

PLANTING

Garden Contest Among School Children Holds Interest

Organizations of Businessmen Foster plan to Give City Boys and Girls Opportunity to Test Cultural Methods on Small Plots of Land, the Results of Effort to be Shown in Contest Exhibit at the Armory in June; Thousands of Children Have Entered in the Unique Competition.



By Marshall N. Dana.

NOT long ago I saw a remarkable view. It was of an un-cultivated back yard that was dissolved marvelously into an orderly garden of cabbages and tomatoes, with ornamental vines growing against what had been the bare back of the house. A boy 12 years old had done the work. The total cost had been his labor and 30 cents.

Then I got to thinking about a trip I took some time ago. It was a little inspection tour of the vacant lots of Portland. The president of the woman's club was along. We would be looking down a prize-winning street with spreading shade trees and well kept lawns when suddenly the eye would be arrested by a lot that looked like a wart on a graceful hand. The vacant lot seemed to project itself into prominence importantly and with an assertion beyond that of any of the well trimmed lawns.

And then, I have been remembering a window box. And it was high up on the fourth floor of the tenement. A little girl tended it and she was growing a tomato plant whose fruit was a pride and a prize winner. She didn't have a back yard or a vacant lot, but she had the window box and she was doing her best to contend with others more fortunate.

Novel Gardening Test.
For contest is the idea of which I write. The contest is for the boys and girls of Portland. The work is being done through the 52 schools of the city and the reports from the principals and teachers give warrant for saying that 10,000 school children have entered the garden growing competition that will culminate in a great city-wide exhibit at the Armory, Saturday, June 15.

Each of the schools will be given a space and each will vie with the other schools to have the most attractive exhibit of the best vegetables. All contestants will individually enter into the exhibit of the school he or she attends. In this way the individual helps support the school pride and at the same time the exhibit is individually considered in the awarding of the 400 or so prizes to be given, first, second and third, for the best radishes, beets, cabbages, peas, beans and so forth. This plan was submitted to the school board by a committee from the business organizations of the city.

Directors Approve Plan.
After it had been thoroughly reviewed for its merits by Superintendent Rigler of the schools and heard in detail by the teachers' committee of the school board, composed of R. L. Rubin and N. Fleischner, it was formally approved, and the superintendent was asked to recommend it to all schools. The organizations interested are: Re-

Top—Oregon Grape, becoming popular for decorating purposes; Madame Souper roses. Oval—Sprig of lilac. Bottom—Frau Karl Druech-ki rose.

tail Merchants' association, Commercial club, Progressive Business Men's club, Rotary club, Realty Board, Ad club, Retail Grocers' association, Bankers' association.

Already there has been a great amount of work accomplished. In the lengthening spring days the boys and girls are pling their hoed and rakes, have been watching the first little blades of green creep up through the brown earth.

Interesting Many Children.
If the purpose of the plan and the organization is fulfilled in Portland there will be 10,000 boys and girls, the men and women of tomorrow, who will understand the true dignity of cultivation of the soil, who will know the joy of making things grow, who will take lessons of strength and endurance and manliness and womanliness from the soil whose hands have been trained and whose hearts are right.

The sub-committee on prizes was made up of the chairman from all the other committees appointed by the business organizations. This committee resolved that the school making the best general exhibit should receive a challenge cup worth \$25; that the best garden in any district should be awarded a first prize of \$25, that there should be a second prize of \$15 for the next best and a prize of \$10 for the best bed. Awards in this latter instance are to be made on a basis of neatness and cultivation as well as on the quality of production.

Prizes for Individual Exhibits.
Then there are to be prizes for the best individual exhibits at the Armory, and there will be prizes valued in each

instance \$5, \$3 and \$2, for first, second and third places for the best vegetables. That no one entering may remain unnoticed for exhibit of merit there will be an award of a pennant, and for every one who enters a nicely engraved certificate, for each exhibit not drawing a special prize.

By bulletin sent from the office of Superintendent Rigler the school principals were asked to make suggestions and they have been forthcoming from 30 of the 52 schools. Each principal furnishes a list of 10 citizens who will be asked by the committee to serve in an advisory capacity for their neighborhoods.

Labor and Devotion Given.
It will be seen that the organization for a city the size of Portland involves a great amount of labor and not a little devotion. But it is worth it. From the first President Kerr of the Oregon Agricultural college, and Director Heisel of the extension department, have been the greatest assistance, and State Superintendent of Schools L. R. Alderman has given days to the Portland plan. There is a plan for the state of similar nature with an organization of the schools in each county, all to culminate in a state-wide exhibit next fall in connection with the state fair.

In Portland, when the time comes, there will be a day of inspection, when the advisory committee will visit the gardens of their respective districts and see how the vegetables are growing. All of this is for the stimulating of earth education and to prove that city boys and girls can grow gardens just as well as their country cousins.

very wide range in the makeup of soils. Some will be largely composed of clay with but little sand. There are heavy garden soils and it will be necessary to spend considerable time in pulverizing these in order to get them fine. Other soils will be more largely composed of sand and will be much easier to handle in the preparation of a seed bed. The physical makeup of the soil will determine very largely the proper time at which to do the first early stirring in the spring.

removal the soil may be quickly put into proper condition and be ready to produce another such short season crop. There should be part of the home garden therefore that will be reserved for the constant production of short succession crops. In this way there is a tendency toward maximum production and an economical use of the soil.

Exercise Care in Planting.
Many hardy vegetables as peas, spinach, radish, lettuce, can be sown in the spring just as soon as the ground has been well prepared. This will usually be from the middle of March to the middle of April. The kind of soil found in the home garden will be the governing factor as regards time of early seeding outside of weather conditions. Tender seeds such as cucumbers, beans, sweet corn, cantaloupes and winter squash should not be dropped until the ground is warmed, ordinarily about the 1st to the 15th of May.

To get an even germination, important factors in seed growing will be the correct depth of sowing and a careful covering and firming of the seed. Even furrows will have to be made and straight rows will not only add vastly to the appearance of the garden but also will make cultivation easier. Lettuce, spinach and radish may be covered to half inch deep; such small seeds as carrots, parsnips and celery must be but lightly covered, barely one fourth inch, while peas, beans, cucumbers and squash may be sown from one to one and a half or two inches.

Soil Must Be Fertile.
Vegetables must grow steadily to be of the best quality and to this end there must not only be a fine mechanical condition of the soil but it must also be "rich," i. e., contain plenty of available plant food. There is not much danger of having the soil over fertilized for vegetable growing except possibly in one or two cases where there may be trouble experienced in some plants making too much vine growth at the expense of fruit as is sometimes found in tomato growing.

Oregon garden soils are for the most part naturally very productive, but some form of fertilization will have to be used to keep up the supply of plant food which is constantly being drained. There is no better general fertilizer than short, well rotted stable manure. Chicken manure is valuable in giving a stimulating effect to vegetable crops, but it must be used carefully, otherwise owing to its concentrated form it will cause a burning of the plants. It would be well to dilute with soil or well rotted stable manure in the proportion of two parts of the former to one part of the chicken manure and then apply the mixture sparingly. Leaves are valuable for the garden in furnishing humus or organic matter. Wood ashes should also be applied in the spring, working them into a beneficial effect. Lime is valuable for its physical assistance to the soil as well as being more or less of a deterrent of some insect pests and also making the soil "sweet."

Handle Manure Intelligently.
Just previous to working over the garden in the spring the manure should be evenly spread over the ground and then thoroughly incorporated with the soil by being deeply spaded or plowed in. There is great danger of long, straw, coarse manure having more of an injurious rather than a beneficial effect, especially if it is but poorly incorporated, in that it will often act as a barrier to proper capillary action and cause rapid moisture evaporation.

If it is desired to give the plants an impetus, chicken manure can be applied as suggested above, or a light application of a commercial fertilizer, such as nitrate of soda, may be made. It will be found quite valuable in causing plants to make a quick leaf growth and therefore is useful for lettuce, spinach, celery, young beets, early rhubarb and asparagus. But a small handful is sufficient for each individual plant. The fertilizer is very readily soluble and should be used sparingly and carefully, in such a way as to prevent the salt from coming into contact with any part of the plant as burning may follow.

Tricks in Planting.
It is most important to compact the soil thoroughly around the roots of each plant that is set in the field. Following this some loose soil should be drawn over to prevent rapid moisture evaporation. Tomatoes should be set four feet apart each way, or if the plants are to be trained to stakes and pruned, they may stand two feet apart in rows four feet apart. Celery should be transplanted six inches apart in the row, with a distance of 30 inches between the rows. Great care should be taken in transferring celery plants from the frames to the field to see that they do not dry out or wither. If the soil at time of setting is inclined to be rather dry the plants should be well watered at planting time, a layer of loose dry soil being brought up to the plants soon afterward. Level transplanting should always be applied in growing the early celery to be later bleached with boards. The tomato plants will be very easily handled in transplanting if they have been grown in the paper or cardboard pots or strawberry boxes.

Plant Study Profitable.
The most successful gardeners study plants. In addition to the information from books and papers which contain information other people have collected, study the plants themselves. When both sources of information are used one is apt to become a good gardener.

Prune Berry Vines.
It will pay you well to remove raspberry and blackberry canes soon after bearing, for they draw from the roots some of the sap that should go to the new canes. Whenever the old canes are cut, the new ones make a more vigorous growth, are in better condition to go through the winter, and bear a large crop the following year.

Clean Up the Yard.
Clean up all the rubbish about your yard. What matter that will not decay cart away or burn. Do not let rubbish lay around the grounds. It makes a breeding place for pests as well as has an unsightly appearance.

Shaping the Fruit Tree.
The fruit trees set last spring will need some attention all the season. Only a little pruning is necessary. Keep in mind, as the ideal tree; the one with the low head and vase form with open center.

If cabbages ripen too fast and threaten to burst, give the more mature heads a half twist, without pulling them out of the ground.

The tools we borrow are our guests, and we should treat them accordingly.

Making New Lawns

Care in Getting Grass Started Right Insures Splendid Results Every Time.

The fact must be faced that making a good lawn is not a simple matter. Realizing this truth, one is more likely to go about the work of preparing and seeding the ground with a degree of careful attention that will bring its reward in fine, green, velvety turf. A carelessly made one quickly runs out.

It is of the greatest importance that the ground should be thoroughly pulverized—made just as fine as plowing and spading, dragging and raking can make it. The surface soil should be loosened for a depth of five or six inches; and if there is a hard subsoil, it should be broken up, but not brought

to the surface. Sometimes, when a new house is erected, the soil brought for the cellar is scattered over the ground. To try to grow a lawn in such soil is to waste both time and money.

Early spring is the best time for sowing seed. In any case, a still day should be chosen, and it is a fact worth remembering that the stiller part of the day is between 5 and 9 o'clock in the morning.

It is best for the average man to purchase one of the prepared lawn mixtures, telling his seedman whether his land is exposed to full sunshine, or partly shaded. There are different mixtures for different situations. If the land is poor, a generous application of fertilizer may be given, using one of the lawn and garden brands, and raking it well into the earth before the seed is sown.

Another plan is to scatter pulverized manure over the lawn, as soon as the grass is well up. A little feeding will be needed each year; but barn yard manure should be avoided. It is almost sure to be full of weed seeds, and to make no end of trouble for the gardener. Sheep manure and the commercial fertilizers are much better. An application of hardwood ashes is also beneficial, if given in the spring, as it tends to impart a lustrous green to the lawn.

Most established lawns require a little mending each spring, where bare patches appear. The best method is to rake over these patches, and to mix a

little bone dust into the soil. A day or two later, another scattering with the rake may be given, and seed watered thickly, choosing a cool, still day. Weeds usually indicate unthrifty grass; so that fertilizers should be applied, and more seed sown, in the spring. Dandelion and dock may be dug out in the fall.

Give Roses Plenty of Water.
Roses are thirsty plants. They need a lot of water, but you will not need to carry it all. Cultivate the ground around the plants, instead. Cultivation forms a dust mulch, which keeps the water in the ground, where the roots can get it. If the surface of the ground is allowed to become baked hard in the sun, the soil moisture is lost by evaporation. Loosely pulverized earth checks evaporation. Water must be given, and given freely; but cultivation is just as necessary. When you give water, put it on by the gallon. You waste your time, otherwise. Make a little herbarium of earth, so that the water will not run off, but sink into the ground. And as soon as the ground is dry, stir the surface with the hoe. Really, it is worth while to feed and water your roses faithfully.

The good farm paper is a much more desirable companion for the farm boy than a yellow back novel.

"HIGHEST QUALITY"

Economy in Seed Buying Is Extravagance

Invest a little more at planting time for "high quality" seeds and get satisfactory results. Remember, it takes as much labor and expense to plant and cultivate a garden grown from cheap seeds as it does from good seeds. Therefore, always buy the best and be assured of choice flowers and vegetables of merit.

The Experienced and Successful Gardener

Knows the importance of planting true, pure seed of "highest quality," but there are hundreds of amateurs who do not give this most important matter consideration and then wonder why results are unsatisfactory.

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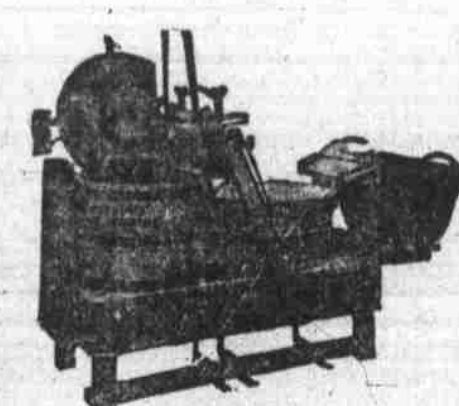
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Good Seed Foundation of Good Crops

Vigorously Growing Plants Can Only Come From Seed Grown Under Proper Conditions; Cultivation Adds Greatly to Results, if Done in an Intelligent and Scientific Manner.

By Professor Arthur G. B. Bouquet, Oregon Agricultural College.
The foundation of good crops is good seed. The questions very often arise with the amateur gardener, "What do you call good seed?" "Where can I buy it so as to be reasonably sure of its reliability?" Good seed should be not only vital, or having life, but viable, or able to grow. It should be reasonably clean, free from foreign matter, plump, well filled, able to germinate readily under proper conditions and produce strong plants that are true to the type or variety represented. There is such a large number of seedsmen in the country that there must be much hesitancy in deciding to whom to mail the seed order. It will always pay to get the best seed regardless of price. This will be necessary to avoid delay and disappointment in getting results from proper seeding.

Vegetable seed, except in a few cases, is inexpensive but there are grades of seed, some of which will not produce the desired end of vigorously growing plants. Most of our large seed firms are as careful and courteous in filling a small seed order as a large one and it is far wiser under most circumstances to be supplied by seedsmen who have a reputation for the reliability of their stock than by purchasing the so-called

ready packets offered for sale with attractive colors on the envelope. As a rule experience will go a long way in determining the source of supply. Eastern stock from dependable firms has been usually quite satisfactory under our conditions, while Oregon grown seeds have already proved their worth in many instances.

Careful Tillage Essential.
Having purchased reliable stock, the next important detail is to provide a soil bed that will be conducive to the ready germination of the seed and the vigorous growth of the plants. The working of the soil before seed sowing in the garden represents the highest type of soil tillage. The successful vegetable grower knows that there is no time spent idly in his extra efforts to put the land in the best possible physical condition.

Vegetable seeds are small and in order to have them germinate evenly in the seed bed, thereby producing a uniform stand of plants, the soil must be smooth, fine, loose, free from coarse material such as rocks, sticks, large clods, straw matter, etc. Such a soil can only be obtained by diligent work in pulverizing thoroughly and afterwards raking well. In home gardens in various localities there is found to be a