

Small Fruits for the Prairie Farm

Raspberries, Strawberries, Currants and Gooseberries

By A. P. Stevenson, Morden, Man.

There are a number of varieties of the large and small fruits that are doing well with us here in the western provinces. To be successful in the growing of apples and plums it is essential that a good shelter belt be first established, if the farm is a prairie one, in fact no success will attend the efforts of the planter without the benefits of a good windbreak. This is usually brought about by the planting of forest trees of varieties of well known hardiness to the north and west of the farm buildings. A distance of not less than 50 yards should be left clear between buildings and forest trees. The varieties most suitable for this purpose are Manitoba maple, ash, Russian poplar, cottonwood, Russian willow, and caragana.

Currants and Gooseberries

Part of the space enclosed by the shelterbelt will be the place to start the fruit garden. Small fruits may be set out as soon as the shelterbelt has been started. Currants, red, white and black are the first fruits usually planted in home-making in this western country. The bushes are quite hardy and with a little care and attention will give excellent returns. They are usually planted four feet apart each way. Under no circumstances should grass or weeds be allowed to grow among the bushes. Prune back some of the young wood in the fall or spring, remove occasionally some of the old wood but always leave some of the strong young shoots to take their place.

The management of gooseberries is much the same as the currant, but the varieties suitable to our western conditions are limited in number, and in our experience Carrie and Houghton are the safest to plant. These are the limit in hardiness of cultivated varieties. The fruit is of medium size and good quality. In currants Ruby Castle for red; Lee's Prolific, black, and white Grape are satisfactory varieties.

Raspberries

The best method of growing the Red Raspberry on the farm is that known as the matted row. Set the plants in rows five feet apart and 18 inches apart in the row. Allow the young shoots to spread only 18 inches wide in the row, so that there will be a row of raspberry canes 18 inches wide only and as long as desired. The ground should be well cultivated between the rows. When setting out young raspberry plants in spring cut the canes off to within three inches of the root of the young plant. Enough only should be left so that it can be seen where the roots are planted. All dead canes in bearing plantations are best removed in spring. The following Red varieties have been bearing good crops with us for many years. In order of hardiness they are Nun-beam, London Shipper's Pride, and Herbert. The hardiest yellow Raspberry is the Caroline. The management for it is the same as for the red varieties.

Growing the Best Strawberries

With an average rainfall abundance of the cultivated strawberry can be grown. Plants should be set out in spring in well prepared land in rows five feet apart and 18 inches apart in the row. Plant firmly but not too deep. The crown of the plant should be visible always. Keep all blossoms off the first season. When young plants begin to form, assist them to take root by placing soil on the runners so that the wind will not keep blowing them about. About freezing up time cover strawberry plants with clean wheat straw to a depth of from four to six inches. Remove this mulch some time the following May. It would be well however to leave part of the straw between the rows as a mulch and to walk upon while picking the fruit.

A new strawberry known as the Ever-bearing variety has been coming into prominence during the past few years.

We have grown this variety for the past four years, and we must say it is a great bearer of fruit of good size and excellent quality. We enjoyed the fruit this year as late as the first of October. Another point in favor of this variety is that a good crop can be gathered the same season the plants are set out. All blossoms should be kept off until the middle of July. They will fruit then until the first heavy frost. Their management is much the same as the old June varieties. Americus, Superb and Progressive are the leading and best varieties. In our experience the Americus is the most prolific.

Laying Out the Garden

A little forethought in laying out the fruit garden will be the means of economizing time and labor in its management. Small square patches of fruit bushes should be avoided. Everything should be planted in long rows so that the labor of a horse and cultivator can be utilized to the best advantage, as the average man does not take kindly to using a hoe. A good place to plant the apple and plum trees is in the rows of small fruit bushes, 16 feet apart each way, and to beginners I would suggest they start with the hardiest known varieties first. Among these might be mentioned the Transcendent and Hyslop Crabs and Saunders' Hybrid apples. Large apples Hibernia, Gipsy Girl and Blushed Calville. These varieties are the extreme limit in hardiness as far as is known. Mammoth, Cheney and Aitkin are the hardiest varieties of the cultivated plum. The next in hardiness is our native wild plum. Fruit trees two to three years old are about the right age to plant out in permanent locations. All fruit trees on being planted out should be pruned back vigorously and planted firmly two inches deeper than they stood in the nursery. Late in the fall the trees should be hilled up with earth and the trunks wrapped with three ply of burlap from the ground up into the limbs. The hilling up will lessen the danger of the fruit trees being girdled by mice, and the burlap will help save the trees from being sun scalded in spring and from the depredations of rabbits. And it should never be forgotten that a good covering of snow all winter in the fruit garden is one of the essentials to the successful gathering of a good crop of fruit from the farm garden in this western country.

TRANSPLANTING TREES

Q.—How should I go about transplanting native trees such as spruce, red willow and high bush cranberry?—M. O. C., Sask.

A.—It is advisable to move shrubs such as the red willow (which by the way is not a willow at all but a native dogwood) and the high bush cranberry as early in the spring as the ground can be worked. You would have better success with moving small shrubs of these varieties rather than attempting to transplant bushes of a larger size. You should secure as much root as possible when digging up the shrubs and after they are planted it is advisable to cut back the top growth very considerably. This is to compensate for the loss of roots and it will also tend to make the shrubs bush out much thicker from the root and will make better specimens.

In regard to spruce, these can be moved somewhat later. It is advisable, however, to get them planted before any new growth is made. Usually it is safe to move spruce under our conditions as late as the first week in June, although it is better to get it done before the end of May. In moving

spruce it is of the greatest importance that the roots be protected from drying out all the time the tree is out of the ground. The roots should not be exposed to the sun and wind even for a minute.—Norman M. Ross, Chief of Tree Planting Division, Indian Head.

Any readers of the Guide wishing further information on fruit growing should address their inquiries to the editor of the Guide and these letters will be answered by Mr. Stevenson or other competent experts.

Our Ottawa Letter

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Growers' Grain Company which handles half the wheat produced in the west should be powerful enough to break it. Mr. Meighen also justified the action of the government by saying that it was better to have the discontent in the west removed even if some people should suffer as a result of it. He believed that the majority of the people in the east were prepared to make concessions to the west in order to remove their discontent.

Hon. Wm. Pugsley who replied to Mr. Meighen declared that his speech was an apology to the members sitting behind him for the government's action. He asserted that the government had not waited until parliament met to introduce free wheat because it knew that it would be impossible to get the support of caucus for such action.

Debt Will Be \$1,300,000,000

The first round in the budget came on Tuesday. The opening part of Sir Thomas White's speech dealt with financial considerations. He was able to point to the largest revenue in the history of the Dominion, some \$232,000,000, for the fiscal year which closed with March. Out of this sum, after general and capital expenditure as well as interest and pensions had been paid, \$60,000,000 remained to be applied to the cost of the war. The minister admitted that the debt of the Dominion is growing at a rapid rate. Before the war it was less than \$400,000,000. At the close of March it was approximately \$900,000,000, and at the end of the present fiscal year he predicted it would have grown to \$1,300,000,000. The big increase was due almost entirely to the steadily growing war expenditure which has now reached the \$600,000,000 figure, including a large sum owed to the British government for the maintenance of the Canadian troops in France.

Sir Thomas intimated that the government in considering new taxation proposals had canvassed the advisability of putting a further customs tax on luxuries and had also thought of the imposition of an income tax. He made no mention of a tax on land values. Higher customs taxation on luxuries had been rejected, he said, for the reason that most articles of this character are embraced under fixed rates in the treaty with France and the tariff cannot be raised in respect of these. "Apart from this," he added, "we should hesitate at a time when France needs the advantage of all her sales on this side of the Atlantic to assist her to exchange to place a prohibition or increased duty against importations from our great Ally."

The reasons advanced by the minister of finance for refusing to impose an income tax were the same as he has advanced on previous occasions—that the collections would not be large and they would be difficult to make. He made the additional argument that with the increased cost of living the imposition of an income tax would be a hardship for many people on salaries. Dr. Michael Clark dealt particularly with this point when he spoke pointing out that if Canadians were relieved of some of the present taxation burdens they could well afford to make a direct contribution to the revenue of the country.

It was apparent that the proposal of the minister to impose additional business taxes met with the general approval of the house insofar as they went. He quite rightly remarked that if a business is making in war time profits above the normal they must be due to abnormal conditions created by the war. "I do not see," he added, "that it makes much difference whether the business in question is the making of munitions or of any other class of goods. Munitions are needed and no discredit attaches to the enterprise which provides them. The steel company which engages in the production of munitions could in most cases make as much if not more money by selling its steel products in the market of the world. Moreover, it would be inequitable to discriminate against the firm which makes a profit upon the finished article and leave untaxed the profits of those firms which supply the raw material.

Apart from taking the administration

to task for not eliminating party patronage and practicing more economy in the conduct of the affairs of the Dominion, A. K. MacLean, the opposition financial critic, criticized the government from three chief standpoints. He opposed the proposal to spend ten million dollars on roads at the present time, and declared that the general tariff increase of 7½ per cent imposed three sessions ago should have been removed, at least from the free list of articles, and asserted that free wheat should have been brought into force under the Customs Act and not as a war measure. As such, he said, it was a temporary measure and would go out of force with the conclusion of the war. Sir Thomas White and Hon. Arthur Meighen both combated this statement, and the former produced an opinion of E. L. Newcombe, deputy minister of justice, that the order-in-council which brought free wheat into effect has the same effect as an act of parliament.

Dr. Clark on Free Wheat

Dr. Michael Clark devoted some attention to the interview given by Sir George Foster when free wheat was announced in which he said—"this is removed from the realm of trade." He thought it was an extraordinary statement to come from a minister of trade and commerce. "To an ordinary man like myself," he said, "a minister of trade and commerce ought to be a man anxious to promote trade. He went to the antipodes and came back without paying expenses as the greatest commercial traveller in the world. On his way back he stopped off at Japan, and I do not know that our trade with Japan has increased by reason of his visit, and I do not know of anything he has done to increase the trade of the country; and now when the minister of finance, aided by the advice and assistance of the Solicitor-General, brings in a measure for the establishment of free trade in wheat with the United States, the minister of trade and commerce rejoices in the fact that it is removed from the realm of trade."

Mr. J. G. Turriff before moving the amendment, already quoted, reminded the government that the farmers of the west had been demanding free wheat for years. The government in surrendering had given as a reason that special conditions exist at the present time. Inaccurate statements, he said, had been made in the order-in-council because free wheat is worth less today to western farmers than in any year since 1911. The benefit would be considerable, but it would fall far short of what the farmers would have received this year had the measure been brought into effect early last autumn before the bulk of the wheat had passed from the hands of the grower into the control of the millers and the speculators.

ALL SEED DISTRIBUTED

Walter D. Willoughby, R.R. No. 2, Shellbrook, Sask., who wrote a letter in our April 11th issue on the cultivation of tomatoes and who offered to distribute free seed of his Willoughby Nonesuch to all applicants, has advised us that he has sent out over 250 lots to Guide readers and that no more will be available this year. He states that any reader who has applied for seed and has not received it will however get it next winter.

The Chilean government has recently adopted measures whereby a special room is to be provided in factories where mothers may spend one hour of their working-day in caring for their children, without any loss in wages.

Curate: "Shame on you for beating up Mike that way. Don't you know you should pray for your enemies?"

Denny: "But he ain't me enemy, father; he's a friend uv mine."

BELGIAN RELIEF FUND

Previously acknowledged	\$10,027 77
Harold Simpson, Lyleton, Man.	2 00
Gertrude Simpson, Lyleton, Man.	2 00
Edith Simpson, Lyleton, Man.	2 00
Mr. and Mrs. R. A. Simpson, Lyleton, Man.	4 00
Mrs. A. A. Elliot, Lacombe, Alta.	1 00
"Violet"	1 00
Total	\$10,032 77