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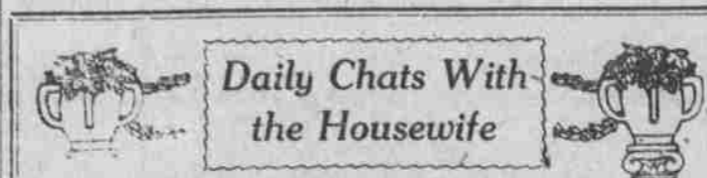
MOORE & SIMIS

GENERAL AGENTS

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Daily Chats With the Housewife

Natural Winter Storage of Vegetables in the Home.

WASHINGTON, July 20.—In order that householders may utilize spare time during the summer to put their cellars in shape for the winter storage of the surplus vegetables which will be grown on the home gardens that have been planted this year, or that may make plans for other methods of natural storage, the United States department of agriculture has prepared the following discussion on the storing of vegetables.

Home Storage of Vegetables.

To those persons fortunate enough to possess land for the growing of vegetables sufficient in quantity for the needs of the family, storage is an economic necessity. Likewise it is an economic necessity to grow vegetables to store. A half acre garden should produce far more vegetables than the average family can consume during the maturing period of the crops. Only a small portion of the garden should be planted to those vegetables which must be used as soon as they reach maturity. The remainder should be devoted to crops that are to be canned, dried, or stored. It is comparatively easy to keep at hand such vegetables as potatoes, beets, carrots, parsnips, salsify, turnips, cabbage, celery, onions, sweet potatoes, dry beans and dry lima beans. Some of the crops may be stored in the cellar under the dwelling, in pits or banks, or in caves or outdoor cellars. Others can be kept in any dry place such as the pantry or attic.

The Storage Room in Basement.

Many houses are heated by a furnace in the cellar. The pipes are as a rule carried under the joist, thus warming the cellar to some extent. For this reason it is best to partition off a small room in one corner of the cellar to serve as a storage room for potatoes, beets, carrots, parsnips, salsify, and turnips. If possible this room should have at least one window for the purpose of regulating the temperature. The floor should not be concreted, as the natural earth makes better conditions for the keeping of vegetables. Bins may be constructed for the various products, or they may be stored in boxes, baskets or barrels. This room will also serve as a storage place for fresh fruits and canned goods. The vegetables to be stored should be harvested when the ground is dry, allowed to lie on the surface long enough for the moisture to dry off before placing them in storage. The tops should be removed from beets, turnips, carrots, and salsify before placing them in storage.

Outdoor Pits or Banks.

Outdoor pits or banks are very generally used for keeping potatoes, beets, carrots, turnips, parsnips, cabbage, and salsify. Select a well drained location and make a shallow excavation, some six or eight inches deep, and of suitable size. This is lined with straw, leaves, or similar material, and the vegetables placed in a conical pile on the material. The vegetables are then covered with straw or similar material, and finally with earth to a depth of several inches. The depth of the earth covering is determined by the severity of the winters in the particular locality. It is well to cover the pits with straw, corn fodder, or manure during severe weather. Such pits keep the vegetables very well, but have the objection that it is hard to get the material out in cold weather, and where the pit is once opened it is desirable to remove the entire contents. For this reason several small pits rather than one large one should be constructed so that the entire contents may be removed at one time. Instead of storing such crops in a pit by itself, it is better to place several vegetables of similar keeping qualities and requirements in the same pit, so that it will only be necessary to open one pit to get a supply of all of them. In storing several crops in the same pit it is a good plan to separate them with straw, leaves or other material. The vegetables from the pit may be placed in the basement storage room where they can be easily secured as needed for the table.

Cabbage may be stored in a special kind of bank or pit. The excavation is made long and narrow and about the same depth as for the other vegetables. The cabbages are piled and placed in rows in the pit with the heads down and roots up. The whole is covered with dirt, or straw or litter, as desired. These pits are made as long as desired as it is possible to remove portion of the stored product without disturbing the remainder. Cabbage need not be covered as deeply as potatoes, as slight freezing does not injure the cabbage. The heads of cabbage are sometimes stored in banks or pits in a manner similar to potatoes, turnips, etc. This method is open to the same objection as when it is used for potatoes. It is hard to get at the material when it is needed. Another method of storing cabbage consists in setting the whole plant in trenches side by side with the roots down and as close together as they can be placed. Dirt is thrown over the spots and against the stalks to the depth of several inches. A low fence is built around the storage place and raised across the top, about two feet or straw, or other material is then piled on top of the storage pit.

Celery may be stored in a modified type of outside pit, or in the row where it is grown. When stored in a pit or trench the plants are taken up and set side by side in a shallow pit as close together as it is possible to pack them, and side boards are put up along the outside of the pit. Dirt is banked against these boards, and

top covered over with corn fodder or similar material. When celery is kept in a row where it is grown, the earth is banked up against plants as the weather gets cold. When freezing weather occurs the dirt should be brought to the tops of the plants and the ridge covered with coarse manure straw or fodder, held in place by means of stakes or boards.

Outdoor Caves or Cellars.

Outdoor caves or cellars are superior to banks or pits in many respects. They require no more labor to store the vegetables than an outdoor cellar, yet give a uniform and low temperature during the entire year. They possess practically all the advantages of the bank or pit, yet may be entered at any time during the winter for the removal of any portion of the stored product without endangering the keeping quality of the material that remains. These storage cellars are usually made partially under ground, although in the southern portion of the country they in sections where severe freezing occurs it is well to have the cellar partially under ground. In order to avoid steps down to the level of the floor, with the consequent extra labor in storing and removing the vegetables, a side hill location is desirable for the cellar. An excavation is made into the hill of the approximate size of the cellar. The dirt from this excavation may be used for covering the roof and for banking against the sides of the structure. A frame should be erected by setting posts in rows in the bottom of the pit near the dirt walls, sawing them off at a uniform height, placing planks on top of the posts, and erecting rafters on these planks. The whole should be boarded up on the outside of the posts, with the exception of a space for a door in one end. The whole structure, except the door, is covered with dirt and sod. The thickness of the covering will be determined by the location. The colder the climate, the thicker the covering. The dirt covering may be supplemented by a layer of manure straw, corn fodder, etc., in winter time. Outdoor cellars are usually left with dirt floors as a certain amount of moisture is desirable. These cellars may also be made of concrete, brick, stone or other material. Such cellars are to be found in many sections of the country, and provide almost ideal storage facilities for potatoes, beets, turnips, carrots, parsnips and celery.

Irish Potatoes.

Irish potatoes can be stored in pits, root cellars, or overground, frost-proof storage warehouses. Small quantities or even carload lots of potatoes are often placed in pits in the field when other storage facilities are not available. Immature potatoes can not be successfully stored for any considerable period even in the best of storages and should never be pitted or buried. Well matured tubers of either early or late sorts, if sound and in a dormant condition upon the advent of freezing weather in the autumn, may be kept until required for table use or for planting by pitting, storing in potato cellars, or in above-ground frost-proof buildings. The commercial storage of Irish potatoes is discussed in Farmers Bulletin 847, entitled, "Potato Storage and Storage Houses."

Sweet Potatoes.

Sweet potatoes should be thoroughly matured before harvesting, dug while the ground is dry, carefully handled, and thoroughly cured by holding them at a temperature of 80 to 85 degrees F. for a week, or ten days after harvesting. After this they should be stored in a place where the temperature remains in the neighborhood of 55 degrees F. Such a location is usually near the furnace in the cellar, or near the furnace chimney on the second floor of the house. There is little merit in wrapping them in paper or burying them in sand. Sweet potatoes are stored in outdoor pits or banks, but this method is not to be recommended except where no other facilities are available. Sweet potatoes stored in pits are not as good in quality as those stored in houses. For further information on storing sweet potatoes write for Farmers Bulletin No. 848.

Onions.

Onions should be well matured before harvesting, and should be allowed to become thoroughly dry before being stored. They may be put up in baskets, crates, or bins, and placed in a cool dry place. The article is better than the unheated cellar for storing onions. The temperature slightly below the freezing point do not injure them, provided they are not moved or handled while frozen. The commercial storage of onions is briefly discussed in Farmers Bulletin No. 854.

Beans, Peas and Other Holed Products.

Such vegetables as may be kept in the dry state should be grown to as great an extent as possible. Various kinds of beans, including Lima beans, should be allowed to dry on the vines. Lima beans should be gathered as they mature, and placed in a warm dry place until dry, then placed in a cool dry place until they are ready to be stored. Navy beans and kidney beans are usually harvested when a maximum number of pods are mature and before the ripen pods open and the vines cured like hay, after which they are threshed or shelled. Peas are harvested in the same way as navy beans, and after the beans and peas are threshed or shelled they should be placed in bags or hung in some dry place, such as a closet or attic.

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