



Judging Plate Fruit Exhibits

The judges at the last Ontario Horticultural Exhibition in Toronto did not have an easy task placing the awards on the 1,400 plates of fruit exhibited. One of the judges, Prof. J. W. Crow, of Guelph, may be seen with an apple in his hand. Beside and beyond him is another judge, P. J. Carey, Dominion Fruit Inspector.

unscrupulous fertilizer salesman or else has "attempted" to do his own mixing! Speaking as a Nova Scotian and one who credits himself with at least an average practical and scientific knowledge of all kinds of commercial fertilizers, I would strongly advise all Ontario farmers, and in fact all those desirous of increasing their yields, to lose no time in taking advantage of the benefits to be derived from the use of these materials, and would impress upon the reader the necessity of doing his own thinking and not letting a man who is prejudiced against the use of fertilizers influencing him. Let us hear from someone else!

### Making Geraniums Bloom

Wm. Hunt, O.A.C., Guelph, Ont.

For two years past my young geranium plants, in fact they are large plants, refuse to bloom. I have tried all I know to make them do so—H. L.

The main reason for healthy geranium plants not flowering are that they are being grown in unsuitable soil, or have insufficient light and sun, or a too dry or gas-laden atmosphere, or an exhausted soil. Soil that is composed very largely of humus or leaf mould will often cause this trouble. This leaf mould or black soil from underneath trees of itself is not suitable for geraniums, or indeed for but very few pot plants. It induces a too rank, soft growth that does not produce flowers.

The best soil for geraniums—in pots especially—is a soil composed of three parts of well-rotted, fibry-rooted, tough sod about four inches thick, cut from loamy soil where the grass is short, enriched with one part of well-rotted barnyard manure or cow manure. These materials should be piled up out of doors

six or eight months until they are decomposed and ready for use.

If the soil where the sod was taken from is of a very light, loamy nature, no sand for lightening or tempering the soil will be necessary. One part of fine sand mixed with ten or twelve parts of the loam mixture will be an advantage if the sod was taken from a clay loam soil. This compost if properly prepared will suit almost any pot plant, especially geraniums. Loamy garden soil, or loamy subsoil from underneath sod, mixed with the proportion of sand and fertilizer given will make a fairly good substitute soil for pot plants.

Saucers of water placed around and under the plants will improve conditions when they are due to a too dry or gas-laden atmosphere. Saucers or pans of water on the radiators, or a steaming kettle on the stove will be a great help. The dry atmosphere of most dwelling-houses is often the main cause of troubles with house plants of all kinds. For a plant that has become too full of roots and the soil exhausted, repotting the plant into a larger-sized pot, or an application of some liquid fertilizer, are the best remedies to apply. If the plant has become tall and unsightly looking, it is best to treat it as described farther on in this article.

### RENOVATING OLD PLANTS

Large plants will probably have to undergo a process of renovation before they will flower successfully. This is done by cutting the plants back severely to a part of the stem where the wood is moderately hard and woody, and by removing nearly or quite all the remaining foliage. Keep the soil barely moist until the young growth starts, which will usually be in four or five weeks from cutting back. Then take the plant out of the pot, remove the whole of the old soil without injuring the roots. Cut off nearly half the length of the roots, and pot the plant into a very sandy soil in a one or two size smaller pot. Use half sand and half potting soil with some broken pieces of flower pot for drainage. This is called "potting back," and is done to get a new root system started.

When the plant has developed young shoots with five or six large leaves on, and the root system is well started, repot the plant into a two size larger pot in good potting soil, as described in the first part of this article. Place nearly an inch of broken flower pot or similar material in the bottom of this larger pot for drainage. Do not disturb the roots of the plant in the operation, only to remove the old drainage. Pack the soil fairly firm when repotting the plant. Water the plant well once and set in a not too sunny window for a time, temperature about sixty-five degrees. Do

not give it too much water until well started into growth, keeping the soil moist but not too wet after the first watering. Later on more water can be given.

When the soil in this large pot has become exhausted, and the pot fairly filled with roots, give it some liquid fertilizer once every week or two. "Bon-ora," sold at seed stores, is a good fertilizer for pot plants. Old geraniums in pots that have become tall and unsightly looking can be renovated at any season of the year by the method described when proper conditions can be given them. For spring and summer flowering the plants may be cut back from now on. For winter flowering it is best to cut them back in July or August out of doors, taking them into the window early in September before frost.

### The Fuchsia

H. Gibson, Fergus, Ont.

One of the best summer flowering plants is the fuchsia. A well-grown specimen is a sight worth going a long way to see.

Easy to cultivate and of extremely rapid growth, it is a plant that is well suited for windows or for the decoration of the verandah in the summer. They do extremely well exposed to the free air in the latter position, but care should be taken to protect them from strong winds, as the branches are brittle and easily broken. An eastern aspect is the one to be preferred; the sunshine of the early part of the day suits it much better than that of midday. Placed in a western position the leaves will curl as if scorched under the influence of the afternoon sun.

The month of March is the best time to start the fuchsia into growth. Bring them from the cellar or other frost-proof place in which they have been stored for the winter, put them in the light, and give water in small quantities, increasing the supply as the plants show signs of growth. As soon as it can be ascertained where the new branches are going to be, cut away at least half of the old top. Repot as soon as a sturdy growth is assured, using a soil compost of loam, leafmould, and a liberal addition of sand.

As the pots become filled with roots, they should be moved on to a larger size so that the plants are not checked in any way. A large specimen will require a ten-inch pot. Young plants should be potted on, as they fill the pots with roots. Older plants will not require moving on as often.

A plant which keeps up its reputation as an annual fit to stand any kind of weather is the corn flower *Cyanus Minor*.)