

No Farm Complete Without a Garden

EVERY farmer should have a garden. In fact, no farm can be complete without a well-managed garden. There is no surer way to cut down the high cost of living than to have all the vegetables the family can consume. Growing vegetables for home use is quite different from raising vegetables on a larger scale for the market. Market gardening can be carried on profitably only where the soil and climate are favorable and the transportation and marketing facilities are accessible. In the home garden the aim is to furnish the family a supply of fresh, wholesome food all the year around and add an attractive feature to farm living.

It has been shown that the farmer gets a larger return from the time, money and land devoted to a vegetable garden than from any other expenditure on the farm, provided it is intelligently managed. A vegetable garden is valuable, not merely because it produces foodstuff worth so much money, but also because it furnishes at all seasons of the year the fresh, green foods that are necessary for the best health and working efficiency. Meat, bread and molasses all the year round do not give a balanced ration. The human system needs for its best development the fresh foods with phosphate and acid juices in them, just as the plant needs phosphates. With a properly planned garden and suitable berry bushes, grape vines, nut and fruit trees, all of which take only an acre or so, the farmer has half of his food supply at a very low cost, and has it fresher and better than it could be bought at any price.

Half Acre Enough.

For the average family a half acre will furnish an abundance of vegetables all the year. The garden should be near the kitchen for convenience in gathering the vegetables. A well-drained spot somewhat protected from the high winds should be chosen. The soil should be a sandy loam or a clay loam. Coarse sand or heavy clay makes a poor garden. If such must be used, the character should be improved at once by the addition of manure, green manure, well rotted chips, leaf mould, ashes, lime, sand or whatever is needed to make a loose, rich, finely pulverized soil. The soil must be given humus enough and be broken deep enough to hold moisture well. When practicable, the garden should be located where it can be irrigated from the tank. Often a very small amount of water will save a vegetable crop. The garden spot should be thoroughly broken and well rotted manure added to the soil in winter. Before the seeds are sown the soil should be plowed and re-plowed, disced, harrowed and dragged until it is thoroughly pulverized, settled down, and the surface leveled and covered with a fine mulch.

The garden should have a wide gate to admit wagon and team, should be oblong so that the rows may be long, and should be so planted that the cultivation may be done largely with horse-power. The rows should extend the entire length of the plot, and should not be less than 30 inches apart for the use of the horse cultivator. Small square patches worked by hand make gardening needlessly burdensome and expensive. The grape vines and berries are usually planted on one side of the vegetable garden, which is a good arrangement.

Japanese Gardens.

To add variety to the attractions of home grounds there is no more potent factor than Japanese gardens, but these must not be left open as a part of the general landscape. They look well when confined to a house court or patio, and if a part of the greater garden should be set apart by a wall, fence, hedge, or other division of a precise nature. They are not expected to fill the same place as other gardens in a conception of the whole, but should be made toy-like or gardens in miniature, more or less absurdities from our own point of view. Rocks, water and uneven surfaces, if extent of area will permit the latter, should be the leading features and considerations.

To Make a Good Hotbed.

Excavate two feet deep, and as large as the bed is to be; if a two-sash bed, the opening is six feet square, if a six-sash bed is to be made the opening is 18½ by 6 feet, as the sashes are generally 3 by 6 feet.

The frame is made so the sash fits snug and tight.

The opening is planked up from the bottom with good, solid boards, which

keeps out the moles and keeps in the heat.

Attend to the ventilation and have the frames so arranged that this may be done with the least amount of time and labor possible.

The front of the hotbed frame is one foot above the level of the surrounding soil and the rear is two feet above.

This gives the sash a fall of one foot in six.

The manure is about 18 inches deep after it is packed down solid. The earth on this about six inches deep. This leaves plenty of room between the plants and the grass.

Always ventilate at the back or top, by slipping the sash down, little or much, as desired.

Growing Asparagus.

Asparagus requires a deep, sandy black loam soil, the deeper the better; subsoil of a porous nature and well tile-drained.

The item of fertilizer is one of gigantic importance. Fertilizer in some form must be procured in liberal

quantities. Asparagus is not a dainty feeder; it devours alike the fine ground bone of commerce and the dead cat picked up in the back alley.

In starting a family asparagus bed, plow the ground at least six inches deep. The plants should be one year old, set in rows three feet apart and 18 inches apart in the row.

Dig the holes for the plants large enough to receive the roots in their natural position and eight inches deep; firm the earth well over the plants.

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