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Vegetable Seed Growing in Ontario

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THE production of seeds of farm and vegetable crops in Canada is assuming large proportions this year on account of our inability to obtain it from the former sources in Europe. As this source will probably be closed for the next two or three years, it behooves us to produce as much of it as possible during that period. Of course we cannot expect to produce it as cheaply as they did because of labor costs, but much of this has been removed through the government aid given to seed producers in quantity.

Seed production in Canada has been largely of the following: Mangels, sugar beets, field and garden carrots, peas, beans both garden and field, corn, garden beets, onions, celery, cabbage, spinach and radish. Many of these have only been produced to a limited extent and will always be limited on account of climatic conditions. Beets, onions, mangels, sugar beets, peas and beans seem to give good returns, and are being grown quite extensively here in Ontario, but much of our seed will be grown in British Columbia. When a gardener has greenhouse space and is growing celery outside in a large way, it will more than pay him to devote some of that space in spring to seed production, as his crop will benefit and he can always find a good market among his fellow grocers for any surplus growing.

In this article I shall deal only with vegetable seed. Seed production

divides itself into two classes; the small garden and the large area producer. This latter refers to the man who produces seed in large quantities under contract for the wholesale trade. On account of the quantity he grows, he can negotiate successfully with the wholesale buyer. Prof. Macoun in his pamphlet, "Every Gardener, his Own Seed Grower," urges each man with a garden to plant two beets, two carrots, five onions, two cabbages, two turnips, three celery plants for his seed in 1919. This can easily be done and the results at Ottawa give the following amounts that have been obtained there per plant: beet, $2\frac{1}{2}$ — $5\frac{1}{2}$ ozs.; cabbage, 2—5 ozs.; carrot, $1\frac{1}{2}$ — $2\frac{1}{2}$ ozs.; celery, 1— $2\frac{1}{2}$ ozs. (outside); onions, $\frac{1}{4}$ — $\frac{1}{2}$ ozs.; parsnips, 2—4 ozs.; turnips, 5—9 ozs.

Johnson in his book on seed-growing gives the following amounts per acre in a good season. Beets, 1000 lbs.; onions, 600 lbs.; cucumbers, 250—500 lbs.; carrots, 500—600 lbs.; beans, 15—30 bushels; cabbage, 400—500 lbs.; tomatoes, 200—300 lbs.; spinach, 1000—1500; celery, 400—500 lbs.; corn 40—60 bushels.

From present indications seed-growing in Ontario may be classed as follows:

Worth while, growing a large amount—onions, beets and beans.

Worth while, growing a small amount—cabbage, radish, tomatoes, spinach, celery (under-glass.)