

shading may be necessary for a time. This may be accomplished by scattering light straw or hay over the plants, or shading with boards.

Protection in Winter

The best protection for the strawberry is a good covering of snow. We are not always sure of sufficient snow and some other cover will often be necessary. Brush which has been cut in the summer and has the dry leaves attached, makes a fair cover. The brush will gather the snow and give good winter protection. In the spring, when the brush is removed, it will be found that the leaves have fallen from the branches and will remain as a mulch for the plants. Clean straw, free from seeds, or hay, cut late in the season after the seed has all fallen make good cover. If hay or straw with seed in it is used, the strawberry bed will be destroyed by a mass of weeds the following season. The cover should not be put on too early. Wait until the ground is frozen slightly. Mould is induced by early covering. If the weather should turn mild, and the plants may be destroyed.

My plan of covering strawberries is as follows: If the weather is likely to be very cold before snow comes, I cover with hay cut late in the fall, not too heavily. If a good fall of snow comes before the plants are covered, so much the better. This is the most favorable condition. Now cover heavily with light hay or straw, on top of the snow. One foot will not hurt the plants. A good cover on top of the snow will hold the plants back in the spring until all danger of spring frost is over. By this plan the ground will be kept cool and moist until the fruiting season is over. Thus the two great hindrances to successful strawberry growing in this climate, namely, spring frosts and early drouth, are overcome. Remove the mulch gradually or in cloudy weather and leave a considerable portion of it to cover the space well between the rows. The cover can be left on very late in the season, when put on on top of the snow, without injuring the plants. Watch the plants and remove when growth starts. If there should be indications of frost after the plants have started to bloom, the cover which has been left between the rows, may quickly be scattered over the plants. They will not take any harm if this cover should be left on for a day or two, should the weather continue cold. We have never found it necessary to cover plants to protect from spring frost when the cover was put on after a good fall of snow. In some seasons the cover was not put on until toward spring, before the snow began to melt, with excellent results. The only drawback to this system is the possibility of severe weather early in the winter before snow comes.

Keeping Beds in Bearing

How long will the strawberry bed continue to produce good crops is often asked. We have had a fair crop the fourth year. On our soil the second crop is usually the best, and we think this will frequently hold good on other soils in this climate, as in our short season the plants do not often become very thick the first year. Three crops, as a rule, will be found the limit of profitable production. Sometimes only two, after which the plants should be plowed up. If the beds are to be retained for another season, they should be mowed soon after the fruiting season is over, and the refuse raked off and burned. The width of the rows may be reduced by cutting off a furrow on either side and running the cultivator between the rows. This will give room for new plants to set.

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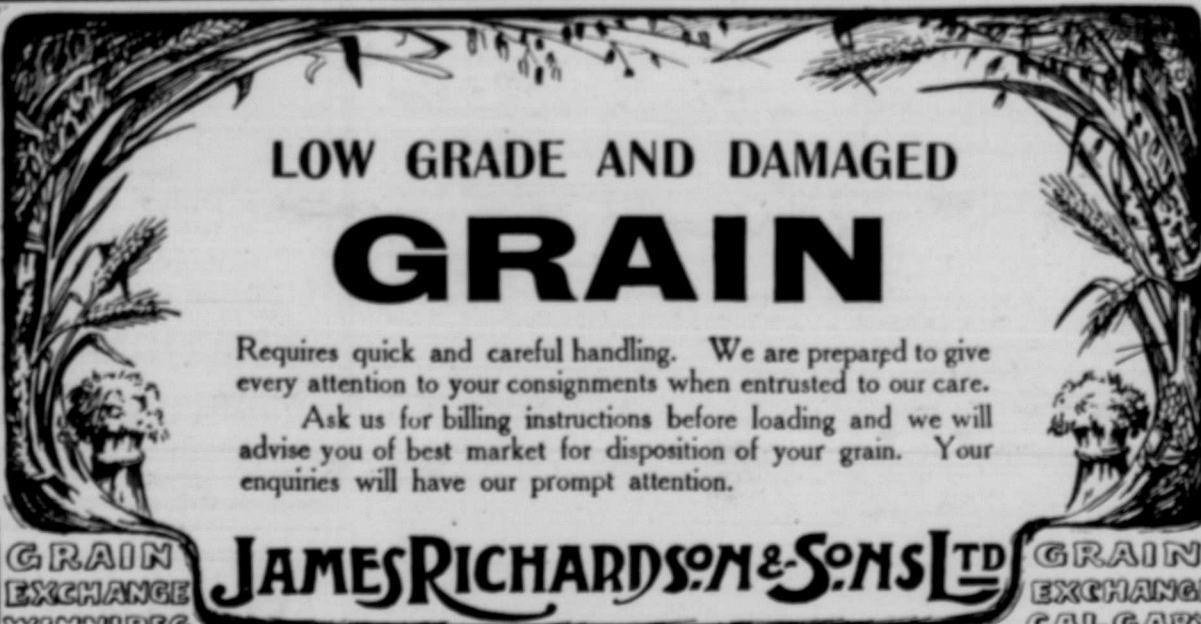
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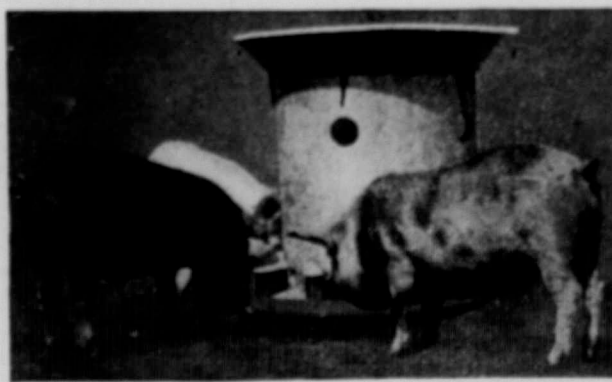
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