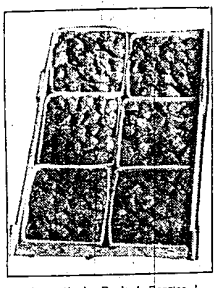
Orchard Information

WAY TO PICK STRAWBERRIES

Boxes Should Neither Be Too Full or Too Slack—Keep Out Leaves, Sticks and Trash.

(Prepared by the United States Department of Agriculture.)

Properly filled strawberry boxes are neither slack nor so full that the berries are likely to be crushed—they are full enough to look attractive and they are still well filled after being transported to the market, sold and delivered to the consumer, say specialists of the bureau of markets of the United States Department of Agriculture. The boxes should not be



Attractively Packed Berries.

filled so full that there is danger of many berries being crushed by the cover. Slack-filled boxes, on the other hand, are as difficult to sell, if not more so, than those in which the berries are beginning to decay.

The boxes must contain no leaves, sticks, or other trash. Boxes in the second, third, or four h layers of the crates must be as well filled as those in the top layer. Some sections of the country it is said, still cling to the practice of "facing" or placing the berries in the top layer on their sides, all pointed one way, or placed with the stem of the berry down in order to add to the attractiveness of the package.

This makes a very attractive package of fruit, and there seems, it is said, to be no harm in the practice until the tendency creeps in of "topping" or putting the best berries on the face of the box. Many shipping associations claim that unless strawberries are very high in price, the extra labor cost of "facing" the boxes of berries is not warranted. "Topping," or placing the best berries in the top layer of the box and the poorer, or smaller berries, in the bottom, is not allowed by the best shipping associations.

DWARF TREES MOST DESIRED

Particularly Adapted for Small Areas and Favored Because of Earliness of Bearing.

The practice of using dwarf instead of the ordinary standard trees is more or less prevalent among prospective planters of small areas. Dwarf trees are produced, say fruit-growing specialists of the United States Department of Agriculture, by propagating them on certain stocks or roots which, because of their inherently restricted habit of growth, restrict also the size of the tops that have been grafted or budded on them.

While earliness of bearing and exceptionally high quality of the product are often claimed for dwarf trees, some of the best experience in this country has failed to substantiate the latter claim. Dwarf apple and pear trees have their place, however, in the garden or yard, especially under intensive methods of culture, where the space is too small to admit readily of the development of standard trees.

MOST IMPORTANT OF SPRAYS

With Apples, Pears, Plums and Cherries Application After Petals Fall Is Most Essential.

The standard spraying solution for fruit trees is five quarts of lime-sulphur and two pounds of lead arsenate paste in 50 gallons of water. If only one spraying is to be given, the most important time is when 95 per cent of the petals have fallen. If this spraying is done thoroughly, fully three-fourths of the worms will be prevented. However, it is generally supposed to pay to repeat the spraying again three weeks later. The third spraying may be given the last week in July or the first week in August. With apples, pears, plums and cherries the most important spraying of all is that given just after the petals have fallen.

GOOD PROFIT IN RASPBERRY

Responds Remarkably Well to Careful Culture and Is Adapted to Young Orchards.

The raspberry is one of the fruits that have been commanding very good prices in the past few years. It is a fruit that responds remarkably well to careful culture and attention and is adapted to growing in young orchards if properly managed.

—THE—
FARMINGTON ENTERPRISE
GEORGE C. MARTINDALE
Editor and Publisher
Farmington - - Michigan

Farm and Garden Page

Timely Articles on Agricultural, Dairying, Poultry and Horticultural Topics of Direct Interest and Benefit to Many Readers in Farmington and Its Surrounding Districts.

AIM TO PREVENT PLANT DISEASES

Much Could Be Saved to Future Crops if Care Is Taken to Avoid Infected Plants.

CROP ROTATION IS HELPFUL

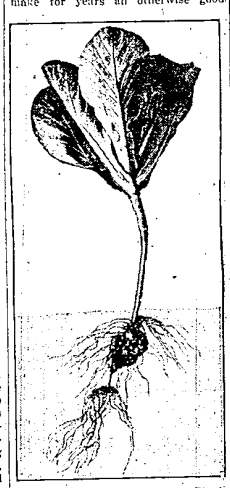
Setting of Few Clubrooted Plants May Give Start That Will Ruin Garden for Years—Wilts Are Easily Transmitted.

(Prepared by the United States Department of Agriculture.)

What a lot might have been saved if we could have applied to crop production 20 years ago what we know now about the control of plant diseases. And equally true, what a lot we could save in future crops if we would only apply the knowledge that we have. "Future crops" is written advisedly, for the introduction of a disease into new soil may affect for years to come the crops planted on that soil unless radical and extensive measures are taken to eradicate the disease from the soil, say specialists of the United States Department of Agriculture.

Infests Soil for Many Years.

Take, for example, the case of clubroot of the crucifers; i. e., cabbage, cauliflower, mustard, etc. The setting of a few clubrooted plants may give the start that in a single season will make for years an otherwise good



Clubroot on Young Cabbage Plant.

garden unsuitable for cabbage and other crucifers. A case is known in which a cabbage patch in Pennsylvania was abandoned 27 years ago because of the prevalence of clubroot. When cabbage was again planted the crop was badly affected. The disease had been kept alive during all those years by wild mustard and other crucifers that had grown upon the land as weeds.

Clubroot is not manifested in the top in early stages of development, but may always be seen on the roots if it is present at the time the plants are taken from the seed bed. An abnormal swelling in any part of the root is an indication of the presence of this disease. In its later stages the swelling may involve the entire root, as shown in the illustration and will invariably cause the production of a poor head.

Another example is that of root-knot of a wide variety of plants, so injurious in the southern part of the country and occurring also in some of the more northern states. It would be impossible to state how much root-knot there was in the South 50 years ago. But it is certain that the disease is becoming more wide spread every year. This distribution is due largely to its transmission by diseased plants.

Clubroot in Advanced Stage.

Some years ago a carload of potatoes was shipped from one state to another to be used for seed. Too late it was discovered that the potatoes were infested with root-knot producing eelworms, which were, of course, scattered far and wide by this means. While this may not have been the first introduction of the disease into that state, it was at least one of many introductions which have resulted in the wider and wider spread of root-knot and the loss of millions of dollars.

Set Only Clean Plants.

Tomatoes, tobacco, celery, peppers, figs, peaches, and many other plants are likewise instrumental in carrying this disease. As indicated by the name, its principal manifestation is on the roots of plants in the form of swellings or knots. Severe infestation will result in the yellowing and dwarfing and often the death of the plant.

Wilts constitute another group of diseases that may be transmitted to new soil by means of diseased plants. They are manifested by a wilting of the whole plant. These, and the ones referred to above, may be and ought to be kept out of new land. The way to do it is to set out only clean plants.

The way to keep the plants clean is to sterilize the seed beds. If steam pressure is available, the inverted-pan method described in Farmers' Bulletin 990, is best. Such steam pressure may often be had in the greenhouse from the boiler used for heating. For outside seed beds any kind of a steam boiler, either on a stationary outfit or a steam traction engine, will furnish plenty of pressure. If steam pressure is not available, good results can be accomplished by the hot-water treatments advocated in Department Bulletin 818.

ROOF ON POULTRY BUILDINGS

Decided Advantage to Unroll Prepared Material and Let in Light and Sunshine.

When putting prepared roofing on poultry houses, it is a decided advantage to unroll the roofing and to let in light and sunshine for a few hours. The roofing expands from the warming and lies smoother when applied to the roof. The inside of the roll is cooler than the outside air, and so if not placed in the sun before application, it will expand after nailing and produce wrinkles.

DUCKS INTENDED FOR MARKET

Fowl Should Be Fed on Fat-Forming Food During Last Three Weeks of Its Life.

The duck intended for market should be fed on fat-forming food during the last three weeks of her life. A good ration for this is meat scrap, one part; wheat bran, one part; wheat middlings, two parts; corn meal, three parts—all by weight. A small percentage of grit and one part green feed should be added.

Feeding Place for Pigs.

Suckling pigs begin to eat when they are three or four weeks old and a feeding place should be provided for them so that they can get the grain without being crowded away by the larger hogs.

Best to Sow Oats Early.

Oats do best in cool, humid weather. It is well to sow early. It also has been proved by experiments that early sown oats produce a larger yield and a better quality of grain.

Young Tomato Plant.

POULTRY MANURE QUITE VALUABLE

Accumulation Beneath Perches of Fowls Receives Only Occasional Attention.

IS FREQUENTLY THROWN AWAY

Is Worth 30 to 40 Cents Per Fowl Per Year If Properly Cared For—Especially Rich in Nitrogen and Phosphorus.

(Prepared by the United States Department of Agriculture.)

The average poultry raiser attaches little or no value to the manure produced by his flock. Its gradual accumulation beneath the perches of his fowls receives only occasional attention, in many instances, and even when cleaned out more frequently is thrown away. When its removal becomes necessary he considers it one of the unavoidable and unpleasant evils that go with the business.

Rich in Nitrogen and Phosphorus.

But poultry manure has a very real value, and may become a profitable by-product of the plant. It has been

A Roosting Platform Helps to Conserve the Night Droppings.

determined by the Maine experiment station, working in co-operation with the United States Department of Agriculture, that the average night droppings of the medium breeds amount to 30 pounds a year for one fowl. On this basis 100 fowls would produce 3,000 pounds, or 1½ tons. The analyses of this manure show it to be especially high in two of the three principal fertilizing elements. If the plant food contained in a ton of average fresh poultry manure were bought at the price paid, usually, for it in the form of commercial fertilizers, the outlay would be about $10.

Taking into account the fact that the quantity of manure produced in the daytime is at least equal to that produced at night the specialists find that one average hen produces about 60 pounds of manure in a year. However, only the night droppings are available for use, as the day droppings are widely scattered over the yards and ranges. The night droppings from 1,000 hens would be worth about $150 a year. As hen manure, as it usually is cared for, contains only about one-half its original value, the loss through this form of neglect must be very large for the entire country.

It can be handled most satisfactorily if mixed with dam to remove stickiness in the summer. In the winter it should be mixed with a fair proportion of loam, sawdust, or coal ashes, sifted dried earth, land plaster, or gypsum. Wood ashes and lime should never be used as they set free the nitrogen, which must be conserved.

Keep in a Dry Place.

To put manure on the ground in the winter would mean to lose one-half or more of its value. The better plan is to store it in barrels or boxes until time to use on a growing crop. When stored this way the container should have several large holes bored in it to admit air. Some plants having several thousand fowls have large bins of concrete for saving this manure. Untreated, a large part of the nitrogen escapes into the air as ammonia gas.

The Maine experiment station recommends using with every 30 pounds of poultry manure 10 pounds of sawdust, 16 pounds of acid phosphate, and 8 pounds of kainit. The acid phosphate and the kainit prevent the loss of nitrogen, and the sawdust absorbs the excess moisture. If sawdust is not obtainable, dried earth in about the same proportion may be substituted. After being treated in this way the manure should be put in a sheltered place until used. If the materials are kept handy the business of mixing soon becomes a routine task.

FEEDING PLACE FOR CHICKS

Excellent to Have Coop Arranged to Permit Young Fowls to Enter, but Keep Hens Out.

A good plan is to have a feed-coop which the young chickens can enter but the old hens cannot, and always have some cracked wheat, oats, or cornmeal and corn-chops in it. You will be surprised how fast the chicks will grow if they have such a feeding place while on range.

Sunflowers for Chickens.

Many poultry raisers have found that it pays to raise sunflowers for their chickens. They make excellent winter feed, and at the same time provide a splendid shade for the chickens in summer.

Valuable Forage Crop.

Those who have grown rape consider it a valuable forage crop. It may be sown at any time during the growing season or even later for fall pasture.

REDUCE CHICK LOSS BY CONFINING HENS

Close Coops at Night to Keep Out Rats, Cats, Etc.

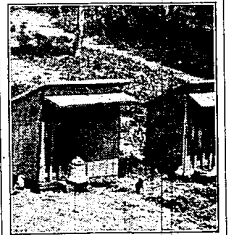
When Mother Is Given Range Young Birds Are Chilled by Wet Grass and Die—They Must Be Kept Growing Constantly.

(Prepared by the United States Department of Agriculture.)

Chicks hatched during the winter should be brooded in a poultry house or shed while the outside weather conditions are unfavorable; after the weather becomes settled they should be reared in brood coops out of doors. It is best to make brood coops so that they can be closed at night to keep out cats, rats, and other animals, and enough ventilation should be allowed so that the hen and chicks will have plenty of fresh air.

In most broods there are one or two chicks that are weaker than the others, and if the hen is allowed free range the weaker ones often get behind and out of hearing of the mother's cluck and call. In most cases this results in the loss and death of these chicks, due to becoming chilled. If the hen is confined, the weaklings can always find shelter and heat under her, and after a few days may develop into strong, healthy chicks.

The loss in young chicks due to allowing the hen free range is undoubtedly large, say poultry specialists in the United States Department



Coops Used on Government Farm at Beltsville, Md.

of Agriculture. Chicks frequently have to be caught and put into their coops during sudden storms, as they are apt to huddle in some hole or corner where they get chilled or drowned. They must be kept growing constantly if the best results are to be obtained, as they never entirely recover from checks in their growth.

INFERTILE EGGS KEEP BEST

Get Rid of All Roosters as Soon as Possible After Hatching Season, or Separate Them.

The poultry flock can get along perfectly well without the rooster just as soon as you are through saving hatching eggs. The sooner the male birds are taken from the flock and marketed, or killed, or placed in separate runs, the better. Infertile eggs are always best for market; for the summer market this holds doubly true. The infertile eggs keep better than the fertile ones. One more thing: The male birds will not increase egg production one whit; they are that many extra mouths to feed while the hens are hustling to pay their own keep.

Mulching Potatoes.

It is doubtful if it pays to mulch potatoes when everything is taken into consideration. The mulching, however, will increase the yield somewhat and will result in a better quality of potatoes produced.

POULTRY CACKLES

REDUCE POULTRY FEED BILL

Utilization of Table Scraps and Kitchen Waste Is Most Wise and Economical Plan.

(Prepared by the United States Department of Agriculture.)

If the chicken flock is to prove an economic success, it must be fed cheaply. All table scraps and kitchen waste should be utilized.

Scraps of meat or leftover vegetables which cannot be utilized in any other way make excellent feed. Many other waste products, such as beet tops, turnip tops, carrot tops, potato parings, onion tops, watermelon and cantaloupe rinds, the outside leaves of cabbages, waste lettuce leaves, and bread and cake crumbs are relished by the hens and can be used to good advantage.

In saving the scraps and waste it is well to separate the portions adapted for feeding to the flock and place these in a receptacle or pail of their own.

Meat Scraps and Waste Vegetables Make Excellent Feed for Chicken Flock.

Decomposed waste material or moldy bread or cake should never be saved to feed to the hens, as it is harmful to them and may cause serious bowel trouble. Sloppy materials, such as dishwater, should not be thrown into their pail. It is also useless to put in such things as banana peels or the skins of oranges, as these have little or no food value.

Any sour milk which is not utilized in the house should be given to the chickens. This should be fed separately, however, either by allowing the hens to drink it or by allowing it to clabber on the back of the stove and feeding it in that condition. When the family's table waste is not sufficient for feeding the flock, it is usually possible to get some of the neighbors who keep no hens to save material suitable for feeding. Many people are glad to do this if a small pail in which to put the waste is furnished.

Table scraps and kitchen waste are best prepared for feeding by running them through an ordinary household food chopper or meat grinder. After the material has been put through the grinder it is usually a rather moist mass, and it is well to mix with it some corn meal, bran or other ground grain until the whole mass assumes a crumbly condition. The usual method is to feed the table scraps at noon or night, or at both times, as may be desired, in a trough or on a board. All should be fed that the hens will eat up clean, and if any of the material is left after one-half or three-quarters of an hour, it should be removed. If allowed to remain it may spoil and be very bad for the hens.

POULTRY NOTES.

A hen is in her best condition only when she is seen industriously at work.

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Nothing will more quickly make scrubs out of good stock than scrub treatment.

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Perches should be built low and arranged so they can easily be taken out and cleaned.

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Uniformity in the size of eggs can best be obtained by keeping one standard breed of hens.

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If chicks are overfed, they sometimes become so fat that their legs are incapable of supporting their bodies.

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Every poultryman should lay in a supply of alfalfa and clover for his fowls during the winter. Green feed is as essential as grain.

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If every farm flock could be rid of the drones and worthless members that lay few eggs, there would at once be an amazing increase in profits.

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One of the greatest drawbacks to successful poultry-keeping is the attempt of many folks to crowd 60 fowls where there is only room for 25.

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One of the greatest mistakes in feeding poultry is that of giving an exclusive grain ration. Meat, greens, vegetables, etc., should all have a place.

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Poultry raising is similar to farming in that it is not so much the number of acres owned, but the number properly handled that gives the profits. Small, well cared for flocks of fowls always bring the best returns.