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### SPINACH GROWING AND MARKETING AS DIRECTED BY COLLEGE CIRCULAR

This Important Vegetable Will Allow System of Two or Three Crops on Same Land Each Year--Is a Good Dehydrating or Canning Crop, and a Good Greenhouse Vegetable to Substitute for Lettuce

(Following is Circular 183 of the Oregon Agricultural college on "Spinach Growing and Marketing," the author being Prof. A. G. Bouquet, and the date being February, 1923.)

Spinach is one of the most important vegetables grown for "greens," being of particular value during the spring, the fore part of the summer, fall and winter.

There has been a considerable increase in the demand of this vegetable during the past few years. If fresh, large, clean and dark green spinach is offered on the market, there is a tendency to increase the consumption, but small, wilted, dirty spinach, which often appears when shipped in from a distance, causes an unfavorable market condition and curtails consumption.

Spinach is valuable for an intensive farm garden in that it can be used as a first crop, preceding late vegetables, such as celery

late cabbage, cauliflower, late beans, fall lettuce, etc., or it can follow as a fall crop such as vegetable as are removed from the ground by August 1 to September 1.

Climatic conditions. Spinach is not adapted to hot weather conditions, and therefore is most successfully grown during the seasons of the year above mentioned. It has a tendency to run to seed very quickly during warm weather.

Soils: There are a variety of soils which can produce satisfactory crops of spinach. Probably the largest yields are being obtained from soils which have an abundance of humus in them, such as the muck or beaverdam soils. Rich, sandy loams are also valuable in that they can be planted early and make a good soil for an early crop, to be followed by another vegetable later in the season. Any soil which grows spinach must be one that can be pulverized to a fine degree so that proper seeding may be made. The essential characters of any soil for spinach are abundance of organic matter and freedom from clods, or ability to be finely pulverized.

Preparation of the Ground: Inasmuch as all spinach is grown from seed and sown with a hand drill, it is necessary to have a fine well-pulverized and smooth seed bed. In order to obtain a good even stand of plants, the land must be free from clods and finely worked down.

Manures and Fertilizers: The extent to which a spinach field will yield in tons is largely dependent on the amount of organic matter in the soil, or on the supply of manure which may be available. If fine, rotted manure is on hand, it should be applied in the spring and thoroughly worked into the ground. If manure is somewhat scarce, a light coating will be better than none. Manure should

also be applied preparatory to seeding the fall crop.

During the final preparation of the soil with the spike harrow and planter, an application of 150 lbs. of nitrate of soda may be made, or as an alternative, 600 to 800 lbs. of tankage.

Varieties: There are a number of varieties of spinach, differing in the shape and color of the leaves, also the crinkly nature of the same. Probably the most widely used variety is the Victoria, having a deep green, pointed foliage; also Thick Leaf with a round thick leaf of rich green color. Another variety which is sometimes used is the Savoyed which has crinkly dark colored green leaves. The variety Long Standing is also used by growers who are producing this crop for the cannery or dehydrator.

From tests which have been made it is very evident that there is a great difference in the producing power of different strains of spinach of the same variety and therefore one must not only endeavor to choose a suitable variety but also to obtain a high yielding strain of seed.

Seeding: Spring seeding begins as early as the weather and soil conditions permit. The plants are hardy and will stand average spring frosts. A hand drill is used to put in 12 to 15 pounds of seed per acre with the rows 12 to 14 inches apart. Depth of seeding should be about one-half inch.

Cultivation: Inasmuch as the rows are close together, all cultivation has to be done by hand. The tools most widely used are the shove hoe and the wheel hoe, which are useful in cutting down small weeds between the rows and keeping a mulch on the surface. It is especially important to keep weeds out of the rows otherwise they will cause considerable both earlier or later on when it becomes time to harvest the crop.

Harvesting: A sharp shove hoe or push hoe is used for harvesting spinach, or the two-wheeled hand hoe with the knives reversed, can be used. If the spinach is not going to be washed, it is best to wait until it is thoroughly dry, or the dew is off the leaves, before it is cut; otherwise the spinach will have to be washed before going to market. It is customary to cut the spinach off with about an inch of stem so that the blades of the knives should go just below the surface of the soil. If this is carefully done, the spinach will be laid over systematically to one side of the row and easily picked up and put into field boxes which are open slatted crates or orange boxes.

Grading: The following grades are not standard for Oregon, but are used elsewhere and offer suggestions to growers in this territory:

Grade No. 1: Consist of spinach which is of one type and free from decay, which is practically free from dead, yellow or coarse and stumpy leaves and seed stems and damage caused by disease, insects, or other means. The roots should not be more than one inch long.

Grade No. 2: Consist of spinach which does not conform to Grade No. 1, but it must be free from decay and serious damage.

Added to the above grades is the suggestion that green, fresh, washed spinach is attractive, but that dirty, wilted spinach is undesirable and causes a glut on the market.

Value of the Crops: Dehydrators and canneries usually offer a price of about \$20 per ton. The average market price in cities, etc., varies from 5 to 12 1/2 c per pound, depending largely on the season and the availability of the crop. Being a shortseason vegetable, one must figure that the land can be utilized soon after the removal of the spinach for another vegetable, thus making it possible to double-crop the ground during the season.

Use As a Greenhouse Crop: Trials in the growing of spinach, as a substitute crop for lettuce in a greenhouse, have shown that this is one of the best vegetables that can be produced during the fall, winter, and early part of the spring. It makes a rapid growth of fine, vigorous, dark green leaves and sells readily on the market during the seasons above mentioned at an average price of ten cents a pound.

Literature on Spinach: Growers who are particularly interested in spinach culture should write for a copy of "Farmers' Bulletin 1183 of the Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C., entitled "Handling Spinach for Long Distance Shipment." Write to the Division of Publications, U. S. D. A., Washington, D. C.

### SPINACH ADVICE NEEDS REVISION

Some Things Have Been Learned in Years Since 1920 About Spinach

(Luther J. Chapin, who was formerly agriculturist of Marion county, and who is an expert on soil and crop conditions in the Salem district, wrote an article in 1920 for the Slogan editor of The Statesman, which Mr. Chapin said to the Slogan editor yesterday needs now some revision. The article of 1920 was substantially as follows):

"Spinach is a cool, wet weather crop. It is grown in the early spring months or late summer and autumn. It requires under favorable conditions, from 45 to 60 days to mature.

"It requires rich garden soil to produce a profitable crop for commercial purposes.

"If the soil is poor it produces only small leaves and shoots too soon.

"Since it is the leaves which are used for food, a luxuriant, rapid growth is desired.

"It produces on rich garden soil or muck land from two to five tons to the acre. This affords a reasonable profit at the present price of \$20 per ton since the cost of production does not exceed \$20 per acre, and it is harvested in ample time to plant corn, beans, cabbage, carrots or potatoes.

"Gardeners in the Lake Labish district are eager to contract at the above price, as the crop nets them from \$30 to \$50 per acre and the ground is left in the best condition for their main crop--one of the above-mentioned crops.

"Spinach is a very wholesome food and should be eaten freely by all.

"It contains a large percentage of iron, and for this reason is used

and recommended by hospital physicians.

"In the dehydrated form it is convenient to keep the year round in any climate.

"The spring crop is used at present for canning and dehydrating, but no doubt the fall crop will also be in demand.

"The fall crop may be planted after many of the summer crops have been harvested.

Three Crops in a Year.

"In fact, it will be possible to produce three crops in one year on the same soil by growing both a spring and an autumn spinach crop. Such a cropping scheme, however, would require the application of the most intensive methods of cultivation and the intelligent use of fertilizers. In other words, it would require the application of the best business methods to farming.

"While three crops in one year are possible on certain soils under favorable conditions, it is not expected in general. It should be the aim, however, of every farmer to keep his capital working to its fullest capacity, as his net returns are thereby increased.

Then and Now

The Slogan editor talked to Mr. Chapin yesterday. He said that while what he wrote in 1920 about spinach growing here still holds good as a general statement, it needs some revision, in the light of experience. For instance, it has been found that spinach grown on our beaver dam lands, or at least on some of them, is subject in some years to late frost damage, injuring the quality and cutting the quantity below the point of a profitable crop.

There are growers, however, on higher land, who are making a success of spinach every year. The Wrights, the market gardeners of Independence, for instance. They use very rich garden soil, and plenty of fertilizer.

Mr. Chapin is of the opinion that the spinach industry on a commercial scale may be developed here to a profitable basis--but that it will require specialization and experimentation. Haphazard methods and haphazard men are likely to suffer disappointments.

The Dehydrating Branch

Geo. Judd, in charge of that branch of the operations of King's Food Products company, writes to the Slogan editor that they have "made arrangements to secure our spinach at The Dalles, where the spring opens earlier and we get the crop before the warm weather commences, and we find that growers there can grow it much better and give us a better quality at a lower price than at Salem."

Does Not End It

This decision does not by any means end the spinach industry in the Salem district. No doubt there will be further experiments, and that our growers will learn the game fully as applied to special localities and soils and conditions, and the proper treatment of the soils in the matter of fertilization. Also, there is a prospect that spinach growing may become a greenhouse proposition on a large scale here.

REPRESENTATIVE NAMED

SPOKANE, Jan. 25.--Permanent representation in the national capital for Washington wheat growers committee was held yesterday by the executive committee of the organization at a meeting here today, presided over by State Senator Frank J. Wilmer of Rosalia.

The committee also expressed a belief in further educational activity among Washington farmers who, it was asserted, have given approval to the committee's export corporation plan when it has been possible to explain its details to them.

What could be more, during than a French soldier getting shaved in a German barber shop?

### IRON IN SPINACH SAVES LIVES OF INFANTS, AND IS GOOD FOR ADULTS

New Food Values for Babies Found in Experiments With This Vegetable, the Use of Which Is Successful in Restoring the Undernourished Little Ones to Normal

Spinach contains 10 times as much iron as is contained in carrots, and since milk, while it contains some iron, in the cases of many undernourished infants, spinach is a valuable addition to a milk diet.

Spinach and orange juice contain all classes of vitamins in abundance, and a large amount of necessary mineral matter, and the supplementing of milk with these ingredients is now practiced in numerous hospitals and homes throughout the country.

To Save Thousands of Lives.

Saving the lives of thousands of undernourished babies annually and raising the type of American manhood and womanhood is expected to result from years of research by Dr. J. P. McClelland, University of Minnesota, who, a few years ago, announced a discovery in infant dietetics.

Experiments made with underfed infants, whose mortality rate had been high, proved his theory, Dr. McClelland asserted. At the Jean Martin Brown home in St. Paul a baby gained 23 ounces in one week.

The diet has a foundation of powdered dehydrated spinach and dehydrated orange juice.

Experimented for Years

Mr. McClelland came to the university in 1914, and since that time has been deeply interested in dietetics, and has for many years been conducting experiments in dehydrated foods. He finally completed his tests and experiments to such an extent that he considered his findings of sufficient completeness for formal announcement.

Dr. McClelland felt that improper nutrition in infancy and adolescence resulted in subnormal mentality and physique in adults, and with the approval of Dr. J. P. Sedgwick, eminent child specialist, and Dr. Jeanette McLaren, attending physician, began the study of nutrition of the infants in the Jean Martin Brown home in St. Paul.

Infants in the home were largely orphans and under weight. By feeding them about two teaspoonsful of powdered spinach and one-twelfth of an ounce of dehydrated orange juice a day he increased their growth rate to about three or four times what it had been previously. The prize baby gained 23 ounces in a week. Even a baby with marked rickets gained in weight.

"It is difficult to get adults to change their diet," says Dr. McClelland. "It has been proved that bread made of 1 per cent of powdered spinach and 10 per cent of soy bean meal is excellent in taste and highly nutritious."

Dr. McClelland's experiments with dehydrated spinach in connection with baby feeding are of momentous importance to every housewife.

The iron, mineral salts, and vitamins that makes spinach so valuable in malnutrition of infants is equally well adapted for building up physical health in adults.

King's dehydrated spinach was used in Dr. McClelland's experiments in the usual whole-leaf form, being ground in an ordinary coffee mill. King's spinach contains all the elements of fresh spinach.

Would Shock Grandmothers

The feeding of spinach to infants a year old would have shocked the old-fashioned grandmothers. But this is what is being done, now, throughout the United States, in the cases of un-

der-nourished infants, and under the direction of reputable physicians and by the advice of expert dietitians.

A Specialized Crop.

One thing should be remembered: Spinach growing on a commercial scale is a specialized industry. Almost any good garden land in the Salem district will grow spinach, and gardeners here often produce surprisingly large yields in small patches, for home use. But in order to produce the tonnage and the quality that will make spinach growing on a commercial scale profitable, there must be special treatment of the land, and special study of the conditions generally--and expert work. In this respect, spinach growing is like celery growing. The merest tyro of a gardener can grow a little patch of passable spinach or celery every year for home use. But it takes an expert to grow either crop in a large way of a quality that will command high enough prices in the markets to make their efforts profitable.

### FARM REMINDERS FROM THE COLLEGE

Tonic for the Fowls; Root Crops Substitute for Kale; Brown Rot Problem

(Following are excerpts from a current bulletin from the department of industrial journalism of the Oregon Agricultural college):

Epsom salts given to the flock at stated intervals is an excellent tonic. It should be given at least once each month at the rate of about one-half pound to each 100 adult fowls. It may be dissolved in the drinking water and put before the birds for a few hours in the morning, during which time no other drink is given. Most poultrymen, however, prefer dissolving the salts in water and mixing a moist mash to put before the flock.

Root crops are a good substitute for kale as green feed. There are many poultrymen without a sufficient supply of winter green feed, especially in this true when we have cold, freezing weather such as we have had in the past few weeks. Ask your county agent for information as to desirable varieties of root crops for your section.

"The Brown Rot Problem in Oregon" is the subject of a circular published by the Oregon experiment station. It is now in the hands of the printer and will be available soon.

The bargain hunter temporarily proud of his cheap material, forgets that repair bills and depreciation costs are included in the bargain.

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