

Raising Potatoes in New Brunswick.

Editor "The Farmer's Advocate."

Having seen very few articles in "The Farmer's Advocate" recently regarding potato growing, I venture to write of my own method of culture. The growing demand for potatoes, both fall and spring, is causing many farmers here to engage largely in the industry. Some years the price ranges from \$3.00 to \$3.50 per barrel in the spring. Last spring the buyers started in paying 60 cents and gradually raised to \$1.75 per barrel. In the fall they usually sell for from 90 cents to \$1.25 per barrel right out of the field, but \$1.00 and up is considered a paying price when hauled from the field direct, as there is no loss from shrinkage or other causes as there is if kept until the spring.

My method of raising potatoes is as follows: I take a dry, gravelly field, plow as soon as possible after haying, using a skimmer on the plow and plowing about five inches deep. The skimmer takes off the margin of each furrow as it is turned, and thus prevents the grass from growing up between the furrows, which is sure to be the case if the skimmer is not used. The following spring, if I wish to use manure or I should say have it to spare. I spread it on quite heavily, and then put on the disc harrows and go over the field three or four times or enough to make the soil a good mulch, supposing I have to harrow it five or six times, for it pays to have it well worked up. Then I furrow out, having the rows about three feet apart and about three or four inches deep. I then apply a good commercial fertilizer at the rate of one barrel to one barrel of cut seed. If I have not top-dressed with manure I apply a little more fertilizer, always sowing it along in the drill, dropping potatoes at the same time with the planter.

As soon as the plants begin to break the ground I apply more superphosphate at the rate of six hundred pounds to the acre, shaking it onto the young plants and a man following with the horse-hoe covering them up. I keep them under ground as long as I can, but when they get too large to cover I use the cultivator and horse-hoe twice each week, keeping the soil about the plants as fresh as possible until the tops get too large to work among. The rust ruins many potato yields each year, but to avoid it I plant about the 20th of May, and by forcing the growth as much as possible I am troubled very little with rust or, at least, until the growth is done. I used to spray with Bordeaux as a preventive, but did not think it would pay me for the little damage it had ever done. Bordeaux will certainly keep off the rust, and any low, damp fields which are more likely to suffer from the disease it would pay well to use it. For the potato beetle I use Paris green, generally mix it with land plaster or ashes and apply with a shaker when the vines are wet. This is a slow job on large fields, so I usually have to spray in the old way, too, or, at least, a part of my fields. A good way is to apply the plaster or ashes when the plants are small, and when the old hard-shelled beetles first appear. If done that way and the old ones killed one is not much troubled with the pest, and generally one application by spraying is sufficient. However, I don't let the beetles injure the plants even if I have to spray two or three times, for I know by experience that it deducts from the yield in the fall.

Digging is a hustling job, as one generally has a number of pickers and, of course, wants to get all done that he possibly can. The man who operates the digger generally keeps the pickers hustling. If he keeps shaking out plenty of large smooth potatoes, the tired, back-aching pickers will seemingly catch the enthusiasm of the owner and pick like wild fire, especially when they turn out from eighty-five to one hundred barrels per acre. If, however, the crop is more than half rotten, as it sometimes happens, I don't "swear off" on potato raising, for even then I have a little profit and my land is much richer than before, and I try to hear in mind that any crop is liable to fail. However, I am generally rewarded with a heavy yield of sound potatoes on my land, and the profit received is always correspondingly large. There is money in potatoes.

York Co., N. B.

A FARMER.

As soon as the fields are cleared, those intended for cereal crops next season would be the better of light cultivation to start the weeds and retain moisture. Both are important factors in successful agriculture. Weeds must die or crops are sure to suffer, and moisture is always a limiting factor in production.

"Here massa," said the coon as he picked up a skunk, "here's the fellow what stole your onions. Smell his breath."

Fruit Crop Report.

The fruit crop report of the Dominion Department of Agriculture states that there has been a serious falling off in prospects for apples in nearly all growing sections since the early part of June. The full effects of the early spring frosts, the adverse weather at blossoming time and the rather serious development of scab and other fungous diseases, have all resulted in what is known as a heavy "June drop."

Crop reports received to date from the different associations in Ontario, point to the same conclusion. In almost every case the apple prospects are given as poorer than a month ago, due to the causes given below. The fruit in uncared-for orchards is generally reported as an entire failure. Scab is the most disturbing feature, and some reports estimate that 30-50 per cent. of the crop according to variety will be culled from scabbing. As noted in a previous report, the Nova Scotia crop will be seriously lowered in grade, and possibly curtailed in quantity as a result of scab.

Quebec suffered seriously from the early frosts. Ontario districts have all shown a serious decline particularly in winter varieties. British Columbia maintains a fair average for winter apples, but not equal to last year's. In New Brunswick the crop of fall and winter apples is decidedly light, and Prince Edward Island will have only a medium crop, the output being early apples. On the whole, therefore, the Canadian apple crop will not be abundant.

The raspberry crop throughout the Province has been greatly reduced by the continued dry weather. The St. Catharines district reports only 35 per cent. of a crop.

A summary of the last reports sent in shows a much lighter crop of apples than in 1912.

A report of the U.S. Department of Agriculture states briefly that the present apple crop of the country is estimated at one-third of that of last year.

Reports of all apple growing countries in Europe indicate short apple crops.

P. W. HODGETTS.

POULTRY.

It generally pays best to market the poultry while it is young. Prices are higher and the cost of production is less.

A few good layers are far more profitable than a large flock of poor layers. Determine which are the profitable birds in the flock and weed out the others.

These are the days when the production of the infertile egg is a boon to the egg business. If the male birds have not been removed from the laying flock lose no time in attending to them.

Sell Only the Good Eggs.

"Say, there is a nest with seventeen eggs in it in those weeds just at the back of the hen house." How often is just such an expression heard during this season of the year. The natural instinct in the hen is to reproduce her kind and to this end she hides her nest away in a secluded place where she hopes to be able to lay her setting, and incubate them undisturbed by the thrifty housewife, anxious to find every egg, to aid in supplying household necessities. Even if the hen lays every day seventeen eggs means seventeen days, but a month often passes in producing this number. Imagine the condition of these eggs, especially when the male bird has been allowed to run with the flock, and the eggs are fertile, and perhaps the sun strikes directly upon them for several hours each day. They are surely not fit for human consumption. It would be far better to allow the old hen to hatch and raise her flock than to sell the eggs, and injure the egg trade, even though the season is very late for hatching chickens. Perhaps the best thing to do is to feed the eggs to the pigs. Experience has always proven that in the end it pays to market goods in the best possible condition.

Our apple growers have found out that to hold a coveted place in the market their apples must be first-class, of the grade stamped on the package. Just so with eggs. If the best prices are to be obtained for eggs they must be first-class eggs. Eggs which have reposed in the blazing sun for two, three, and even four weeks, with the temperature at least part of the time high enough to commence incubation, are far from first class. Good eggs find a ready market at high prices, and it is only the fact that so many of inferior quality have been finding their way into the market that prices in the past have not been higher. The price of good eggs has

been lower to enable the dealer to break even or make a living profit on the inferior eggs which he was compelled to handle, and which had to be destroyed or sold at a loss. In some sections eggs are now bought on a loss-off basis, which is the only just method. Case count can never prove satisfactory to the producer who markets nothing but strictly high-class uniformly fresh eggs. It will always pay to discard the dozen or so of eggs of questionable age and quality found in the stolen nest. The loss of all these is as nothing compared to the several cents per dozen extra price reckoned on the hundreds of dozens produced by the flock during the year, the increased price being due to the fact that all the eggs are positively guaranteed fresh as shown by the stamp they bear of the date of being produced. Buying eggs on the loss-off basis encourages better hen houses, better flocks, more careful management, and a finer quality of eggs for which the producer invariably receives higher prices. Always remove the male birds from the flock as soon as the breeding season closes. Try to have the chickens all hatched early in the season to hasten this removal, as well as to get greater profits from the birds hatched. Gather the eggs regularly once, and, if possible, twice daily during the very hot weather. Prepare cool suitable nesting places for the hens to prevent as far as possible hiding away of nests and consequent loss. Search diligently each day all probable places of nesting. Discard all eggs about which there is any reason for suspicion as to age. Carefully grade each lot marketed as to size and color and ultimately increase the price of eggs and the profits from the poultry on the farm.

FARM BULLETIN.

Ontario's Highway Commission.

Chas. A. Magrath, W. A. McLean, and A. M. Rankin, M.P.P., have been appointed by the Ontario Government as a commission to look into the matter of the construction and maintenance of public highways in this province. The initial work of the commission will take the form of an investigation to ascertain the needs of the country, and the best means of satisfactorily meeting these. They will study all matters relating to the construction and maintenance of public roads and highways, and in making this study will visit such localities as they see fit. They will take note of the results obtained by various systems and schemes for construction and maintenance, and methods of financing these and will report thereon at the same time recommending the adoption of a plan for constructing, improving, and better maintaining the public highways of the province of Ontario.

The three men chosen are well fitted to undertake the task. Charles A. Magrath, C. E., is chairman of the Canadian section of the International Deep Waterways Commission, and was a few years ago a member of the Dominion Parliament for Lethbridge, Alta. As a civil engineer he has had much experience, and has been connected with road building in Alta., for several years. In all probability he will be made chairman of the Commission.

W. A. McLean, C.E., has been for a number of years provincial highways engineer in Ontario, and has had a wide experience in road construction. At present he is studying road problems and how they are met in Europe. Upon his return this month the Commission will commence its investigation.

A. M. Rankin represents the county of Frontenac in the legislature. He has been president of the Good Roads Association in Ontario, and has always interested himself in all matters concerning road improvement.

It is expected that the work of these men and their report to the Government will result in additions to the present scheme of county road construction, and with the assistance of a Federal grant a system of provincial permanent highways may result. Government assistance towards maintenance is likely to be one of the most helpful results of the scheme. It is little use to build expensive highways, using all the available money and then let them go down because of no funds to maintain them. The work of the Commission will be followed closely by all those interested in good roads. Old Ontario, as well as the newer sections, is to be benefited.

The average value of horses in Ontario in 1911 was \$138.64; of milch cows, \$47.15; of other horned cattle, \$22.56; of sheep, \$6.03; and of swine, \$7.28. In 1901 the average value of horses was \$76.17; of milch cows, \$30.53; of other horned cattle, \$17.33; of sheep, \$5.27; and of swine \$6.77. The average of all live stock per farm holding in 1911 was \$951.69, as against \$571.99 in 1901, being an increase of 66 per cent in the decade.