



# Over the GARDEN GATE

While a heated basement makes a poor root cellar, its surplus warmth can be diverted with profit into a hot-bed in which you can start seeds of both flowers and veg-



Hotbed Built Into Basement Casement.

etables weeks earlier than it is safe to sow them outdoors.

The trick is to build a frame around a basement window, preferably with southern exposure, and open the window to let the warm air circulate over the plants.

In front of the window make a shallow excavation, about a foot deep. The size must be figured carefully, so that a frame set in this excavation can be covered by window or hot-bed sash. As in the case of other hot-beds, a glass substitute may be used on the sash, if desired.

Build a frame to fit in the excavation. The sides must slant

sharply from a point above the window, almost to the ground. Fit the sash on this frame, using hinges at the top so the sash may be easily raised for ventilation. Earth may be banked around the frame to keep out the cold; and the sides should be as tight as possible to keep out the wind.

The frame may have to be caulked, where it joins the foundation to prevent drafts, otherwise it is built like the garden type, using a standard or odd size sash as you choose.

Heat is supplied to this bed by opening the basement window, and allowing the heated basement air to enter the bed. The window is left open at night, and may often be closed during the day, when the sun is shining on the bed. Hot-beds of this type have been tried and tested, and although they do not maintain temperatures as high as other kinds the heat will be more even, and the ventilation much better.

The main things to watch are temperature and drafts. Ventilation is necessary on warm days, and for very short periods on cooler days.

Glass substitutes may be used to cover the sash. They are lighter, and not so likely to be broken by the wind. Polyethylene sheets of double thickness will last one season; and translucent materials strengthened with wire will last longer. All admit an adequate supply of light for young plants.

## Ladino Clover Problem Eyed

Farmers with slug-riddled Ladino clover pastures may be able to solve their forage problem with New Zealand white clover, according to H. B. Howell, superintendent of the Oregon State College J. J. Astor branch experiment station.

Yield trials at the Astoria station on Oregon's coast — where slugs have been carving huge slices from once promising pastures — give New Zealand white clover the nod over other legumes tested. Ladino, Kentish, and Kentucky white clovers and Columbia and Beaver big trefoils were included in the tests.

New Zealand white clover's good showing rounds out a three-year search for a Ladino replacement by Howell. These tests, plus local-grower experience, indicate that New Zealand white is superior to Ladino along the coast and lower Columbia River countries. And work at Corvallis indicates that the New Zealand white may be a good bet on some non-irrigated pastures on good soils in the Willamette Valley.

Pastures close to the ocean, with mild temperatures and high rainfall, remain green and productive the year around. But this climate also favors garden slugs, and these slugs have limited Ladino in pasture mixtures to two years.

In contrast, New Zealand white seems to repel slugs, and is able to keep a vigorous, dense growth.

## Tough Farm Year Looms

Another rough year is looming on the Oregon farm front. Average net income for Oregon farmers this year may be little more than half of what it was in 1951, believes M. D. Thomas, Oregon State College agricultural economist.

Large stocks of farm products piled up in past years will hold prices down even if Congress approves the so-called "soil bank" early this year, says Thomas. Major benefits from the soil bank are "long range," states the economist, with immediate benefits likely to be felt only by Oregon seed growers who would find rapidly expanded markets for grass and legume seeds to plant the nation's soil banks.

The soil bank would take out of production 10 to 20 per cent of the nation's cropland and save it until needed in an emergency such as a drought or all-out war, or by our future production.

If the acreage taken out of crops brought sufficient production cuts, farmers' incomes would improve slyly, Thomas explains. Farm prices would probably be enough better in two or three years to more than offset the decreased production, he believes. Meanwhile, substantial government payments would be necessary to keep many farmers going while the "bank" is being established.

Already, the average Oregon farmer's net money income from farming has dropped below \$2,000 compared to \$3,000 in 1951. A further drop in 1955 and prospects for some further decline may slash farm family income by nearly one-half in the past five years.

The average net would be down even more if the number of farm operators in the state had not decreased, says Thomas. The census shows only 54,442 farms in the state in 1954 compared to 59,827 in 1950 and 63,125 in 1945.

Many farmers on smaller Oregon farms are supplementing their income with off-farm work. The economist believes such families will seek even more off-farm work in 1956 with job prospects and salaries now favorable. Mill and factory wage rates have risen steadily for several years and now average one-third higher than in 1949.

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## Convenient Hose Carrier Built

A convenient, inexpensive holder for the garden hose is easily made with a galvanized steel pail. Simply nail the pail to the garage wall through the bottom of the pail so that the open end faces away from the wall.

The shape of the pail with a flared lip on the outside edge, easily keeps the hose in place, coiled around the pail.



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