

the British War Office expects to require large quantities of jam this year, and if Canada can successfully compete with Great Britain, where large quantities are manufactured, there is reason to believe the orders will be placed in this country. No jelly will be required, and the specifications state distinctly that no mixed jams will be accepted and that fruit must not be pulped before manufacture, except in the case of apricots."

"With the opening of the strawberry season in Ontario, there was a general complaint that the boxes were not being properly filled. Upon investigation it has been found that these complaints are in most cases entirely justifiable. In Toronto, Ottawa, Montreal, and undoubtedly in other markets as well, many packages have been received which were not more than three-quarters full of fruit, in some instances only half full. Not only that, but much of the fruit was immature and quite unfit for consumption.

"Steps have already been taken to remedy this state of affairs. Fruit inspectors at the shipping points are doing all in their power to warn growers against this practice. All those whose names have been received at Ottawa have been notified of this failure to fill their packages.

The situation is really a deplorable one, and one which has not the smallest excuse in its favor. To deliberately defraud the public by marketing immature strawberries, and giving only a meagre measure at that, is a dishonest practice which cannot be tolerated, and one which is bound to reflect upon the man who has adopted it."

A Home Made Weeder.

A ten-cent vegetable knife with a wooden handle four inches long and a steel blade four and a half inches long and three-quarters of an inch wide, tapering obliquely at the end to a sharp point on the cutting side was converted by a reader of "The Farmer's Advocate" into a handy weeding tool by heating the blade in the fire and bending an inch and a half of it a trifle more



acutely than to a right angle. Wheel and hand hoes fail to reach many small weeds that grow closely among the rows of garden vegetables like parsnips, onions, carrots, beets, lettuce, etc., consequently necessitating a great deal of stooping to remove the intruders with the fingers. For such work the weeder described is most effective, and is particularly useful for weeding onions grown from seed, and is also handy for thinning. Other sizes of knives have been made over in this way, but the point, as shown, is hard to improve upon.

A Responsive Field of Strawberries.

The weather-man has been rather stern this year in his relations with strawberry fields. The result has been that berries, usually scarce enough, have suffered reverses again this season. Growers must contend with the caprices of nature and many times they "lose out," but recently we were privileged to see a small field of strawberries on the farm of Alfred Thompson, in Middlesex County, Ontario, which had withstood the rigors of unseasonable frosts fairly satisfactorily. Would that we could omit the words "fairly" in the preceding sentence but it is necessary there, for, although no damage was revealed by a casual glance, it could be seen on close inspection that the foliage was injured on some varieties, while on others some of the early bloom had been killed. Nevertheless there were many berries just ripening, some being harvested, and many were in reserve waiting for the warm and sunny days, the absence of which they were beginning to regret. This is the dark side of the story, but with it all was an exceptionally nice field three-quarters of an acre in size, vigorous, growthy, and bearing a good crop.

The varieties in this field included three of the leading kinds: Dunlap, Williams and Warfield. The latter two varieties were set so the Williams, which had a perfect flower, might fertilize the Warfield which is imperfect. The accompanying illustration, which shows only part of the field, will give the reader some idea of the width of the matted rows. They were set 4 feet apart, but growth has been so profuse that not quite enough room is left between the rows. Last season while cultivation was being carried out, a cultivator with a rolling coulter on one side was used to keep the rows within bounds. Such an attachment is easily arranged, and Mr. Thompson advises a coulter on both sides, which would save one trip between each pair of rows.

It has been the custom on this farm to take only one crop from a plantation, and then follow

it the same season with millet or potatoes. However, since the field illustrated is clean it was decided to retain it for another year. It is necessary to get new growth and keep down weeds. This will be accomplished by cutting and burning the foliage, plowing between the rows and cultivating. The rows as they now appear will be reduced to one foot in width by the cultivation, yet the new growth which is thus encouraged should make the field quite profitable another year.



A Berry Grower's Cultivator.

The wheel on the side keeps the width of the rows controlled.

The plants are mulched each winter with coarse, strawy, horse manure, and in the spring they are just opened up so growth can start. After setting the field was given one-half a ton of commercial fertilizer, mixed in the percentages of nitrogen, potash and phosphoric acid that would be suitable for such a crop. The entire field has been well treated and it has responded.

POULTRY.

It is estimated that four pounds of grain will produce a pound of gain in chickens. Think of the grain going to waste in the fields after harvest and what it would mean to have it converted into poultry products. Elaborate buildings are unnecessary to accommodate chickens in the field. Colony houses are preferable of course, but large, dry-goods boxes, piano boxes put back to back and other conveniences will answer. With



In Berry Time.

Part of a strawberry field on the farm of Alfred Thompson, Middlesex Co., Ont.

runners under them the houses can be transferred from place to place and many a pound of waste transformed into actual gains.

Ducks are marketed before the pin-feathers of the adult plumage start or after the feathers have grown in so clean picking is possible. Ducks sold when from nine to eleven weeks old are sometimes called "green ducks" and if the market is normal they are most profitable at that age. After the mature feathers start to come in there is little gain in flesh until the plumage is complete. The pin-feathers will appear when the ducks are from eleven to fourteen weeks of age and some growers claim the proper time to sell ducks is when they are ten weeks of age.

Forcing the Molt.

Much of the financial success with poultry depends on the winter egg production. This is brought about by hatching the pullets early in the spring so they will begin to lay during the late fall months and having the yearling hens molt early and resume laying in early winter. Some poultry experts have recommended special treatment for the hens so the molting is forced. This method was explained over a year ago in these columns and individuals who tried it thoroughly claimed it to be a success.

About the middle of August the rations of the hens are reduced to one-third of their usual allowance. During this time the hens should have water and green stuff rather sparingly but they should not be deprived of it altogether. This partial fast should extend over a period of four days and the purpose is to dry up the tips of the quills and quill cells and cause the feathers to drop out in large numbers long before they would do so under normal feeding. After the fourth day the usual allowance of grain should be given. If prices continue high mash made up of bran, middlings or shorts and corn meal will be fed more generally this fall. Wet mashes are fed but the dry mash is considered preferable by many. To force the molt after the period of semi-starvation keep before the hens, until they start to lay, a mash composed of the following: bran, two parts, and one part each of wheat middlings, corn meal, gluten meal, beef scraps, and linseed meal. The linseed meal opens the quill cells again, starts the flow of oil and causes the new coat of feathers to grow rapidly. When the molt is complete the linseed meal should be omitted until cold weather sets in when it is more safely fed. If there are any indications of diarrhoea or looseness the quantity of linseed meal should be reduced.

A very important part of the business is the production of eggs in winter and if the hens are just getting their new feathers when cold weather arrives the chances are against them for laying until spring. Pullets which lay too early are liable to molt in the fall and cease laying until spring. The latter part of September and the month of October is a very good period for pullets to commence. If they do not develop until November they are liable to pass through the winter with a very small egg production so real early-hatched chicks should not be forced too rapidly.

FARM BULLETIN.

More Letters Wanted.

Editor "The Farmer's Advocate":

During my experience as a traveller throughout the rural communities, coming into contact with a great many farmers of all kinds, from the practical, progressive, scientific "business farmer" to the predestinarian, I have noticed one thing at least, that I think is worthy of calling to the attention of the readers of this excellent agricultural journal. In discussing the several different branches of farming and the methods of management in each case, we find that a great many farmers specialize and devote extra time and attention to some particular branch. The horse is one man's hobby. Another specializes on dairy cattle, others are in love with the Irishman's pet—the hog. The next man perhaps can tell you all about poultry, grain-growing, gardening, fruit-raising, beef-cattle, sheep-raising and one man of individuality tells me that his fortune is due in a year or two more, from his specialty—an acre or so of ginseng-root.

A great many of these men have, through their own efforts, made discoveries, invented new labor-saving devices, and thought out new methods, systems and means of pursuing their favorite occupation, that are an improvement on the methods generally known and of practical value as time, labor and money-savers. Now would it not be interesting and valuable to both the publishers and readers of "The Farmer's Advocate," if every farmer, farmer's son, farmer's wife or daughter or other person engaged in farming and who knows practices or uses any new article, system or method, write and publish a description of their experiences. I include farmers' wives and daughters for I know that when it comes to securing eggs, growing poultry or making an economical exchange of these for the household necessities, that they are fifty years at least ahead of the men. I am sure that these letters would be valuable and that the editor would be glad to publish them. Many people think that these little "original ideas" are not worth mentioning but I think that is a mistake for anything that would save even a few steps or a few cents each day, would be of incalculable value if known and practiced by everyone. To illustrate:—Last spring I saw a farmer plowing. He left a strip of sod, the same width as his end-ridges, on both sides of his field. Then to finish, he plowed round and round the whole field without any lost time, lifting of the plow or turning. Of course this might not be advisable in