

## HORTICULTURE

### Essentials in Orchardng

G. H. Vroom, Dominion Fruit Inspector

Very thrifty trees should be selected when setting a young orchard and should be headed not as near home as possible. Do not plant too many varieties. Trees planted with a view to profit should not be set more than 30 feet apart, and should be headed not more than two feet from the ground. This may be called a low-headed tree and is the ideal tree for profit.

Pruning should be done by cutting back the new growths each and every year fully one-half. The lower limbs should be so cut as to leave the terminal bud on the top side of the limb, and, in this way, training the limbs with an upward tendency. Not much

pruning will be necessary apart from the cutting back. By heading a tree low and keeping it well cut back, it will bear earlier and more abundantly. The tree is more easily sprayed and the fruit more easily picked. It is not so apt to be destroyed by wind storms, on account of it being near the ground where the wind has less effect upon it than it does when trees are tall. From the standpoint of labor alone, the low-headed tree is a necessity, as well as a thing of beauty which is always a joy forever.

"Somebody may say, 'What about cultivating around these low trees?' Cultivating can be very easily done until the tree is several years old. After it becomes difficult to get near the trunk with the plough and harrow, leave a strip two feet wide on each side of the trees without cultivation for by this time the roots have extended far beyond the top, and cultivation will be just as effective a little farther away from the trunk as it would be very near it, from the fact that the feeding fibres are out at the ends of the roots. Grass should be cut on this uncultivated strip of land at least three times during the season.

In growing fruit for profit, trees should be thoroughly sprayed at least three times during the season, and four would be better. It neither costs money nor takes time to spray. This sounds strange, but it is true. The outlay in cash for material and team hire is more than made up by the increased quantity and quality of the fruit. Any school boy who knows anything about a good apple can figure that out. The time lost in spraying is more than made up by the difference in the time it takes to grade good, clean, well-grown fruit, and poor, scabby, badly grown fruit. On second thought this must be apparent to any person.

### Onion Culture

Herbert Hachborn, Echo Place, Ont.

To grow onions successfully, the first thing to do is to get the soil properly manured and thoroughly worked. The best method of treating the soil is to spread the manure in the winter or early spring so that the spring rains can wash the fertilizing elements into the soil.

It is a mistake to change onion ground every year. Onion ground should receive about 25 loads of well-rotted barnyard manure to the acre every year; then, by the end of the second or third year, the ground will be in first-class condition for onions. If the ground is changed every year, it will not be in such good condition. I have grown onions on the same piece of ground for the last five years, and had a better crop last year than ever.

As soon as the ground is dry enough plow down the dressing and work it with a disc or scum harrow and allow it to stand for about a week, then work it again, and this working will kill any weeds that may have started. Many growers believe in plowing the ground in the fall, as onions require a hard bottom, but I find that I get just as good a crop by plowing in the spring. Onions are cultivated mostly by hand, and the ground will naturally form a hard bottom.

### KILL THE MAGGOTS

It is well to put a little over-slacked lime and salt on the ground every spring or fall, to prevent maggots from working. When sowing the seed I mixed a little powdered sulphur and salt with it; that also acts as a preventive against maggots.

Care should be taken not to get the ground too rich with nitrogen, as this causes "thick-necks" or scallions. The best thing to do with thick-necks is to bunch and sell them for green onions.

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variety of onion for winter keeping or for shipping. The seed should be sown as early in the spring as possible, in drills fourteen inches apart at the rate of four pounds to the acre.

### Sweet Potatoes

Where can I get sweet potatoes and how should they be cultivated?—T. J. P. Que.

Sweet potatoes for planting are not sold by any Canadian firm. The sweet potatoes that you can purchase at your grocers, probably in your own town, or if not, in Montreal, will do. This crop is not grown commercially in Canada, although some persons have had good success with them in private gardens, particularly Mr. Walter Ross of Picton, and Mr. P. G. Keyes of Ottawa. The tubers may be

started in an out-door hotbed early in spring. In a few weeks the buds will sprout, and, by the time all danger from frost is past, a dense growth of slips will cover the bed. These are removed from the tubers and set by hand in the field or garden in rows three or four feet apart, in the rows. They seem to thrive best in a warm soil, which should be deeply cultivated and well enriched.

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