

VINEGAR MAKING.



THE Farmers' Call gives the following hints on vinegar making, which, it says, are based on years of practical experience :—One of the common uses now made of the apple crop in many sections, is to convert a large part of it into vinegar. With many farmers this has entirely superseded making cider for a beverage, and from the fact that less care is necessary in gathering the fruit, it is found fully as profitable. When made in large quantities the process begins as soon as enough apples have fallen from the trees to furnish a supply.

The apples are ground in mills, as for cider, and the juice may be expressed at once, but more commonly the pomace is kept in vats or hogsheds until it has fermented and become quite sour before the pressing is done. This sour cider is then allowed to settle and is run into barrels, but not quite full. Throughout the fall season these barrels should be kept in the sun, covered with loose boards as a protection to the cooperage, and the bungs should be left out until it is necessary to remove them for the winter. The bungholes should be covered with bits of thin netting that will keep out insects without excluding the air.

Experience has demonstrated that a barrel contains about the right quantity of liquid, and an open bunghole gives sufficient exposure to the atmosphere for making vinegar of the best quality by this slow, natural process. Some dilution with water is often necessary where the cider is so rich in saccharine matter as to prevent its turning to vinegar in a reasonable length of time.

Vinegar barrels should be iron-hooped and be kept well painted to resist exposure and prevent leakage. The natural process will require a year or more of time to produce an article acid enough to meet the requirements of the market, but it will continue to grow stronger by age, and will admit of sufficient dilution to compensate for loss by evaporation and leakage.

The natural process of vinegar making may be accelerated by occasionally running the cider from one barrel into another, and thus exposing it for a time more fully to the air. Adding a gallon or two of strong vinegar or a little mother to each barrel of sour cider is another method. Still another method is trickling it down through beech chips or shavings, and corncobs saturated with strong old vinegar.

Summer pruning is desirable because the wound heals rapidly, and is not followed by an excessive growth of water sprouts. The objection to summer pruning is the supposed shock to the tree by cutting away boughs in the growing season. The objection is mostly avoided by annual pruning and a little attention to water sprouts.