

Garden Department

THE BLOSSOMS OF THE CAULIFLOWER

There is no more desirable or delicate vegetable for the home garden than the cauliflower, yet there are a great many failures with it. Every garden ought to have a few of these vegetables. If perchance you have a few "flowers" in your vegetable patch, here are a few essentials to observe to conduct it to a snowy, close-headed maturity.

The cauliflower to be at its very best must be personally conducted, which is the reason the greenhouse cauliflowers are by far the finest. The most necessary part of growing a cauliflower is to keep it growing. A stoppage in growth due to drought means that the flowerets are likely to spread, and it will be a scraggy-looking affair and worthless. If a

dry spell sets in, don't hesitate to water the cauliflowers.

It is an excellent plan to give them some high-grade commercial fertilizer along toward the middle of their career, hoeing it into the soil. Some of the so-called "balanced" fertilizers are generally used. Market gardeners who specialize in cauliflowers sometimes put on as much as 1500 pounds per acre.

The flower or "curd," as it is generally known among professional gardeners, appears early in the life of the cauliflower, a little white knob down in the center of the rosette of leaves. This is the time to put in your best ticks. Encourage that little white knob with frequent cultivations, keeping the soil stirred. When it is about two inches across

it is time to start caring for its complexion, seeing that it doesn't tan and comes to a snowy maturity.

The best plan is to tie the tips of the leaves so that the "curd" is fairly well enclosed, pulling the leaves up in a bunch, but not too tightly to hamper the growth of the "flower," or exclude all air. This is not necessary and it is too tedious a process if you are growing any considerable number. A quicker method, and one which serves the purpose very well, is merely to bend the big leaves inward so that the thick midrib cracks and leaves the cauliflower lying over the center.

Both these operations protect the "flower" from insects. The cauliflower should be picked when it is just right. Left too long the "curds" start to separate and string out and it loses its table quality. Examine the heads every few days after they have been tied up.

ONIONS

No vegetable is so widely used in cooking and used in so many different ways, yet no vegetable receives less attention in culture. Onions grow so easily that the ordinary gardener just sticks them in the ground or throws in the seed and lets them worry along. True, he gets a young onion or an inferior matured dry bulb, but he might have a lot

better for a little more pains. Onions grow about in proportion to their treatment.

First and foremost, an onion wants rich soil, soil in which there is plenty of fertilizer quickly available. It prefers a cool soil, reasonably moist, but well drained, a condition meaning plenty of humus or decayed vegetable matter present.

MID-SUMMER MANURING

It is an excellent plan to have commercial fertilizer on hand to spur the vegetables along when the dry days of the summer come along and just before the crop is maturing. These fertilizers are in powder form and are very easily sprinkled over the soil and hoed in. Being concentrated, it is not necessary to give a heavy dressing. Little and often is a good motto.

There are the balanced formulae fertilizers which are kept in stock by every dealer, which contain all the elements necessary for plant

growth, but one of the most convenient and efficient fertilizers is pulverized sheep manure, which can be bought in 100-pound sacks at a price between \$2.50 and \$3. This may seem high, but the product is all manure, no straw or litter and, in its way, it may be regarded as concentrated. It is dry and easy to handle with a minimum of disagreeable odor. It is one of the best subjects for making liquid manure, using about a peck to a vinegar barrel of water.

For string and lima beans, poultry

manure is a fine fertilizer to hoe in. Poultry manure should be dried carefully as soon as collected and broken up fine. Dried quickly, it retains nearly all of its fertilizing content, but if permitted to remain moist, it ferments like other manures and loses its nitrogen in the form of ammonia fumes, which in a henhouse not properly cared for are often very strong.

Blood and bone is a fine fertilizer for any but root crops. It is very good for cabbages and cauliflowers. Nitrate of soda scattered thinly after

the crops are well established is good for beets, onions, cucumbers, celery and egg plants.

Shredded cattle manure is fine as a mulch and fertilizer combined. This is an odorless product of the packing plants. It is particularly valuable as a dressing for lawns, and has the advantage of not containing any weed seeds which will germinate as they are destroyed in the process of drying it.

While the so-called commercial fertilizers are comparatively expensive, they are worth the money.

The easiest to store away in jars.

A cellar stocked with canned vegetables and stored with root crops is a gold mine under present high prices and with a little care it is a simple matter to pave the way for a bright now.

Half a dozen cabbages hung by their heels or buried in earth mean a lot when a minimum of ten cents a pound at the grocery is considered. The big winter radishes will give material for salads and a fresh vegetable. They are as snappy as the little red breakfast radishes in flavor.

Dry herbs and store them for dressing for poultry, sage, thyme, marjoram, savory, parsley, the green tops for soups or stews.

DON'T BE AFRAID TO THIN-OUT

Now is the time to watch the root crops such as turnips, parsnips, carrots, beets and others, and see that



they have plenty of room. They may be left fairly thick in the row a

couple of weeks after they are up without any great damage, but as soon as they begin to attain luxuriant foliage start thinning them out so there will be plenty of room for the root to develop in proportion to the top.

Luxurious tops do not necessarily mean good bottoms if they are too close in the row. Transplant if necessary and desirable to save some of the extras. Beets may be pulled for greens, thinning to the proper distance, which ought to be about six inches if they are desired as a fully developed root crop.

There is more loss in real vegetable value by close crowding, so that the gardener does not get anything like the crop he should, than from any other cause. It is better that they should be too far apart than too close.

Don't be afraid to thin.

MAKING THE GARDEN DOUBLE-UP

It is now the season when the potatoes are getting into flower and the sweet corn is getting about the knee high stage. It is also the time to double up on crops and economize on space. If the potato rows are as far apart as they should be, cabbage plants can be set between the rows for a fall crop and by the time the potatoes are dug, the cabbages can have full possession and grow along and the ground is in continuous bearing.

the fall. Of course it cannot be expected that the finest quality of celery can be grown by this means and it is presumed that the ground is rich enough to support it, but a reasonably good crop may be secured.

It serves the purpose of using the ground which would be of no further value unless squash had been planted with the corn in which case the vines would occupy the ground.

Keeping the ground working all summer is the real way to run a vegetable garden. It is worth experiment, even if the second crop isn't all that it might be. The chances are more in its favor than against it.

Top dressings of nitrate for the cabbage after the corn is cut will speed these vegetables on their way, and there is then a chance for the needed cultivation.—National Gardening Bureau.

TWO DISEASES TO WATCH

Cucumbers and muskmelons sometimes have mysterious complaints and get the dying habit without any apparent cause. The two commonest of these ailments are "wilt" and "downy mildew." The latter is the most destructive pest in the way of a plant disease that hits the cucurbits, as the members of the family are known. It is a fungous disease and Bordeaux mixture is the remedy on the safe side and give the cukes and melons a good spraying with Bordeaux as soon as they start to run. It is much easier than attacking the disease after it appears.

The symptoms are angular spots of the leaves, which later assume distinct form, the older leaves at the ends of the vine going last. The underside of the leaves will show a faint purplish covering on these spots. This pest often does not appear at

all. Again it will raise havoc. It generally appears the latter half of the summer. It is a good plan to use a little preventive.

"Wilt," just as its name denotes, is a general droop of the foliage of the vine which dies without any apparent reason. An insect carries this spore which causes the trouble by clogging the veins of the plant. Bordeaux with some arsenate in combination is the remedy for this trouble.

Leaf blight sometimes attacks the muskmelons and makes short work of them. It appears in the shape of round spots which rapidly increase in size. Bordeaux spraying is the remedy.

A wise gardener will spray his melons and cucumbers once every 10 days with Bordeaux mixture as soon as they begin to make vine. The young growth should be sprayed with care. Whole crops may be saved by this preventive work.

CONSERVATION OF PLANT FOOD

Having always been blessed with rich, fertile soil and lots of it, gardeners of the United States have fallen behind the rest of the world in what is generally known as intensive gardening of culture, that is, making the soil yield the most possible in the way of crops. Fertilizing is a fine art with the foreign gardener, particularly the Frenchman.

American gardeners are beginning to realize with the mounting prices of everything, including vegetables, that it is necessary to get the utmost return from the soil and the study of fertilizers is spreading, unconsciously, it may be. During the summer months when gardening work slackens after the heavy tasks of spring planting it is time to look after the fertilizer supply. A neglected supply is soon.

When the stoves or furnaces are cleaned out, if they are soft coal burning, save the soot scraped away

from the pipes. Store it away in a barrel for use. It is a fertilizer and an insecticide, even more valuable as the latter than the former. Seed houses sell imported Scotch soot at \$4.50 per hundred pounds. It is not necessary to import it.

The chief benefit of soot, which is used as a top dressing on the soil, is in banishing cut worms and grubs. A dressing of soot hoed in or leached in will discourage these vermin, which work underground where their depredations cannot be noticed until they have been accomplished. Soot is a fine preventive of the grubs which sometimes attack radishes and onions.

There are certain insects which infect the roots of plants, such as the root aphid. A dressing of soot in the spring will drive away the egg-laying insect. Every little help in the garden makes for better crops and it is as easy to save the soot as to throw it away.

YOU CAN SOW ALL SUMMER

There isn't a month of the year except when the ground is frozen, that some vegetable may not be planted. The middle of June is about the right time for planting kale or boracole which, planted at this time, will be ready for use in the late fall and early winter. It may be picked when the snow is weighting down its leaves.

Kale is a winter green, the leaves being boiled and eaten the same as beets or chard. It has a mild cabbage flavor and is very ornamental resembling a gigantic tansley, having the same curled leaves. There are ornamental varieties with colored and variegated foliage, sometimes offered for the flower garden.

One of the main objections to kale is that it harbors such a quantity of plant lice at times. The same complaint is made against brussels sprouts. Sometimes cauliflowers suffers the same trouble.

Soak these vegetables in strong salt water for an hour before cooking, and the bugs detach themselves and the vegetables are readily cleaned.

The last of June and the first of July is the time to start the curly endive for late autumn salads. It comes at a time when the garden is practically devoid of green vegetables and may be picked up to a killing frost. The leaves should be tied up by the tips to blanch the hearts. This is also an ornamental vegetable with its finely cut foliage.

Served whole, the entire plant being cut off, carefully cleaned and set upon a plate with the salad dressing poured over it, it presents a handsome appearance when brought to the table with its white heart and green tipped curly foliage.

Corn salad for an early crop may be put in this month.

CAN USE SURPLUS CROPS

It is now time to look over the canning materials and get ready to store the surplus from the garden for next winter. A can in the cellar is a coin in the pocket. Peas are the first canning crop and it will be only a short time before they will be ready. There used to be a widespread belief that vegetables were difficult to keep compared with canned fruit. Since the food con-

servation campaign during the war taught everybody the art of canning vegetables, it has been found that they keep just as safely and as readily as canned fruit.

Asparagus may be canned. It is an expensive luxury to buy in the can from the grocery. Hardly a vegetable in the common vegetable form can be bought for less than a quarter. The canning of vegetables is accomplished with practically no expense. String beans are one of



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