

THE PEACH.



THE Kansas State Horticultural Society has published a volume on the peach, giving very complete directions for planting, care, gathering, and marketing this fruit. A considerable amount of the matter is unsuited to Ontario, but we make a few extracts of portions that are applicable to our conditions.

SOIL.

The soil for a peach orchard should, if possible, have a good clay subsoil, naturally well drained, and be rich enough to produce a fair crop of wheat or corn to the acre.

Some people appear to think that if they have an old field that is so exhausted it will not produce profitable farm crops any longer, and is washing into gullies, there is the place to plant an orchard. No greater mistake can be made. If you are not willing to devote good land to the orchard, our advice would be to let the business alone. In the region of country for which I am writing we find that the so-called red lands, as well as the grey, and those that are composed of sandy loam with a clay subsoil, all produce first-class peaches.

PREPARATION.

The entire surface should be plowed deeply before planting; then check each way with a plow, planting where the furrows cross each other. Dig the holes sufficiently large to admit the roots without cramping. In locations where the subsoil is poor, it is advisable to dig a hole, say three feet in diameter and eighteen inches deep, and then fill up with good surface soil, leaving the excavation that is to receive the tree of such a depth that the tree, when planted, will be about the same depth, or a little deeper, than it grew in the nursery. The proper distance apart for planting is from sixteen to twenty feet each way. In orchards with sloping or uneven surface we generally recommend locating the rows as near a horizontal

line as practicable, about eighteen feet apart, and the trees in the rows sixteen feet apart.

VARIETIES.

The selection of varieties for the commercial orchard is a point that is vital to its success and in making this selection there are a number of considerations that demand our attention. While I do not condemn new varieties, yet it is wisdom on the part of the commercial grower to "touch them lightly" until he has tested them himself, or they have been tested by others in soils and locations similar to his own. Then there is the matter of hardiness in fruit, and consequently greater certainty in producing regular and paying crops. For while a variety may be beautiful in appearance and first-class in flavor, it may, on account of its unproductiveness, be unworthy of a place in the commercial orchard. The grower should also study the markets that he wishes to supply, that he may learn what style of peaches is most in demand in these markets. He should also study the production of other peach centres with which he may be brought in competition. For instance, if some other favored locality sends, at a certain season, large quantities of some leading, first-class variety to market, it would not be wise to endeavor to compete with them at the same season with any variety in the smallest degree inferior to what they are sending in such large quantities to the market.

The commercial grower should therefore confine his list to a few varieties. If the fruit is being grown for a home market, then, of course, a great range would be admissible. . . . A good reason for planting only a few varieties is that this will enable the grower to have his fruit carried to the market at less expense. Having large quantities to ripen at once, he can ship by car-loads. The difference in cost between this method and express, affords quite a profit in itself. If I were planting an orchard of only 5000 trees, and had no one at the same