

son. It requires a few years for a cull to regain its normal growth, and one can depend on thrifty one-year-olds to keep right on growing, providing they have proper care.

PLANTING

Planting may be done in the fall or spring. If conditions are favorable, the fall is the best, for the reason that currants leaf out and start into growth very early, and if the ground is wet and planting time is postponed, they receive a set back. I have seen them planted out when in full leaf, but they did not do well. By planting in the fall, they become established before winter sets in, and are ready for business in the spring. They should not be pruned until spring.

There are many methods of marking a field out for planting. If one wishes to be very particular, every hole should be marked with a stake, but this method is not usually employed commercially where the money end of the game is the one aimed at.

The following method is easy, cheap, and satisfactory. Having decided the distance the rows are to be apart, place white stakes about five feet long at each end of the field the required distance apart. Then by sighting from each end of the field from these stakes, other long stakes can be placed at intervals down the rows. These stakes are used merely as a guide for the plowman. Plow a furrow out each way and then take another furrow out of the bottom so as to deepen it. A wire on which the distances are marked with solder or tar can then be stretched along the furrow and a hole cleaned out at each mark for the plant. This method reduces shovelling to a minimum.

The plants should be placed fairly deep, as we want them to grow in bush form and to sucker freely. They should be deep enough so that the first few branches are covered with earth at the junction with the main stem.

Patches vary a great deal as to distances of planting. Some people recommend four feet by six feet, others six feet by eight feet. I know of a patch twenty-two years old planted three and one-half feet by seven feet, but the former distance is a little too close for satisfactory cultivation crosswise, and every other bush has since been taken out. Another patch of two acres planted five years ago at three and one-half feet by nine feet is already too close in the rows to allow cross cultivation. The reason for planting the rows at nine feet apart was to allow a power sprayer to be used, as currants should be sprayed for the best success. Also, two-horse implements may be used to advantage. From experience gained from our own mistakes, we have formed a new ideal of planting

distances, and it is this. The bushes should be five feet apart in the row. This gives plenty of room for the bush and also for cross cultivation. The rows should be seven feet and nine feet apart. Starting on one side of the field, plant three rows seven feet apart and then there should be a space of nine feet and



A Heavy Yielding Current

The red currants on the branch here shown were grown by Mr. Wm Dick, Echo Place, Ont. He considers it a better variety, known as Tam O'Shanter, than the Cherry currant. It is an Old Country variety and very prolific.

then another three rows seven feet apart. This method economizes a little space and yet provides a space for the power sprayer. Even if a grower does not intend to use a large sprayer, it is best to have the spaces wide enough to be able to drive a manure waggon through, as driving over the top of the bushes is certain to cause injury to the buds.

CULTIVATION

Thorough cultivation is absolutely necessary for best success. In the fall plow up to the bushes and thoroughly furrow out the patch so that no surface water will remain on the ground.

The patch should then be in good condition to stand the winter. Cultivation should begin in the spring as early as the ground is workable. A good implement to use is the two-horse springtooth cultivator, which works the soil up into fine particles. Cross cultivation can be done with a one-horse springtooth cultivator. The earth and weeds which remain in the middle of the bush can be taken out with a berry fork. After this the patch should be cultivated at least once a week to preserve a dust mulch until after the crop is off, when cultivation should cease. This gives the young succulent wood a chance to ripen before winter sets in, and also generally allows

a beautiful crop of chickweed to develop. If manure is applied it should be put on in the fall and plowed down so as to be partially rotted and available as plant food when growth begins in the spring.

FERTILIZATION

The soil should be kept rich, and for this purpose twenty tons of manure may be applied every three years. This does not seem to be a very heavy application, but judging from what I have seen, it is enough.

Nobody knows much about the benefit of commercial fertilizers on their crops as yet. The manure may be supplemented by a two-eight-ten mixture, but I would not recommend commercial fertilizers alone, as in time the proper mechanical nature of the soil would become injured.

PRUNING

Black currants bear the fruit on wood of the preceding year's growth. As the canes become older the size of the fruit deteriorates, as it is necessary to practise a system of renewal in pruning. Red currants bear their best fruit on two-year-old wood, and canes should not be allowed to remain longer than five years.

Pruning may be done at any time after the leaves fall, but it is usually carried on in late winter. No set rule can be laid down, as many different conditions are met with and a good deal of judgment and commonsense has to be exercised. Canes which have passed the age of greatest productiveness should be removed and young ones allowed to take their place. Broken branches and those too close to the ground should also be removed. Young, vigorous branches should be headed back to encourage the production of fruit spurs all along their length. This is particularly the case with the Fay variety, which has a tendency to produce its fruit spurs near the end of the branches, and when the bushes are loaded heavily, they are liable to be borne to the ground, allowing the fruit to become spoiled.

Young plants must not have much pruning for three years except to cut back about two-thirds of the growth each year to encourage the development of fruit spurs. Pinching back the shoots in the summer is not practiced much, but the patch should be watched for canes that may have the cane-borer. All such should be cut out and burned. The best tool for pruning is a good heavy pair of grape prunes.

The very worst advertisement for Ontario apple growers in the west is the appearance of a poor grade of Ontario barrelled fruit exposed for sale side by side with the beautiful appearance of the boxed goods from Oregon or British Columbia.—C. J. Thornton, M.P.