

# WILLAMETTE FARMER.

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## Correspondence.

**Small Fruits.—An Old Grower's Method of Cultivation and Marketing.**

GRANT'S PASS, OR., May 1, 1884.

Editor Willamette Farmer:

I have been interested in the communications on Strawberries from the pen of A. F. Davidson and think an exchange of ideas by subscribers to any agricultural paper, is the main thing to make the paper valuable to all concerned. So, Horace Greely like, I thought it might not be out of place to tell what I know about strawberry farming.

Having grown and marketed over two thousand bushels of strawberries in the last ten years and having been asked a question about varieties, culture, kind of soil suitable to grow them, etc., for every pound thus grown I desire to answer some of them here for the benefit of your many readers. Have grown them on rich deep and rather moist soil, also clay loam, and on light sandy or ashy soil mixed with fine gravel, the latter I pronounce the best by far of the three; the less gravel and the more soil the better. Such a soil is generally underlaid with a bed of gravel, thus giving first-class drainage—one of the main requisites to the successful culture of the strawberry. I never yet saw a variety that would succeed on wet soil, even wild ones shun such a location; such soil never bakes or gets lumpy and is easily worked and kept free from weeds. It is a warm quick soil and the flavor of the berries is much better and sweeter than those grown on heavier soil, while my experience proves that the bed will remain in a good healthy bearing condition much longer than a heavy soil. I have repeatedly produced on such a soil in a single season 250 bushels of first class berries of the Wilson variety without manure. The main requisite being deep and thorough culture—that is, stirring the soil often to a depth of one foot and hoeing and raking between vines. Such a soil treated as above only turns up moisture at one-half an inch below the surface, to the astonishment of any drouth which I have seen in Oregon in after a continuous residence of 18 years. I use a cultivator that merely loosens the soil without ridging it up, as a strawberry bed should be kept level.

Having selected the ground to be planted, I summer-fallow it one season or plant to hoed crops unless it is already in good condition and free from foul stuff. If one starts in with ground perfectly clear the battle is half won, as it is an endless job to fight sorrel and such coarse stuff after the plants are set. I prefer fall rather than spring planting as the plants make a more vigorous growth the first season. I remove all blossoms the first year as it tends to check the growth of the plants to require them to bear even a few berries the first summer.

After plowing the ground one foot deep, immediately previous to planting and harrowing well, we proceed to smooth the surface with a plank or any suitable device, and mark off the rows in the following manner: Set a stake at each end of the first row, and one at the proper distance for the second row at the end we are starting from. Then walk across the field directly on the line of the first row, taking steps double the length that you want your plants distance apart, and set a plant at each track and also one half way between. This shows the plant dropper just how many and where to drop the plants, after we finish marking the first row we set the stake over and return on the second row and so on until the field is all marked. I make the rows three and one-half feet apart and step three feet at each step, making the plants stand eighteen inches apart in the row. Supposing one to raise their own plants, the next thing in order is the digging and trimming of the plants, which we do by having two

or more stout men to go ahead with spade or shovel and loosen up the plants and shake out all the dirt and throw them in convenient piles for the trimmers, which with us consisted of a dozen or twenty boys from ten to fifteen years old, who cut off all but one or two of the heart or centre leaves and all old leaves and runners and shortened the roots to four inches, placing them in piles with the roots kept well straightened out. Such plants being much easier set than those which have not been trimmed and are thrown together in a jumbled up mass with roots in every direction. Then we have a good active boy drop the plants along the line marked off and as many men as necessary to set them, using dibbles for setting which are made from a piece of steel  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch thick by 5 inches wide at top and 3 inches wide at bottom, with side and bottom edges drawn down thin having a handle welded on one corner at the top the shape of an ordinary walking cane handle. By thrusting this into the ground and giving it a few motions to the right and left then drawing it out carefully so no dry dirt shall fall in the opening. The plant is then set by placing the plant in the opening with the roots kept spread out like a fan, and thrusting the dibble into the soil at an angle of about 30 degrees with the bottom nearest the plant, and with a quick motion of the hand the dirt is firmly pressed against the plant and then by filling that last opening by scraping full, the work is done. We had 13,000 Wilson plants dug, trimmed and packed at our Turner farm and sent to us here, all of which arrived safely after a trip of 250 miles. They were planted as above stated about the middle of March, which are now making the best growth of any I have yet planted, as it is on very sandy loam soil on the north bank of the Rogue river, treated as above. We have not lost over one plant in a thousand. After setting we hoe and rake after and run a cultivator that merely loosens up the soil without ridging it up through between the rows and loosen the soil to a depth of one foot, about once a week until August 15th, when they are laid by for the season.

If any weeds make their appearance after August 15th, I pull them by hand or shave them off from the surface with a hoe being careful not to go deeper than an inch, as the fall is the time the plants throw out a good supply of small hair like roots completely filling the soil with them. Feeders we call them, to supply the following year's crop with nourishment. They should not be disturbed by either hoe or cultivator until after they are through bearing the following summer, as by so doing the plant is weakened and very likely, as Mr. Davidson has said in regard to the Wilson, the second and third pickings would be small seedy things. I have best success in growing them in single plants or hill with all runners kept off. When I began planting strawberries one would say do not cultivate in the spring, and I would ask why. The answer generally was that they did not know but that they read or heard so somewhere, so we paid no attention to it until we found out better by experience.

As to varieties I cannot say much now as this article is already long. I have tried some twenty-five varieties of the much praised kinds, and for profit I have yet to find the variety that will equal the old Wilson. But soil and culture have much to do with the value of some varieties. I will at some future time give my mode of gathering, packing and marketing. If I have answered any of the many questions asked me in the past years by different parties I shall feel repaid, as that should be a part of our business in this life to learn and be learned.

R. D. SANDFORD.

Newspaper Letter from California.

SAN JOSE, Cal., April 20, 1884.

Editor Willamette Farmer:

Having traveled in the northern and

central portion of California during the past month I have had the pleasure of seeing some very pretty country and scenery. The present prospects are flattering for an abundant harvest so far as I can see, and reports are that it is universally so throughout the State. The grain crop is to be seen in all stages from seeding to heading. The greatest difficulty apprehended is too rank a growth of straw, owing to there having been an unusual amount of rainfall. There have been more rainy days the past month than fair ones. The prospects for fruit is simply enormous, and fruit culture here has reached an immense magnitude. Seemingly the industry would become overdone, but the planting of new orchards is in progress all over the State. The estimate is that this seasons planting will more than equal one-third of all former orchards and vineyards. The apple, plum, prune and pear are just shedding their bloom, whilst the almond, apricot, and peach are of considerable size; the orange is to be seen from the bloom to the ripened fruit. It is claimed by many that the fruit industry will soon be overdone, but judging by the prices asked for fruit—green and dried—it yet holds a margin. Apples, green, \$1.25 to \$2.50 per box; oranges, \$3.50 to \$4.25 per box; retail for fifty cents a dozen for very choice. Good fruit lands in localities accessible to market are selling for from \$100 to \$800 per acre. Yet in many choice localities more distant from market and railroad communication there is choice fruit lands to be had at prices varying from \$10 to \$50. There is a beautiful section of country adapted to vineyarding by irrigation to be found at a small place ten miles south of Stockton, on the railroad, where land can be bought for from \$30 to \$45 per acre. I visited some beautiful young orchards and vineyards that were flourishing nicely. The is an increasing immigration of a more wealthy class to this country, having been attracted by the fruit industry and congenial climate. But let me say to my Oregon friends do not neglect to avail yourselves of a golden opportunity of engaging in the fruit industry of such varieties as are adapted to soil and climate, such as Bartlett and Winter Nellis pear, apples, plums, prunes, cherries, blackberries, raspberries, currants, etc., can be produced in abundance and of as fine a quality for the market in the form of green or dried fruit as any spot on earth and not depend upon the one routine of wheat culture, and to provide to get an equal share of the markets of the north-eastern States and Territories, as that is a topic here, to raise the above varieties for the markets of those sections, on the line of the railroads are built and open them up.

M. V. ENSLEY.

An Oregonian in California.

Herewith we append an interesting letter received from our old friend and former resident, Mr. M. V. Ensley. It fully explains itself.

SAN JOSE, Cal., April 12, 1884.

Editor Willamette Farmer:

Having been associated with apiculture and knowing the advantages of, and results, obtained in the production of honey in Oregon, and having passed through the greater portion of the northern and central part of the State of California, and having investigated the results of this portion of the State by interviewing apiculture in different localities, I find Oregon is, and can be, made far more profitable in this industry than is possible in the central and northern portion of California. I find the principal portion of all bees kept here are confined to the mountain ranges. It is claimed that about one year in three is a failure; having to feed the entire stock in most localities, while in some of the canyons where there is natural irrigation they may be self-sustaining and in some instances furnish a small amount of surplus, but such localities are scarce

Apiaculture has become an industry in this country; about one in four years a bountiful season, then the amount of honey obtained depends altogether upon the hives used and locality in which they are kept, and I am informed that in many sections of the country where honey could be gathered most plentifully, the species of vegetation of which the honey is gathered is such as to produce an inferior article not suitable for the table or market, and I also find that there is a large portion of the product obtained in many parts of the southern counties, especially in the afterparts of the season, that is not a merchantable article. Taking the results obtained, together with the prices obtained, the business of honey producing is not so remunerative as is claimed. The price in San Francisco, and quality, are proportionably as follows: Extra white comb from 15 to 18 cents (of the total crop of last year it will aggregate 17 $\frac{1}{2}$  per cent.; medium to best, 21 $\frac{1}{2}$  per cent.; price 10 to 12 $\frac{1}{2}$  cents per pound; dark and inferior mixed 8 cents per pound; choice 28 per cent., price, 5 to 7 cents per pound, according to quality, and I find the principal hives used are the Langstroth and Simplicity, and used principally by tiering up from three to four high, as they find the larger the hive the better the results obtained.

In Oregon there is scarce a season when it becomes necessary to feed the bees, the production is more uniform taking one season with another, and better range for bee ranching in the mountains along the Cascade and Coast ranges of Oregon than is to be found in California, when taking into consideration the extent of good honey producing territory, quality and quantity obtained, and the Northwest, including an Eastern market along the line of the Northern Pacific bee keeping in Oregon is much more extensive and remunerative than in California.

M. V. E.

Weather Report for April 1884.

EOLA, May 1, 1884.

Editor Willamette Farmer:

During April, 1884, there were 14 days during which rain fell, and an aggregate of 3.09 inches of water.

The mean temperature for the month was 51.51 deg.

Highest daily mean temperature for the month, 65 deg. on the 7th.

Lowest daily mean temperature for the month, 42 deg. on the 13th.

Mean temperature for the month at 2 o'clock P. M., 58.56 deg.

Highest temperature for the month, 75 deg. at 2 P. M. on the 4th and 14th.

Lowest temperature for the month, 25 deg. at 7 A. M. on the 8th.

Frosts occurred on the 4, 14, 15, 18, and 27th.

The prevailing winds for the month were from the north during 10 days, southwest 9 days, south 11 days.

During April, 1883, there were 19 rainy days and 6.51 inches of water, 4 clear, and 7 cloudy days.

Mean temperature for the month, 47.46 deg.

Highest daily mean temperature for the month, 56 deg., on the 25th.

Lowest daily mean temperature for the month, 40 deg. on the 13th.

T. PEACOCK.

Woman Suffrage is Popular.

LABISH, Or., May 3, 1884.

Editor Willamette Farmer:

In yesterday's paper I see a short editorial in regard to the woman suffrage question that surprised me. You say that not more than one in three will vote for the amendment. Now I have talked with a great many in this part of the county about it, and only one man in about fifty was against it and he was not in favor of it because he thought the "wimin was too smart now." It is hardly worth while to advance arguments on the side of the suffrage for those that oppose it are seldom capable of

understanding even the simplest proposition. But there is one that it seems the feeblest intellect can grasp, and that is there should be no taxation without representation.

F. J. BEATTY.

RIVER AND HARBOR IMPROVEMENTS.

Of course our Congressman are exercising all their influence and policy to secure appropriations for improving the river and harbors of Oregon and Washington, but they cannot force the great majority to view matters in a proper light. At a time when the treasury is so full and the revenue so great it would seem that improvements of such importance as the rivers and harbors of this region require could command the attention of Congress and secure sufficient appropriations to carry them out. Here is what the last dispatches say on this subject:

It was agreed to appropriate as follows: \$40,000 for continuing improvement at Yaquina bay; the engineer's estimate was \$140,000. For constructing the Cascades canal, for which the engineer's estimate was \$500,000, the committee has agreed on an appropriation of \$100,000. The upper Willamette river, above Portland, was allowed \$500,000, and the Columbia, below Portland \$100,000; in the former the estimate was \$31,000, and in the latter \$242,000. For the upper Columbia and Snake rivers, for which the engineers estimated \$56,000, the committee has agreed to appropriate \$5000. Recommendation for the Coquille river. Coos bay and for improving the mouth of the Columbia were rejected. It was proposed to construct a jetty at the mouth of the Columbia, from the south cape of the entrance to the spit, and there attach it. There were some differences of opinion among the engineers as to the advisability of constructing this breakwater, which would have cost \$500,000, and the disagreement resulted in a minority report by Mendell, Steward, Craighill, Comstock and Powell agreed that the improvement would be successful, but Mendell reported that owing to the peculiar action of the tides on that part of the coast there were some doubts whether the plan proposed would succeed. The committee concluded that until the engineers reached some settled opinion on the subject it would be unwise to make an appropriation.

The Coos bay estimate was rejected on the grounds that \$97,000 had been already expended on a half tide jetty, started near Fossil point, at the mouth of the bay, and which is to extend on a curved line toward Coos.

The estimate for the Coquille was also to construct a jetty and cut a channel through the south entrance, permanently closing the present channel.

The committee took the ground that as these improvements would cost a great deal of money, it was better to wait till the present appropriations are exhausted. The total amount appropriated will be between \$12,000,000 and \$18,000,000.

Cour d'Alene Mines.

Isaac D. Huntoon, a Portland merchant, writes as follows from the mines:

I have been in nearly all the stampedes from Arizona to Frazer river, and have met several of my old friends on Pritchard creek that tell me this is the best mining camp they have ever seen. Some of these old timers are direct descendants of the Washington. You couldn't hire them to tell a lie, and when they assure me they have seen \$40 to the pan washed out and over five pounds cleaned up from a three days' run on some of the claims, and when I see the rich specimens of quartz they find here, I tell you I feel satisfied that I am in the richest mineral belt in America. This is a great field for prospectors. All through these mountains, from the Yankee fork to the British Columbia line, there are thousands of quartz leads, and I venture to predict that within eighteen months there will be one thousand stamps crushing ore between Misouira and Cour d'Alene lake.

Notice.

There will be a meeting of the stockholders of the Salem Co-operative Association of Patrons of Husbandry No. 17, on Saturday, the 10th day of June, 1884, at 1 o'clock P. M. of said day, to elect directors and organize said corporation, and do any other business that may properly come before said stockholders.

R. P. BOISE,  
DAN'L CLARK,  
G. G. GLENN,  
Corporators.