Efficient Farming

PLANTING STRAWBERRIES IN LATE SUMMER.

Although spring is the season when the great majority of gardeners make up their new strawberry beds, yet there are many who swear by August and early September planting.

The drawback to summer planting is the danger of having to contend with a dry soil at that season so that some plants may be lost. Where pot plants are used—that is, runners rooted in small pots—the loss will be negligible.

In favor of summer planting, where it is carried out successfully, is the prospect of a small crop of nice berries the following spring. Plants must however, be set out sufficiently early that we can be tolerably certain they will become thoroughly established prior to winter.

It may be necessary to use water freely and regularly after planting, depending upon weather and soil conditions, whereas a mulch of straw or other litter will aid in keeping the soil around the plants moist and cool and so encourage root action.

What we have to fear most from summer planting is the alternate freezing and thawing of the ground during winter and spring, though this can be guarded against to a great extent by mulching the plants, covering them with a good layer of straw or other matter.

If August planting is to be carried out the ground should be dug deeply two or three weeks ahead, at the same time placing a layer of old manure in the bottom as the work proceeds.

Summer planting is best done in August; the plants are then able to get well established in the new bed before winter, and so pass safely through the cold weather.

When a strawberry plant has borne fruit for two, or at most, three seasons, a new bed should be made, as from this time the fruit will be smaller and the crop considerably curtailed.

Planting distances vary, but the home gardener may safely space his plants twelve to eighteen inches apart in rows two to three feet apart. When the time has come for setting out the plants and no rain has fallen for some time the ground should be thoroughly watered before and after planting, and also at regular intervals for a few weeks to insure growth.

THE RIGHT WAY TO PLANT.

The after success of the strawberry depends greatly upon the way in which it was placed in the soil. The roots should be just covered and made quite firm; the crown—that is, the point from where the young leaves arise—must be quite free and exposed.

Make the hole sufficiently large to receive the roots comfortably when spread out as they should be; cover with soil and tread firmly all round, but slightly away from the plant itself. When setting out pot plants, loosen the soil around the roots before placing them in the prepared hole.

A mulch of old well-decayed manure, short straw or lawn clippings is spread around the plants. During hot and dry weather the mulch will keep the soil moist and cool and the formation of new roots will be greatly assisted. After the ground freezes the entire bed must be mulched, the plants also being lightly covered with straw or other litter.

Unless it is desired to increase the stock of plants, all superfluous side shoots or runners should be cut off as they appear.

The strawberry is increased by runners, many of which are produced by all vigorous growing plants. On examining these plants it will be noticed that several long, thin stalks proceed from them at various points, and that at the end of each there is a small plant.

INCREASING STOCK BY LAYERING.

This is a runner, and propagation is effected by layering. If the soil is at all moist these little plants emit roots and form runner plants, becoming independent of the parent plant, and by severing the shoots which still adhere to the old plant they are lifted and used in making new beds.

However, if young stock is wanted for summer planting and you purpose raising such stock from your old plants the better plan is to layer each runner in a separate pot.

Use pots three inches in diameter, place a small piece of turf at their base for drainage, then fill up with finely sifted soil containing some sand.

The pots are buried in the soil up to their rim and just under the selected runners. The reason for plunging the small pots in the ground is to prevent the soil from becoming dry, as would quickly occur were the sun able to reach them. The runner at the end of the long stalk is then fixed into the soil of the pot. This may be done by means of a hairpin or bent wire, or merely by placing a stone over the shoot to hold it in place. Water must be given as required.

In the course of a week or so roots will be emitted and they will soon take possession of the pot. The stalk can then be cut.

They are now ready for planting out in the formation of new beds. Set out early and attended to as suggested they will be fine plants, sturdy and well established in the new soil before winter. The latter half of June is a good time to insert the layers in small pots; if given proper attention in the matter of supplying the needed moisture the pots will be full of roots by August, in good time for planting the new bed.

Strawberry varieties have two types of flowers, perfect and imperfect, and unless perfect — bisexual — varieties alone are grown it will be necessary to plant some of each kind to insure fertilization and a crop of fruit.

Some few very productive strawberries have imperfect flowers, but most of the varieties now cultivated extensively are perfect or bisexual.

Thinning Fruit.

It is curious, when you think of all the advantages claimed for it, that the practice of thinning fruit, particularly apples, is not more common.

Here are some of the advantages said to result from thinning, and there seems to be abundant experimental evidence to substantiate the claims.

First, it increases the size of the fruit if there is an average crop or better on the trees; and of course the heavier the crop is the more the fruit will be increased in size.

This increase in size will benefit the owner in two places: at the top, so to speak, so far as size is concerned, the apples will increase in size enough so that they will grade extra fancy or fancy, instead of fancy and A grade or No. 1, and will therefore bring a better price. And at the bottom it will increase the size of a lot of apples which might otherwise be too small to sell for much, making them good marketable stuff.

Experiments show that as a rule the apples on the thinned trees increase in size sufficiently to make the total crop on these trees equal in bushels to the total crop on similar unthinned trees.

A test at an Experiment Station showed that although there was an average of 2,000 more apples to the tree on the unthinned than on the thinned trees, yet owing to the smaller size of the former, the crop of marketable fruit was actually less than half what it was on the thinned trees.

In the second place thinning maintains the vigor of the tree. This is particularly important with trees which have not yet reached their full size, but is worth considering with any trees.

In the third place the fruit is improved in color very decidedly, provided the crop is at all heavy. The color is of deeper shade and more of the surface of the fruit is covered. We all know that good color is mighty important in selling fruit.

In the fourth place thinning pays in cash; we get more money for our crop. Not only that, but the grading and packing of the crop can be done more rapidly because there are much fewer poor apples to be taken out and handled.

Now the foregoing is a fairly impressive list of benefits to come from a single operation and, as we have said, it is curious that more growers do not practice thinning.

Of course the explanation is that we let our fruit go unthinned, just as some folks let their teeth go uncleaned, simply because it is one of the things that can be neglected and still we can "get by." If failure to clean the teeth brought on a severe stomach ache at once, no one would neglect his teeth; and if failure to thin our apples caused a loss of the entire crop most of us would thin.

If you have not been in the habit of thinning your apples and want to see what the practice will do for you, why not try it out? Select ten trees with a heavy set of fruit and thin the fruit on five of them.

Thin these five trees if possible when the little apples are about the size of the end of the thumb. Wait until the June drop is past and then get at it just as soon as possible. The earlier it can be done the better. Thin off all the apples but one on a spur; or better still, thin till the apples are six or seven inches apart.

The important thing is to thin!

Poultry

Blood clots on the yolk of eggs result from the clot becoming attached to the yolk when it passes through the oviduct. Later it is surrounded by albumen. It most often occurs when pullets are starting to lay or during the spring when production is heavy. Flocks that are heavily forced with concentrated feeds are apt to produce the largest per cent. of eggs with the blood clots on the yolks.

The only remedy is to candle the eggs if they are being shipped to a high class trade. Then all the eggs with clots can be removed and used at home or sold to a trade that will pay less money per dozen, but not discriminate against the clots. When the clots are removed, of course the eggs appear normal and are alright to use. The most unfortunate factor in this trouble is the fact that inexperienced buyers may think they are receiving partly hatched eggs when the poultryman is not to blame for the condition.

At present the most valuable gift which can be bestowed on women is something to do, which they can do well and worthily, and thereby maintain themselves.—James A. Garfield.

Cutworms.

Complaints have already been received of cutworms attacking corn, cucumbers and several other plants. A number of fields have been examined and the indications are that in many localities farmers should be on guard against injury by these worms. The plants most likely to be destroyed are corn, tomatos, cabbage, melons, cucumbers and other transplanted plants. The work of cutworms is easily recognized. They feed at night, cutting the plants off near or at the ground, though some species will climb the plants and eat the foliage without cutting the stalk. They hide by day under any kind of refuse or in the soil just below the surface, where they can readily be found. Control is usually easy, all that is necessary being to scatter thinly the following poison bait over the infested area or to drop a small amount—half a teaspoonful—near each plant. Do this in the evening about dusk, as they prefer the mixture when it is moist.

Formula: Bran, 25 lbs., Paris green or white arsenic, 1 lb., molasses ½ gallon, water 2 gallons.

Mix the bran and poison together dry in a wash tub or large vessel. Add the molasses to the water. Stir well and then pour the liquid over the poison bran and mix until every part is moist and will fall readily through the fingers.

Watch for cutworm injury and as soon as they are seen to be present apply the bait. Usually one application will be sufficient.

Caution—Beware of cattle, chickens or other animals getting access to the bait.—L. Caesar, Prov. Entomologist.

How to Drench a Hog.

This is a job that takes more skill and patience than most men are ever able to acquire. If not too large, the animal may be drenched successfully if special apparatus is provided. A bottle should never be used, as there is too great danger that the animal will break the neck of it and swallow the glass.

The bottle containing the drench should be provided with a short piece of hose, which should be fastened securely at the neck, the part of the hose that is to be inserted in the animal's mouth should not be too firm and stiff. The free end of the hose is placed in the animal's mouth and when it reaches the back of the mouth, the animal will usually chew upon it and discontinue the squealing; the liquid is then allowed to run into the mouth very slowly. Care should be taken that the liquid does not flow too freely.

The danger in drenching is from pnumonia, caused by liquid entering the lungs.

Spray the Dairy Cows.

The annoyance created by stable, house and horn flies during June, July, August and September is responsible for considerable loss in many dairy herds.

In tests conducted at the Ontario Agricultural College cows that were sprayed gave a little more milk and were more easily handled than during similar periods when no spraying was done. Less annoyance to the milker and to the cow during the milking period makes the practice worth while. The following recipe will be found as efficient as any fly repellant now in use:

Dissolve 8 pounds of laundry soap in water and then add the following: 4½ quarts coal tar dip, 4½ quarts fish oil, 3 quarts coal oil, 3 quarts whale oil, 1½ quarts oil of tar. Sufficient to make 30 gallons spray.

Value of Pasteurization.

To test the value of pasteurization as an aid in keeping milk in a usable condition for a long period, a study was made by the Dairy Dept. of the Ontario Agricultural College during July of 1923. Similar samples of raw and pasteurized milk subjected to a temperature of 53 deg. to 54 deg. F. gave results as follows: The raw milk did not keep for twenty-four hours, while the pasteurized milk was sweet at the end of the third day. Similar samples of raw and pasteurized milk held at 37 deg. to 43 deg. F., gave the following results: The raw milk kept sweet for less than forty-eight hours, while the pasteurized milk was still sweet and in good condition at the end of two weeks. The trials show the great value of pasteurization in the fluid milk trade and the necessity of low temperatures for holding the milk after pasteurizing.

Goats Are Particular About Feed.

Goats are particular that their feed and water be clean. If anything drops to the ground and is trampled on, they will not eat it unless extremely hungry. Therefore a rack so constructed that they can not pull the feed out and drop it on the ground, is absolutely essential for economy.

Have some sort of a milking stand for goats. One about fourteen or sixteen inches high, about three and one-half feet long and two feet wide, with a small stanchion and feed box on the front, is very satisfactory. This enables a person to sit on a stool or box and milk just the same as milking a cow, while the goat may be eating her grain. As a rule goats do not care for bedding, but prefer a hard surface on which to lie. For this reason it is well to provide a bench or platform about three feet high, especially for goats kept in a pen.

Horse Sense

The best time for grooming is at the close of the day's work, unless the work has been exhaustive and the animal is very tired; in this case it should be allowed to rest first. By giving the animal a thorough grooming at night, it will need by a light grooming in the morning, simply to remove the dirt and produce a cleanly appearance.

The horse should be cool and dry. Begin grooming at the left side of the neck, immediately behind the left ear, thoroughly brushing out the coat, moving the brush in the direction that the hair lies; if dirt is excessive and sticks rather close, it may be necessary to move the brush in a circular direction.

To use the brush to the best advantage, it is advisable to stand at some distance from the horse, about arms' length, and holding the arm fairly rigid, lean a portion of the body right against the brush, thus forcing it through the hair. The brush should not be brought down with too much force upon those animals which have a tender skin. If the operator stands too close to the animal, and with his arm bent, he is not as apt to remove the dirt so effectively, since the bristles do not penetrate the coat.

After the one side is completed, the other side is groomed in the same manner, starting at the same place on the neck. The legs can be groomed at the same time the sides are groomed, or they may be finished after.

At this stage of the grooming, if you desire to do a good job, turn the animal around in the stall to clean the face, eyes and nostrils. It is much more convenient and you can do a much better job of it as the manger is in your way if you do this part of the grooming with the animal standing naturally. The animal is again turned in the stall and the mane and tail brushed out, and the animal is given the final polish with the rubber.

Use a soft brush or a rubber for cleaning the head; a dry water brush is as good as anything you can use. Do not knock the skin or the body projections on the head and legs while grooming them.

The Value of Pedigree in Seed.

"Pedigree" in seed grain bears essentially the same relationship to crop production as "pedigree" in the case of live stock bears in relation to the profitable production of milk or meat. The value of pedigree in live stock has been recognized for centuries, but it is only within comparatively recent times that the principles of breeding have been found to apply in the case of plant life. Even to-day, comparatively few people realize that reproduction in plants follows essentially the same laws of nature and takes place in much the same way as it does in the case of animals. In the case of our ordinary grain crops, the male and female organs are situated in the one individual flower. New varieties are produced by removing the male organs (stamens) from the flower and introducing the fertilizing element, known as pollen, from the male organs of another variety. The seed resulting from this fertilization combines the potentialities of the two parents. It is therefore of the utmost importance that the varieties chosen as parents possess qualities of outstanding merit. The varieties of grain which are grown to-day in Canada have been produced chiefly by artificial or natural crossing of different varieties followed by a rigid selection. As might naturally be expected, varieties differ greatly, not only in visible characters but in their ability to yield. Some, moreover, are suited to certain conditions of soil and climate, while others thrive satisfactorily under conditions which are quite different. In view of these facts, it is obvious that the individual farmer should do a certain amount of variety testing on his own farm from time to time. While his nearest Experimental Station will be able to advise him as to what varieties are likely to thrive under his conditions, it is almost necessary that he try these varieties on his own farm for a year or two, in order to be sure which is most suitable for his particular conditions. Here the "performance record" as in the dairy cow will be the deciding factor, but the foundations for this record will have been laid through generations of careful breeding.—L. H. Newman, Dominion Cerealist.

Weeds on the Lawn.

Getting rid of weeds on a lawn may seem impossible, but I saw the job done easily last summer. A spraying machine was filled with a solution of 90 per cent. water and 10 per cent. nitric acid. This was sprayed over the entire lawn so the surface was saturated. About three hours were then given for the acid to penetrate to the weed roots and destroy them. The grass roots were so much deeper that no acid reached them to harm them in that time. The lawn was then sprinkled with a 10 per cent. sodium carbonate solution. The carbonate also tended to kill the weeds, but also neutralized the nitric acid, producing sodium nitrate, a distinct fertilizer. In a short time the grass came up more luxuriantly than ever before and the weeds—except in one or two spots—were entirely killed off. This may sound fishy, but I saw it and was convinced.—L. B. R.

County Fairs and Off Seasons

BY FRANZ A. AUST.

While exhibits at fairs all over the country, however, have been increasing in excellence, the places for holding fairs have in most cases remained much the same. Four days in the year the grounds are made gay with flags and bunting in an attempt to detract from buildings ramshackle and innocent of paint. But a poor setting they are, indeed, for splendid livestock and poultry and vegetables and fruits! There's an old tent, probably, for beautiful fancy work and a display of delicious food, or there's a wooden structure with a leaky roof. There's not a tree on the grounds, sometimes, under which Mr. and Mrs. John and the family can gather in the shade for lunch; not a bush nor a shrub to soften the ugliness of uninviting buildings. Surely the country fair products of to-day have a right to be housed in the best possible quarters.

MAKE IT PAY.

And this brings up another side of the problem. A county fair must pay its own way. It is a business venture to a large degree, and those who support it are justly not satisfied unless the treasury shows a reasonable surplus each year.

The business side of the venture, therefore, must also enter into the plans for the best sort of layout. While the owning of every kind of motor vehicle from flivver to high-powered car has made distance of small importance, still the success of any fair depends much upon its location in the county. It must be so situated that it will be of interest to every citizen. It must be so placed that it will be sure to draw the crowds. Then, on the grounds themselves, the race-track, the concessions for stands and "dog wagons" and side-shows and the merry-go-round, and for the sale of the latest self-soldering device, must all be located with as great care as any of the other features.

One who designs a fair-grounds, then, has the work of making it easy of access, attractive in appearance, convenient for exhibitors and for those who have concessions, and so arranged that it will bring in the best returns in good Canadian money. Everything must work in harmony. And the most successful fair will be built with a plan as a foundation.

REST ROOM FOR WOMEN.

A women's building of substantial proportions should have in connection with it a comfortable rest room. A day nursery with a nurse to watch over the little ones is also an excellent addition. There the children may safely be left while their mothers enjoy the sights and sounds which only weary babies. And just outside the nursery there should be a fenced play yard. In this play yard may be placed sand-boxes and simple playground apparatus. In the women's building itself, of course, should be arranged the booths for fancy work and the other gentle arts.

Nearby, the hall for flowers and vegetables should be constructed, for in these, too, are the women particularly interested. The poultry, in a suitable building, also, should not be too far away.

BUILDINGS FOR STOCK AND MACHINERY.

The section in which the men are chiefly concerned should centre in a judging pavilion, around which the various barns should be grouped. These should all be as far from the crowded portion of the grounds as possible and away from the entrances. Thus there will be no unpleasant odors to annoy, and thus those who are especially interested may view the stock in quiet.

A building for the machinery should be midway between the stock barns and the women's building. For machinery, which may include anything from milking-machines and automobiles to vacuum cleaners and flat-irons, is equally attractive to both the man and his wife. Outside the machinery building an open field should be left free for demonstration of the larger farm machinery.

Near the main entrance should be located an administration building. In this building the secretary's office should be placed. In fact, it should be the centre for all information and for all executive work of the entire grounds, while the fair is in session. If this building is placed in the direct line of traffic it can easily be reached by visitors, and all confusion can be avoided.

Amusements, since they must necessarily be a part of the money-making plan, must be situated where the crowds will pass them without going out of their way. These locations are better to be made permanent, and the returns from them made standard. Neither side-shows nor exhibit buildings should be so scattered over the grounds that the crowd seems to be lost among them. For nothing will bring a larger crowd more successfully than a grounds which seems to be already crowded. Haven't you noticed this?

For outdoor entertainment a good race track is still necessary, although all racing as an attraction is not so essential as it used to be. In these days a well-planned baseball diamond is quite as much needed to attract those who like "a good fight." Airplane stunts and livestock shows, too, are largely taking the place of races. And some day the races may be entirely replaced by skillful exhibition riding, a feature which is becoming veryesucessful at the largest fairs.

WHERE TO PUT THE AUTOS.

An ever-increasing number of automobiles is making the traffic problem one of the most serious of all. In order to avoid accidents, the automobile entrance should be entirely separate from the gate where folks are entering on foot; no automobile should be allowed where exhibits are being shown; a separate stall for every car parked on the grounds; and the exits opposite the entrances so that one-way traffic lessens the danger of collision. An extra fee should be asked for parking service, and this fee is added to the fair association fund.

Trees should be planted along the main avenues for shade and shelter. A fine grove at the entrance is a delightful spot for picnics. There are numerous native trees and shrubs to frame the buildings and to hide the sharpness of the angles and corners. The gates at the entrance should be pleasing and attractive to welcome the incoming visitor.

USING THE GROUNDS DURING THE YEAR.

While most county fair grounds are planned to be used but one week in the year, the buildings should be made more permanent, so that frequent meetings can be held within them during every season. The judging pavilion can be used for stock sales. The administration building can be permanent enough for winter meetings and auctions. Christmas fairs and harvest festivals and all winter amusements of interest to whole communities can be held in the largest building.

In the spring the fair-grounds can be the ideal place for field meets and other outdoor sports. Even the Commencement of the county high school can be held at the grounds if the pavilion is properly kept and cared for.

One enterprising fair association has combined a tourist camping park and fairgrounds. Thus during the summer the place is seldom idle, and the events of that one important week in early fall receive from the traveling public much free and good-natured advertising.

Bedtime Stories

A King's Justice to a Horse.

All the world has heard of Saint Louis, the good King of France, who, in olden times, administered justice under a big oak-tree near his palace, says a contributor to *R. S. P. C. A. Journal*, Australia.

Charles, the king of the little Italian province of Calabria, also judged his people himself, but, instead of holding his judgment out of doors he received his subjects in the hall of his castle.

Now, the King happened to hear that his men did not always show into his presence those who wished to be introduced. If poor, shabby people called they were often refused admission, and no one heard their plea.

Determined to prevent such practices, Charles ordered a bell to be hung in such a way that petitioners might pull it themselves and be sure of direct access to the King's presence. So it was done.

One day an old horse, abandoned by his master, happened to pass near the castle and to browse among the green herbs growing between the stones in the wall. By chance the horse pulled the bell-rope hanging there, and the sound echoed through the castle.

"Open the door," ordered the King "and bring in the supplicant." Soon after the guard returned laughing "It is but a horse, your Highness, Sir Capece's horse," he said. "Let this knight come in," replied the King.

Capece was introduced, and Charles inquired why his horse was wandering about. "Oh, my Lord," answered the knight, "he was a splendid creature in his time. He followed me through twenty campaigns; but now he is no longer fit for work, and I find it useless to feed the poor beast to no purpose."

"Yet did not my father reward you for your services?" asked Charles "So, indeed, he did," said Capece "And yet you will not keep this brave horse to which you may owe your success!" said the King. "Go home, and give the horse a comfortable box in your stables; I intend it to be well treated, or my displeasure awaits you."

King Charles slept heavily that night, grateful and glad to have had the opportunity of rendering justice even to a horse.

Sheep Powders.

For preventing trouble from internal parasites of sheep, I keep before the sheep at all times, a mixture of equal weights of salt and copperas. Another remedy that gives good results is salt mixed with tobacco leaves, one pound of salt to four of tobacco. Salt saturated with turpentine is often recommended, but I have never used this. There are some good commercial sheep powders.—C. M.

When your watermelons begin to bear flowers, nip off the heads of those producing staminate flowers. This makes more lateral branches, and these raise the best melons. Some melon growers have paid large sums of money to learn this little trick.