

The Farm Flower Garden

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THE prevailing scarcity of farm help owing to so many of our young men being absent fighting for King and Empire, and the security of our Canadian homes, makes it quite possible that the farm lawn and garden may of necessity have to be somewhat neglected until the war is over. Possibly a few practical suggestions as to the easiest and best way to help decorate and brighten up some surroundings with plants and flowers may be acceptable, so that our boys may not return and find the old homestead altogether desolate and forlorn looking. With these facts in view, the following notes on plants specially suitable for the surroundings of farm homes may be of service at the present time.

Climbing Vines.

No plants improve the appearance and make even the most plain and unpretentious building look pretty and more home-like than do trailing vines. The easiest to grow and secure is the *Ampelopsis Quinquifolia* (Virginia Creeper) or the *Ampelopsis Engelmannii*, the last named being of a more self-clinging nature than the first named. Both are quite hardy in Canada. *Ampelopsis Velutina* (Boston Ivy) will cling well to a stone or brick wall, but is not quite as hardy as the two first named.

Hardy Perennials.

A few of the best hardy perennials that may be planted any time during the month of May, are *Rudbeckia* (Golden Glow), *Mim. Meliata* (Sun-flower), *Perennial Larkspur* and *Asiers* or *Milchemas* *Daisies*. These grow to a height of from four to six feet and are suitable for planting as a background.

Hardy Shrubs.

The *Lilacs*, of which there are now such a number of beautiful varieties of numerous colors and shades, ranging from white and lilac to the deepest purple, are still one of the best flowering shrubs grown. Plant a group of four or five kinds of *Lilacs* at the side of the lawn. Their profuse and sweetly perfumed flowers will tend a charm to their surroundings wherever grown.

Another useful class of flowering shrubs that will grow three or four feet in height are the *Spiraea*. Two of the best are *Spiraea Van Houttei* (Bridal Wreath) and *Spiraea Lemotii*, not quite as strong growing as *S. Van Houttei*. *Spiraea arguta*, that grows only two or three feet in height is also a splendid variety.

Flowering shrubs give endless pleasure to the owner with very little care and attention. The vines and shrubs already mentioned should be planted at once, the month of April really being the best time to plant them. An evergreen shrub or two, such as the *Thuja occidentalis* (White Cedar) or the dwarf growing *Thuja* (Hovey), or a plant of the hardy *Juniper* varieties will also help to tend a variety of color to the lawn. Evergreens can be planted until the end of May successfully.

Annual Climbing Flowers.

The best and most effective climber grown from seed is the *Cobea scandens* (Cap and Sancer Vine). Seeds of this may be started now in a hot bed or in the window. Do not plant them outside until well on in June until the weather is quite warm. Give them a good light rich soil, and you will be amply rewarded with a luxurious growth and numbers of their old looking purple and white cup and saucer shaped blooms in the hot months of summer. A small rockery or stump of a tree at the side of the lawn or house covered with these and some climbing *Nasturtiums* makes

one of the most attractive features on the margin of even the most pretentious lawn or garden. The Wild *Cucumber Vine* (*Echinocystis lobata*) is also another good climbing vine. The seeds of this and *Nasturtiums* as well as *Convolvulus* (Morning Glory) can be sown out of doors where they are to grow about the third week in May. A light loam soil, enriched with some well rotted barnyard manure and some black leaf soil from the bush dug in, will be best for these climbers, to get the best results from them.

Gladioli.

These are the easiest to grow, and the most profitable of all summer flowers for the farm garden. The corms (bulbs) can be had at seed stores from \$2.50 per 100, or about 30 c. a corm, up to quite high prices, but good flowers can be had from the cheaper collections. Plant the corms about four inches deep and six inches apart in groups or rows in a sunny open part of the garden. They can be planted any time from the second week in May until early in June, the third week in May being about the best time. Any fairly good garden soil if not of too heavy a nature will suit them very well. They make splendid flowers for cutting from the end of July until quite late in autumn. Cut the spikes if wanted for indoor decoration when two or three of the first large flowers have opened. Gladioli will well repay for any trouble or care given them.

Sweet Peas should be sown at once if not already sown. They like a deep, rich soil and an open, fairly sunny position. Sow the seed about four inches apart in a drill nearly two inches deep.

Put chicken wire or maple brush up for supports about five feet in height. Pick the flowers every second day so as not to allow seed to form. If seed forms the plants will soon stop flowering. Sweet Peas are one of our best garden flowers.

Other Varieties.

Other annuals such as *Asters*, *Phlox Drummondii*, *Ten Week Stock*, *Zinnia*, *Cosmos*, *Nasturtium* and *Mignonette* seed should be sown before the end of May in an open, sunny part of the border. The seed of these should be sown about half an inch in depth and the plants thinned later on from six to eight inches apart according to habit of growth. These annuals just named grow from one to three feet in height. Good dwarf growing annuals for an edging for the border are *Dianthus* (Chinese Pink), *Sweet Alyssum*, *Candytuft*, and *Portulaca*. If you have a very hot, dry spot in the flower garden, dig and rake the ground fine and sow some *Portulaca* seed on the surface and rake it in lightly. During the hottest months of summer you will have a very showy bed of flowers with little or no care and attention. The plants of all these dwarf growing annuals should be thinned to about six inches apart to get the best results.

It is surprising the pleasing effect a few plants and flowers have around a house. These mentioned have been selected with a view to effectiveness with as little care and trouble possible required to obtain a bright and pleasing effect.

Slowly but surely the farmer is coming to the front as the most necessary and most important factor in the material prosperity of the great human family, and with the realization that upon the proper development of the world's agricultural resources rests its future, the conviction has come that the farmers of the future must be educated.



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