

IRRIGATION.

Where irrigation is practised, the water should only be applied when the condition of the plants indicates that they are in need of water, as by the darkening of the foliage. Care should be taken not to wait until the ground is too dry, because one can seldom cover the whole field in one day. A check in the growth of the potatoes should not be allowed, as it tends to produce ill-shaped tubers.

Potatoes planted the 1st of May seldom need water supplied before the end of June or the beginning of July. Do not water after the middle of August, so as to give plenty of time for ripening in dry earth. Cultivate as soon as possible after each irrigation. Great care in supplying irrigation-water is necessary for best results both for market potatoes and for seed stock.

CULTIVATION AND WEEDING.

The success of the potato-crop depends largely upon the kind of cultivation given. No matter how well the land has been prepared and how carefully the sets have been planted, the crop will be much reduced if the soil is allowed to become hard, the weeds to grow, and the moisture lost which could be saved. Cultivation should begin soon after planting. The common drag-harrow, or a weeder, can be run over the ground three or four times, or until the potato-plants are 3 or 4 inches high. From then on, most of the cultivation is done with the single-horse cultivator. The first time the cultivator is used the ground should be cultivated fairly deep and as near the plants as possible without injuring them, to loosen the soil for the tubers. Later cultivations should be shallow to prevent injury to the roots and tubers. The soil should be cultivated every week or ten days, depending on the weather. If the soil becomes baked, evaporation takes place rapidly. It should be stirred after each rain. If the land is weedy, the more frequent the cultivation the less work with the hoe to keep the area clean. From five to six cultivations, or even more, are none too many, and it is usually found that the crop increases in proportion to the number of cultivations. The last two or three cultivations the earth should be thrown towards the plants if the potatoes are near the surface. The weeds that are not killed by the horse-cultivator should be hoed out or pulled by hand. Hilling potatoes in dry sections is a mistake of much too common occurrence.

HARVESTING.

Potatoes may be dug with the four-tined potato-fork, ploughed out, or dug with the potato-digger. The former method is used when the area is small or the ground stony, and also in case of digging potatoes early, when care should be taken in handling, not to bruise the tubers more than necessary. Where there are large areas to be dug, the potato-digger is essential, as digging with the fork is too expensive, now that good men are difficult to get and wages are high. There are a number of good potato-diggers now on the market.

Potatoes, more or less affected with late blight or rot, are ready to dig as soon as the tops have died, if the weather is favourable. They should be dug in dry weather if possible, so that when taken to the cellar or store-room they will be perfectly dry. If the potatoes are affected with late blight, it is advisable to leave them in the ground as long as possible, because the