

has bought a rundown farm, that he may start fair, without loss of time. In this case, it is practically so much more added to the cost of the farm and has already been discounted in the selling price. If the farm we have recently bought, and upon which we shall use some \$100 worth of Mr. Bowker's fertilizers this spring, would have produced without them the crops we expect to produce with them, we should very gladly have paid \$500 more for it. As we go on we shall use less and less fertilizer, and depend more and more on thorough tillage, a careful rotation of crops and homemade manure. In the end, if the farm does not become self-supporting, and improve yearly in productiveness, it will be because the man who runs it does not know his trade as well as he ought.—Dr. Hoskins.

Some advice about Vegetables.

Don't defer the making up of your lists of seed of flowers or vegetables until the last moment before they are needed. The seedsmen are then hard pressed and you may have a vexatious delay in getting your seeds, at a time when every day counts. It is the fashion with some writers to abuse seedsmen, and I have seen some statements that lead me to conclude that the writers who complain of being cheated, are themselves to blame. When a man buys seeds of any sort which are offered by parties of no reputation in the trade, at prices so low that reliable seed cannot be furnished, he has no one to blame but himself if the result is bad. With nearly all of our garden vegetables the cost of the best seed is insignificant in comparison to the crop, while the saving of a few pence in price of seed will usually make more than as many dollars loss in the result. There was a time when market gardeners were so shy of seedsmen that they were afraid to plant any seed except that of their own growth, always grown at an extravagant cost to them. But with the wonderful development of the seed business in this country, and the great care used by the seedsmen who have earned a reputation, it seldom pays for private or commercial gardeners to raise their own seeds. In fact, with the majority of vegetables the seeds now offered by our leading seedsmen are not only cheaper, but better and purer than any that can be grown in limited gardens.

Taking it for granted then that you are going to buy seeds, we would like to say a few words as to what to buy. Of course experienced gardeners have their old favorites of all kinds, but we are not writing for them, but for those who are seeking information. First then, deal with a reliable house. There are now plenty of them all over the country, who will sell you good seeds at prices they can make a profit on. When any one offer you seeds at prices much lower than those of the leading houses in the trade, you will be wise in passing him by. In the second place buy the old standard varieties until you have tested and proved the new ones. Don't find fault with our enterprising seedsmen if all the so called novelties do not turn out as predicted. The trade competition compels them to offer the new things which they have not tested, and all the advance made in our vegetables is through the activity and energy of seedsmen in hunting up and testing new things. Many of our best seedsmen nowadays never send out any new variety until tested their own hands. Last summer I wrote to a leading seedsman friend telling him of a decided novelty in vegetables which I had seen in a garden in this neighborhood, and which had never yet been offered for sale to my knowledge.

He replied: "We have had it for three years, and have now fifty acres growing, in order to send it out in spring of 1889." Now he can offer it with the assurance that it is just as he describes it. As a result of this extra care we have

of late had an unusual number of novelties that "have come to stay." Among the new vegetables that we can advise our readers with confidence to use, we note: In bush or snip bean, we have found the *Dwarf Flageolet* the largest and most productive of the wax sorts. It is a little later than the *Golden Wax*, but its enormous productiveness will make it the wax bean for market growers. Several now self-blanching celeriacs have been offered, but in this class the *White Plum* is still the best. From Baltimore southward the old tall-growing celery of a good strain will give more satisfaction than the dwarf sorts. South of Philadelphia the early sorts of Sugar corn are not worth planting. The old *Black Mexican* being the only one of comparative earliness that succeeds. The *Egyptian* is a large sort, a little earlier than *Stowell's Evergreen*, and is the best for main crop.

Don't waste time and money in planting such melons as the *Montreal Market* muskmelon, (1) unless you are growing them for a market which takes big melons without regard to flavor. These big muskmelons are not fit for family use. The best of all muskmelons now in use is the comparatively new sort called "*Emerald Gem*." It has many advantages. 1st. It is a deep green color when ripe, and so fools the melon thieves. 2nd. It has beautiful, thick orange-colored flesh of the highest flavor I have ever known. 3rd. It is enormously productive. 4th. It was the only melon here last summer that survived the incessant rains of August and September last. If you do not want to be pestered with a vile perennial weed that will spread all over your farm, don't invest in the *Upland Cress*. Some of our eastern Maryland friends have been spending money and time in vain efforts to destroy this weed for the last twenty-five years or more, so if you are free from it, don't get it.

For twenty-five years past we have had a hobby for new tomatoes, and have tried nearly all that have been offered. A few sorts stand up like finger-boards through the years and mark our progress. *Tilden*, *Trophy*, *Acme*, *Dwarf Champion* each mark an epoch in tomato culture, with years between them crowded with new aspirants. *Mikado* is big and quite early, but with us has always been too rough and uncouth. *Dwarf Champion* is now the best tomato in all respects that we have. We have a fine lot in pots this winter and feel sure that they will do as well under glass as out doors. The first ripe one was cut Christmas day, and the plants are well loaded with green fruit.

The *Eclipse Beet* is far superior in all respects to the *Egyptian*. In fact the *Egyptian* never had anything to recommend it but its color and small top, for the old *Bassano* was a better table beet by far and just as early, but city people wanted a dark red beet, and the gardeners of course gave them the worthless *Egyptian*, instead of the sweet *Bassano*. In the cabbage line the old sorts still hold their own. For family use we always preferred the *Winningsstadt* as a second early. In fact, it follows the *Wakefield* so closely that I have shipped them the same week. There is always a time in late summer when cabbage is scarce, and *Follter's Brunswick* fills the space nicely. *Henderson's Succession* promises to do the same and probably a little better.

In lettuce there has been but little advance. The effort of late seems to have been to get hot weather lettuces. Inasmuch as no lettuce is fit to eat grown in hot weather, we do not sympathize with the effort. With some brittle heads of *Boston Market* headed in frames and followed by a little *Curled Simpson* in early spring, we are content to do without lettuce until cold weather makes it good again. (2) Among watermelons

(1) They are very good though.

(2) And the Cos, the only lettuce fit to use as a salad; not mentioned!

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