properly accredited representatives, that they are ready to agree to a settlement based upon justice and reparation of the wrongs their rulers have done." Terms of peace, he added, would not include, dismemberment, robbery or punishment of the enemy, but would be based on justice, defined briefly as follows:

Freedom of nations and their peoples from autocratic domination, repatriation to Belgium, relinquishment of German power over the peoples of Austria, Turkey, the free Balkan States, as well as evacuation of Prussian territorial conquests in Belgium and northern France.

Emphasizing the purpose of the United States not to interfere in the internal affairs of any nation, the president asserted that no wrong against the German Empire was intended, and that there was no desire to re-arrange the Austro-Hungarian Empire. He said that when he spoke eight months ago of the right of nations to free access to the seas he had Austria as well as the smaller and weaker nations in mind.

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