

A Garden For Every Suburban Home---Some Hints on How to Make It

A Half-Acre Devoted to Garden Crops Would Easily Supply a Family With \$100 of Vegetables in Year.

A HALF ACRE devoted to the various kinds of garden crops would easily supply a family with one hundred dollars' worth of vegetables during the year. A bountiful supply of really fresh vegetables close at hand, however, is of more importance even than the money value. The home vegetable garden, therefore, is worthy of special attention and should include a greater number and variety of crops.

Where there is considerable choice in the location of the garden plot, it is often possible to select land that will require very little special preparation. On the other hand, it may be necessary to take an undesirable soil and bring it into suitable condition, and it is generally surprising to note the change that can be wrought in a single season.

Good drainage of the garden area is of primary importance. It is desirable that the land have sufficient fall to drain off surplus water during heavy rains, but the fall should not be so great that the soil would be washed. The surface of the garden should not contain depressions in which water will accumulate and stand. Waste water from surrounding land should not be allowed to drain upon the garden. A good fence around the garden spot is indispensable and it should be a safeguard against all animals, especially poultry. A tight board fence will accomplish this result and also serve as a windbreak.

Glasses of Fertilizer.

The kind of fertilizer employed has a marked influence on the character and quality of the vegetable produced. Fertilizers of organic composition, such as barnyard manure, should have passed through the fermenting stage before being used. Well-rotted barnyard manure has no equal as a fertilizer for garden crops. Chicken, pigeon and sheep manure rank high as fertilizer, and manure from fowls is especially adapted for dropping in the hills or rows of plants.

Autumn is the time for plowing hard or stiff clay soils, especially if in a part of the country where freezing takes place, as the action of the frost during the winter will break the soil into fine particles and render it suitable for planting. Sandy loams and soils that contain a large amount of humus may be plowed in the spring, but the work should be done early in order that the soil may settle before planting.

Sandy soils will bear plowing much earlier than heavy clay soils. The usual test is to squeeze together a handful and if the soil adheres in a ball it is too wet for working. In the garden greater depth of plowing should be practiced than for ordinary farm crops, as the roots of many vegetables grow deeply into the soil. Subsoiling will be found advantageous in most cases, as the drainage and general movement of the soil moisture will be improved thereby.

Locating Crops.

Hand spading should be resorted to only in very small gardens, or where it is desirable to prepare a small area very thoroughly.

After plowing, the next important step is to smooth and pulverize the soil. If the soil be well prepared before planting, the work of caring for the crops will be very materially lessened. It is not sufficient that the land be smooth and fine on top, but the pulverizing process should extend as deep as the plowing.

In planning the location of the various crops in the garden, due consideration should be given to the matter of succession in order that the land may be occupied at all times. As a rule it would not be best to have a second planting of the same crop follow the first, but some such arrangement as early peas followed by celery, or early cabbage or potatoes followed by late beans or corn, and similar combinations are more satisfactory.

Sow in Straight Rows.

Garden seeds should always be sown in straight rows, regardless of where the planting is made. By planting in this manner the seedlings will be more uniform in size and shape, and thinning and cultivating will be more easily accomplished. In the control of insects and diseases that infect garden crops it is often possible to accomplish a great amount of good by careful sanitary arrangement. Some of the vegetables among the garden varieties that are

comparatively easily cultivated are: Artichoke, asparagus, beans, beets, Brussels sprouts, cantaloupe, carrot, cauliflower, cucumber, sweet corn, cress, egg-plant, endive, potatoes, lettuce, okra, spinach, parsnip, peas, pepper, squash and onions.

For growing certain crops it has often been found advisable to prepare the ground in a special manner. Such crops as beets, radishes and onions are sometimes grown in beds 6 to 10 feet in width and raised 6 to 8 inches, with narrow walks between. From Baltimore southward, cabbage, cauliflower and similar crops are frequently grown on top or on the sides of ridges. When the plants are set on top of the ridge better drainage for the roots is secured. When set on the south side of the ridge greater warmth and earlier maturity will be secured, and when planted on the north side, the growth is retarded. For growing celery and a few similar crops it has been found advisable to place the plants in furrows or slight trenches in order that the soil removed may be available for working in around the plants as they mature.

What Is Good Soil?

In the broadest sense the entire garden is a seed bed, as the seeds of many of the crops are planted where they are to grow. As the term "seed bed" is used here it refers to some specially prepared place for starting plants, from which they may be transplanted to their permanent positions in the garden. The location of an outdoor seed bed should be such that it may be conveniently reached for watering, and it should be naturally protected from drying winds.

Good soil for a seed bed consists of one part of well rotted manure, two parts of good garden loam or rotted sods, and one part of sharp, fine sand. The manure should be thoroughly rotted, but it should not have been exposed to the weather and the strength leached out of it. The addition of leaf mould or peat will tend to make the soil better adapted for seed bed purposes. Mix all the ingredients together in a heap, stirring well with a shovel, after which the soil should be sifted and placed in boxes or in the bed ready for sowing the seed.

Weed seeds and the spores of fungous diseases that are present in the soil for a seed bed may be killed by placing the soil in pans and baking it for an hour in a hot oven.

The seed bed should never be allowed to become dry, but great care should be taken that too much water is not applied. Plants require the action of air upon their roots and an excess of water in the soil will exclude the air. Too frequent and heavy waterings will cause the damping-off of the seedlings.

Protect From Sun.

A few hours before removing plants from the seed bed or plant bed, they should be well watered and the water allowed to soak into the soil. This will insure a portion of the soil adhering to the roots and prevent the plants from wilting. If the plants have been properly thinned or transplanted it is often possible to run a knife or trowel between them, thus cutting the soil into cubes that are transferred with them to the garden.

Where the soil does not adhere to the roots of the plants it is well to puddle them. In the process of puddling, a hole is dug in the earth near the plant bed, or a large pail or pan may be used for the purpose, and a thin slime, consisting of clay, cow manure, and water, is prepared. The plants are taken in small bunches and their roots thoroughly coated with this mixture by dipping them up and down in the puddle a few times. Puddling insures a coating of moist earth over the entire root system of the plant, prevents the air from

reaching the rootlets while on the way to the garden, and aids in securing direct contact between the roots and the soil.

In parts of the country where the sunshine is extremely hot during a part of the summer, some plants, especially those that are grown for salad purposes, are benefited by shading. Shading is often used in the care of small plants when they are first transplanted.

Where boards are available they can be used for protecting plants that have been set in rows in the garden by placing them on the south side of the row at an angle that will cast a shadow over the plants, and holding them in place by short stakes driven in the ground. Laths, wooden slats, cotton cloth or shaded sash are frequently used to protect plant beds from the heat of summer.

ALCOHOL IN FRUIT JUICES.

BY A RECENT decision of the U. S. Department of Agriculture all fruit juices to which alcohol has been added must be plainly labeled to show this if they are to be shipped in interstate commerce after September 1, 1914. In the opinion of the department, such names as "peach juice," "cherry juice" should be applied only to fruit juices which are unfermented and which contain no added sugar, alcohol, or other substances. In the past alcohol has been frequently added as a preservative to these preparations which are used for such purposes as flavoring beverages or preparing cordials. After September 1, however, goods that do not comply with the new ruling and indicate this fact on their labels will be denied entry into this country and if found in interstate commerce will be subjected to appropriate action by the authorities.

Berry Growers Put Salesman on Road.

The Washington Fruit Growers' Association of Centralia has put a salesman on the road to increase the berry demand to meet the supply at the height of the local season. So far the local berries have been disposed of without any waste. A second car of 700 crates was shipped to Montana. At a noon luncheon of the Commercial Club Secretary H. M. Robinson asserted that 70,000 crates of berries would be produced in this vicinity this year, but that as a result of the efforts of the new farmers' association there will be but little loss.

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