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The Proper Cultivation of Strawberries

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THE ground on which strawberries are to be planted should be prepared for them by manuring well after the preceding crop is taken off. A good coat of horse manure is preferable to any other manure as it seems to add to the ground that which is most necessary for the growing of strawberries. Potatoes or corn are recommended as good crops to precede strawberries as they need hoeing, thus keeping down small weeds. If these weeds are kept down and not allowed to go to seed, there will not be any seeding of the ground to spring up in the early spring when the young strawberry plants are shooting their first runners; if there are a lot of weeds around a plant one often cuts off the plant in trying to get close to it with the hoe.

After getting the ground well worked (that is, to have about six inches of loose soil on top) a roller should be run over it. This is to level it and also to break up any large or hard lumps that may be on the field. A field is not considered ready until all the ground is as smooth as possible and devoid of all sticks, stones or sods.

PLANTING

Planting should be done as soon as the plants can be secured. Good healthy plants should always be selected and especially if the soil is light, for in case of a drought or short dry spell just after planting, a small plant would wither and die while a large plant, being sturdier, is not so easily killed. This is one reason why the Williams and Glen Mary are so popular. They are large plants and generally have good long roots.

When planting a line is used so as to have the rows straight. Care must be taken to keep the line tight, and always plant on the same side of it. The plants should be put from eighteen to twenty-four inches apart. The smaller the plants are the closer they should be planted. The holes are always made with a spade and wedge-shaped. This is done by moving the spade back and forth after sticking it in the ground. The plant is then placed in the hole, the roots being kept perfectly straight, and then the earth is pushed back, filling in the hole. A practised man can do this handily with one foot. The most important thing in planting is not to cover the heart of

the plant with earth when filling in the hole. The rows should be three and a-half feet apart.

Before planting, all plants should be looked over and all the dead leaves and runners cut off. This must be done and the plants then placed in good order with the roots out straight, so that they can be easily picked up and dipped in water. This serves to keep them moist and also to keep the roots straight.

After the plants have a good start, they should be hoed once a week during the whole summer, to keep the weeds down and also to keep the runners trained. All blossoms should be pulled off the first year.

CARE IN FALL.

In the fall, after the plants have stopped growing, yet before the ground

Unequaled

I do not think that THE CANADIAN HORTICULTURIST is equalled by any publication on the continent.—W. J. Brandrith, Secretary, British Columbia Fruit Growers' Association, Ladner, B. C.

freezes, a wide shoe is put on the back of the cultivator to throw out a deep furrow. This allows any water that may collect on the ground to run off.

As soon as the ground freezes in the late fall, the vines should be covered with long strawy horse manure. This covering is left on until spring and, as soon as the vines begin to shoot up and there is no danger of frosts, this may be shaken up loosely and left for about a week. Then it is all raked off the vines and left between the rows. This keeps the weeds down and also keeps the ground moist. The manure should never be taken from between the rows as it keeps the berries on the edge of the row from getting sandy after a rain. The berries on the edge of the row are always the best. No weeds should be allowed to go to seed.

TREATMENT OF FRUITING PATCH

After the fruit is all taken off, the mower is run over the patch and the tops of the vines are cut off. This is done so as to start a new growth when the

vines start growing again. The rows, which are now about two feet wide, should be plowed down to about one foot, that is to take some off each side of the row. Do not plow too deeply, then go along the row with a cultivator to shake out the dirt from the roots of the plants that have been plowed out. If once is not sufficient, go through a second time. Let a man go through now with a fork to shake out the loose vines and throw them in heaps. The usual plan is to throw five rows into one. This refuse is all hauled off, and dumped out of the way; if there is not too much earth in it, it could be mixed with manure and rotted. Everything being out of the way now, the cultivator is applied once a week until it freezes up. They should of course be kept free from all weeds as much as possible. Another covering of manure is put on in the fall, and dealt with as in the preceding year.

Strawberry beds are seldom kept over two seasons. It is not policy to do so, as the beetle that attacks the blossoms most severely breeds in the old beds. Some prominent fruit growers prophesy that the time is not far off when a bed will be plowed up after one season of bearing.

[Note.—The majority of our commercial growers already follow the practice of cropping a strawberry plantation only once.—Editor.]

Fruits For British Columbia

As soil and climatic conditions vary widely in British Columbia, it is difficult to recommend a list of varieties of fruits that would be suitable for planting in all parts of the province. This fact is pointed out in a letter that was received by THE CANADIAN HORTICULTURIST from Mr. Maxwell Smith, Dominion Fruit Inspector, Vancouver, which is as follows:

"It is quite impossible for me or anybody else to answer your question directly as to the best standard varieties of fruits to plant in British Columbia. Our climatic and soil conditions are so diversified, that the same varieties which might be a success (and also have market value) in one locality, might not be the varieties to recommend for another, and I therefore hesitate to give my opinion unless it were in answer to a direct ques-