

If these things contribute to the health of a family, so they do to its enjoyment. How much they cheapen the cost of living, they know best who are careful and industrious enough to grow them.

The present month is the time to get things in order, and as the first work is the making of *Hot-beds*, sash, frames, &c., should be made ready. An amateur gardener, a young friend in Ohio, requests us to give simple directions for making a hot-bed, *just for family use*, unless we consider it a matter so well understood that the room it occupied would be wasted to most of our readers." The many questions we have asked of us by hundreds of all sorts of persons shows us that many are turning their attention to gardening who never gave the subject a thought before, and that the simplest directions in the most ordinary practice are eagerly sought for, and really needed. We therefore comply with the request of our correspondent, giving the system we usually practise, and have before recommended.

Every one should have a hot-bed, if it were only to forward a few plants for the garden. The too prevalent opinion is, that they are expensive and difficult to manage, requiring the skill of the professional gardener. Both suppositions are entirely erroneous. A hot-bed may be constructed by any man of ordinary ingenuity. A frame of about twelve feet long and six wide, which will allow of four sashes, each three feet wide, will be found large enough for any family. It should be made of common two inch plank—the back about three feet high, the front about half that, the ends having a regular slope from back to front. This will give an angle sufficient to throw off rain, and give the full benefit of external heat and light to the plants within. If the beds are narrower, the front must be higher in proportion. The sides and ends are simply nailed to a strong post, four inches square, placed in each corner. For the sash to rest and slide upon, a strip six inches wide is placed upon the frame, the ends morticed or sunk into the sides of the frame so as not to cause a projection. The sashes are made in the ordinary way, but without cross bars; and in glazing, the lights are made to overlap an eighth or quarter of an inch, to exclude rain. Such a frame, costing but a mere trifle beyond the labour, will last for years, and furnish all

the cabbage, tomato, celery, cauliflower, pepper, melon and cucumber plants needed, with a sprinkling of early radishes, &c. Where so large a frame may not be wanted, an old window may be used for sash, and all expense of glazing avoided. One of the sashes is moved down as in admitting air, and another laid off entirely.

Hot-beds should occupy a dry situation, where they will not be affected by the lodgement of water during rains or thaws. They should be exposed to the east and south, and be protected by fences or buildings from the north and north-west.

Where it is intended to merely grow plants for transplanting to the garden, they may be sunk in the ground to the depth of eighteen inches, and in such a case require not more than two feet of manure; but when forcing and perfecting vegetables is designed, a permanent heat must be kept up, and the bed must be made on the surface, so that fresh and warm manure may be added when necessary. A depth of three to four feet of manure will in such cases be wanted.

Manure for hot-beds requires some preparation. It should be fresh manure, placed in a heap, and turned and mixed several times, and producing a regular fermentation. It is thus made to retain its heat a long time; otherwise it would burn and dry up, and become useless.

The mould should be laid on as soon as the bed is settled, and has a lively regular-tempered heat. Lay the earth evenly over the dung about six inches deep. Radish, and lettuce require about a foot of earth. After it has lain a few days it will be fit to receive the seed, unless the mould has turned to a whitish colour, or has a rank smell, in which case add some fresh earth for the hills, at the same time holes should be made by running down stakes, to give the steam an opportunity to escape.

Those who wish to force cucumbers, &c., should begin, in this section, if the weather is favourable, by the 1st of March. For raising plants, the middle is time enough.

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