

The Cottage Gardener



The Successful Gardener Plants the Seeds in a Flat Tray, to Be Set in a Window on the Living Room Floor or in the Basement Where it is Warm and Sunny.

START THE PLANTS IN WINDOW BOXES

All Vegetable and Flower Seeds Respond to Warmth and the Bright Sunshine.

A window box for starting early vegetable plants will give the home gardener from ten days to three weeks advantage in earliness over his neighbor who does not have some means of starting early plants. Tomatoes, peppers, eggplants, cabbage, cauliflower and lettuce are the crops that lend themselves best to starting early in the house. It does not matter what kind of a box is used, but for convenience it should be about 3 or 4 inches



The Home-Made Flat.

deep and of a size that will readily fit into the window space. The box can be set on a small table or on special legs or supports.

One method of providing a window box is described by the United States Department of Agriculture. Take a soap box or some similar packing box and saw it horizontally lengthwise into two sections. If the box is too deep for sawing through the center, two cuts can be made, using the top of the box with cover nailed on to form the bottom tray and the bottom part of the box for a second tray. The middle section which is cut out may have a bottom nailed onto it, forming still another tray. Only one tray will be needed in the window at first for the sowing of the seeds. Later additional trays or flats, as they are called, are required for transplanting.

One point of great importance in starting early plants in the window is to see that they are not over watered. Another point is to turn the box from time to time so that the plants will not grow crooked and drawn toward the window. A supply of good soil should be stored in the cellar or in some dry place in the autumn in order to have it available along in February or March when it is wanted for filling the window boxes. This soil should be of a light loam or sandy nature and the part used in the transplanting trays should contain a very little finely sifted manure well mixed with the soil. The plants should be shaded for a day or so and kept well watered after transplanting, but as the season advances the trays should be carried into the open air whenever it is warm enough and the plants exposed to outdoor conditions so that they will be sturdy and accustomed to the open air by the time it is safe to set them in the garden. In removing the plants from the trays for setting in the ground a knife or trowel should be run between them so that they may be lifted with a nice block of earth adhering to their roots.

BEEF CONTAINS IRON

The beet is said to be especially valuable as an article of diet because it contains a larger portion of iron than other vegetables.

SHOULD FERTILIZE TO GET GOOD CROP

Stable Manure, Soil Building Crops, or Commercial Fertilizer Necessary.

Most farmers can spare enough manure from their other crops to fertilize properly a one-fourth acre garden plot, but in some sections, especially near towns, manure is no longer to be had in quantity and other means must be found for fertilizing garden soils. In brief, states the United States Department of Agriculture, at least three methods of adding fertility to the soil. First, by the application of manure; second, by the use of soil building crops, and, third, by commercial fertilizers. No one method is as good as any two or the three combined, and if we are to get the best results from the use of commercial fertilizer a reasonable amount of manure or organic matter must be in the soil.

The amount of manure required will depend entirely upon the soil itself, but very few cases are found where the use of manure on gardens is being overdone. The same might be said about the turning under of manure crops or soil building crops. Even the weeds that grow upon the surface during the late summer, aside from their seeds, are often valuable for working into the soil. The method of applying the manure will also depend upon local conditions, but as a rule manure that has been piled and thoroughly composted will give better results than that which is in the raw state.

Too much cannot be said in favor of the compost pile by means of which equal parts of manure and soil or sods, which are even better are piled to rot. This compost heap should be turned once or twice during the winter months and the material applied to the garden as a top dressing during the spring. Ten tons of this kind of material will not be too much for



Intensive Fertilization.

the ordinary one-fourth acre garden. Commercial fertilizers are used for adding plant food to the garden and give best results when used in conjunction with stable manure or compost. Commercial gardeners often use as much as 4,000 pounds to the acre for special crops like celery, but generally speaking 400 or 500 pounds of a fertilizer containing 3 or 4 per cent nitrogen, 8 per cent phosphoric acid and 2 to 4 per cent potash, will be all that is needed on a one-fourth-acre garden. Fertilizers should be used most heavily on corn, potatoes, cabbage and the root crops and more lightly on beans, peas and tomatoes.

SHARP TOOLS

The majority of gardeners enjoy the task more when the tools are sharp. File the edge of your hoes and spades before time to work in the open.

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HOW TO MOVE THE DECIDUOUS PLANTS

Trees and Shrubbery Should Not Be Disturbed While Showing Growth.

Deciduous plants are ordinarily moved when dormant or during the period from a little before the leaves drop in the autumn, until growth starts in the spring. With extra care they may be moved at other times. The secret of successful transplanting is getting a good root growth started before top growth makes too heavy demands upon the roots. In cool moist climates there is not the same care demanded as in warmer or drier ones. If possible, plants should be put in their permanent places immediately. Otherwise, they should be put in the ground temporarily to prevent their drying out, states the United



Trees Ready for Planting.

States Department of Agriculture. The soil must be so dry that there will be no danger of its packing hard enough about the roots to bake or become bricklike on drying, and will spring apart again after being squeezed tightly in the hand.

The holes should be dug sufficiently wide to take all the roots without doubling them back, and deep enough to set the plant a little deeper than it grew before and still have 2 or 3 inches of good new soil under it. The good top soil should be saved for putting back in the hole about the roots of the plant, the sub-soil should be taken away and replaced by good soil. Well rotted manure and ground bone or cotton-seed meal may be liberally mixed with the earth about the roots of the newly set tree. These should be well mixed with the soil but should not come in direct contact with the roots.

The roots should be placed as nearly in the position they grew as is possible, care being taken not to leave them in layers without fine soil between. The plant should be gently worked up and down to be sure there is no opening left under the place from which the roots branch. After the hole is partially filled, the soil must be well tamped to bring the roots and soil into close contact with one another. If the earth is very dry water should be applied before the hole is finally filled. After it has soaked away the balance of the soil should be replaced but without any tamping or firming of any kind. When the work is done in the fall it is well to make a mound about the plant to prevent wind from swaying it and loosening it in the soil. This mound about the tree should be used only in fall transplanting and should be leveled down as early as possible in the spring. If the plant is large it should be securely staked to serve the same purpose. Mulching with coarse manure or straw will aid in cold countries by preventing frost from penetrating the ground so deeply and in dry countries by holding moisture.

The top of the plant must be pruned somewhat in proportion to the amount of roots that were destroyed in digging. This usually means that one-half of the top should be cut away when the plant has been well dug and handled and three-fourths or more if it has been poorly handled. As far as possible this should be done by removing whole limbs or branches rather than by cutting back the ends, in order that the general shape or character of the plant may be kept. It is often a help in protecting the roots from drying out too rapidly and assisting them in coming in immediate close contact with the soil to dip them in very dilute clay and cow manure just before planting, or even in dilute clay alone.

EGG SHELL SEED POTS

Half egg shells make good seed pots in which to start cucumbers.

THE STAR CAR

THE STAR CHASSIS FEATURES

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- 11 Spicer Universal Joints.
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- 14 Star Springs are semi-elliptic, underlung and in line with the frame—front 34 in. long, rear 48 in. long.
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- 16 Stewart Vacuum Feed Pipe.
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- 19 Timken Front Axle.
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