

War's Effect on the Apple

WHILE the probe of the price on food products is being waged by federal authorities, fruit growers and dealers are wondering what effect the war in Europe will have on the apple situation in this country. That the exportation of apples will be curtailed is self-evident, but this should not be a little figure since the quantity annually shipped abroad is but a drop in the bucket of production.

The importation of foreign fruits and the foreign demand for dried apples and peaches from this country will modify the apple situation more than can now be anticipated. The free entrance of bananas and the increased hazard of marketing this tropical fruit in the warring countries will tend to force the consumption of larger quantities of bananas in the United States. The curtailment of the fresh and dried fruits of Southern Europe will aid in increasing the home consumption of apples.

It is too early to anticipate what the situation will be by the time the apple crop is rolling. By that time the crisis in the war may have been reached, and that will materially modify the market condition. There will then be an outlet for approximately the usual quantity used abroad, together with the usual demand for dried fruits. But with the great nations of Europe at the height of anxiety and

with our own country eagerly watching the latest move on the checkerboard of fate, the demand for apples, both at home and abroad may be smaller than can be anticipated at this time.

There probably will be a healthy demand for apples of good grades at reasonable prices, while low grades may be an absolute waste where by-product plants are not available. There will undoubtedly be a strong demand for dried apples. There will be an increased call for cider, vinegar and other standard apple products, and it behooves apple growers to look more carefully to the outlet for their low grades than it does to their storage stock.

Good apples, well graded and well packed will be good property. Storage facilities will undoubtedly be taxed to the utmost, and fruit growers as well as dealers will find it more important than ever to advertise apples. The International Apple Shippers' Association has well matured plans under way for a systematic campaign of limited size, a plan which could be made national or international in its scope if sufficient funds were available. Such a campaign should receive the hearty support of every one directly or indirectly interested in the apple market. Mr. U. Grant Border, Baltimore, Md., is chairman of the committee that will handle the apple advertising.

Farming in the Back Yard

TODAY in the United States thousands of people are making money from their back yards. Some are making their entire livelihoods from a few hundred feet of ground, while in other instances incomes are doubled by the judicious farming of small patches of ground as a side line or odd-time job.

More vegetables can be grown in the city or suburban back yard than the average family can eat, with a good quantity to spare.

Intensive cultivation must be resorted to. Not an inch of space should be wasted during the growing season. As soon as one vegetable is through bearing another must be ready to take its place.

The first thing that the small farmer should do is to study the nature of the soil at his disposal. Clay soil, for instance, is very strong, and—though difficult to handle—vegetables once started in it will develop vigorously.

The best soil, however, consists of a subsoil of clay and a topsoil of friable loam, which should not be too light and dry. For the lightening of tough ground nothing is better than

sand, lime, compost, wood ashes and stable manure, and even the toughest soils treated in this way can be made to produce profit-getting crops.

Next in importance to the study of the soil itself is the question of fertilizing. Stable manure that is well rotted and not too strawy can be used to advantage on any soil. On the other hand, chicken droppings and sheep manure should be used sparingly. In recent years, however, commercial fertilizers have come into great favor, and as the best of them combine, in proper proportions, the chief elements of fertilization, they are undoubtedly of great value to the yard farmer, especially the beginner.

The selection of the crops to be grown is, of course, of the utmost importance. The size of the garden, the nature and condition of the soil, the amount of time to be spent in gardening and the market conditions must be carefully considered, as well as the climatic advantages.

Cucumbers are among the most profitable of all vegetables. On a bed 16x16, as an example, 24 hills of cucumbers were planted. Ten vines were left in each hill and from this patch, which was kept well watered as the season grew dry, 800 salable cucumbers were gathered. The price obtained for these was 20 cents a dozen, from which it may be seen a comfortable profit was made from the limited space of ground occupied. Cucumbers will grow well in almost any climate and soil, provided proper care is given them, and, in addition, they are prolific bearers and good keepers, all of which makes them an attractive crop for the back-yard farmer.

Another good crop is tomatoes. There is always a good sale for young tomatoes, the demand for which exceeds the supply in most localities.

But few vegetables bring, perhaps, so good a price or find so ready sale as lima beans. They require a mellow loamy soil with plenty of sunshine, and may be planted to great advantage along an everyday woven-wire fence. The space occupied, for this reason, does not really affect the garden at all, and, as the market price is good, limas are consequently a necessary and important crop.

Of the late spring vegetables peas are, perhaps, the most delicious and bring, as well, the best prices.

There are several other crops that may be grown with profit in the ordinary backyard, among which may be mentioned radishes, lettuce, spinach, garden cress, beets and onions. Brussels sprouts are also a profitable crop.

There is a man in New Jersey who raised twenty-four kinds of crops on a plot of ground 25x60 feet. The total cost of his farm was \$12.50 during the

season exclusive of labor. The total amount of time spent by him was two hours a day, and yet this man—who farmed his back yard as a side line—raised last year a crop that returned him over \$800 in net profits.

In Chicago—in the center of the apartment house district—is a man who owns a small farm, a half-square in area, who has supported his family for years from the proceeds of his truck garden.

To avoid the annoyance caused by rusty garden tools, apply a coat of lard, to which a little white lead has been added, to the bright portions when they are not in use. When tools are found to be rusty, they may be allowed to soak for twelve hours in sour milk when, at the end of which time the rust can easily be removed by a stiff brush or soft cloth, a coat of kerosene being then applied.

When grafting is being done, considerable annoyance often results from the sticking of wax to the hands. The usual remedy is to grease the hands, but a better plan is to use Indian meal or bran, which, if rubbed on the hands at frequent intervals, will prevent the wax from adhering to the flesh.

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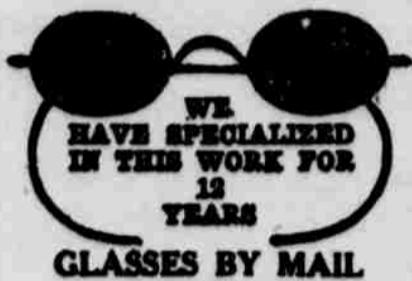
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