



Packing Apples in an Ontario Packing House

not produce uniformity and will hardly secure the prize unless the other plates are markedly inferior. Uniformity cannot be too greatly emphasized in fact one would make no mistake in placing this point before all others. Uniformity consists in having each specimen like all others on the plate as far as size, form, color, freedom from blemish, maturity, and so forth, are concerned.

Freedom from blemishes should be rigidly insisted upon. Many will pick up a plate consisting of one or more wormy apples which of itself should be sufficient to put the plate outside of first place, because the prize-winning fruit should be at least No. 1, and a wormy fruit is certainly not. Too often this point is not given enough attention. Small scab spots, scale insects, bruises, broken stems, and so on, may be found on the fruits that are sometimes exhibited. These should never be allowed. They have frequently been the means of losing first prize for otherwise good fruit.

REQUIREMENTS TO OBSERVE

In order to choose good color, one should know what good color is in the variety under consideration. Abnormally high color is not to be desired, but good color for the variety with all other points equally developed, should produce a plate of the right kind of fruit.

Good color in fruits is usually found on specimens grown in the sunlight individually rather than in pairs or clusters. Most fruit have a natural bloom and this should be preserved without any unnecessary rubbing in handling.

Form, which is almost as important as color, should be as nearly normal for that variety as it is possible to have it. One familiar with fruit will know that the majority of varieties have a distinct

form peculiarly their own, and the nearer this form the better.

One will occasionally look for the largest specimens obtainable. These are usually overgrown, coarse and poorly colored and are seldom to be desired. Specimens somewhat above the average in size with a nearly ideal form, high color and free from blemishes, are the most valuable for exhibiting. Just how large or how small they should be will depend on the other factors that go to make the individual. Avoid abnormal specimens. Quality and texture are largely judged by color and finish. Specimens should be mature, or nearly so, at the time of exhibiting, and for this purpose one has recourse to retarding or hastening maturity for the exhibition. Cold storage should be resorted to when necessary to hold the fruit a considerable time. A cool and comparatively dry place will answer for holding the fruit a short time.

The season of the different varieties is a varietal difference and varies somewhat with the different seasons. The fruits on a tree are not all at the same stage of ripeness at one time, and earlier or later specimens can be chosen as required.

In collections one must know the relative value of the different varieties in order to determine what varieties should go in a specified collection. This is largely gained by experience and comparison with the winning collections.

Score cards are excellent as an aid to standardizing our ideas as regards fruit, and can be followed with profit by anyone intending to make his first exhibits. As experience is gained one unconsciously fixes in mind the points that are important and seeks these in making all selections.

The Prairie Markets

F. C. Hart, Department of Agriculture, Toronto

THE conditions which obtain this fall with regard to the western market for Ontario fruit are without precedent. Nobody knows what is going to happen, and it is impossible to prophesy. We can readily understand, however, that for Ontario the west may be the main market. The difficulty is in forecasting what the consumption will be, and how this consumption will be supplied by apple growing sections other than Ontario. Nova Scotia has a large crop this year and their markets across the water will be seriously curtailed. An endeavor is being made to find a market for some of their fruit in South America. If however, quantities from Nova Scotia are sent west it will have an effect on the market.

Financial conditions in the west are reported not to be of the best. This will have an effect on consumption. A good deal depends on the decreased western crop finding a profitable market on account of the war. A large part of the British Columbia apple crop has been offered to England by the Government. The apple growing sections south of the line however, have a good clean crop, and much of this fruit will, as usual, seek our western market. Various possibilities are open. It may be that the prairie provinces will be flooded with apples from Ontario, Nova Scotia and the United States. This together with lack of money in the west may make this market a very poor one. On the other hand conditions may cause a material increase in the price of all food products, in which apples will have a share, although not to the same extent as the more staple articles of food. There seems to be no doubt that the western grain crop will find a good market this year, and this to some extent will relieve the financial strain that at present exists, so that the market for apples may not be as difficult as might be anticipated.

In view then, of the uncertainty of the western market and of the partial stoppage of our usual export market, Ontario growers should ship only their best fruit of their best varieties west this year, and even then it is likely they will have to be satisfied with lower prices, as the expected prices may not be realized if an endeavor is made to bring up the total returns by shipping inferior grades and varieties. In view of the financial conditions, care should be taken to ensure returns. Credits should be closely watched.

Many customers will buy a box who will not buy a barrel. Boxed fruit is more easily handled.—C. J. Thornton, M.P.