

In the Field of Agriculture

MOISTURE CONSERVATION

Cultivation is the one practical means that the farmer has for conserving moisture over any considerable area of land, says a bulletin of the Nebraska experiment station. It is by cultivation that the surface is put in condition to catch and hold the water until it can soak into the soil. Weeds are killed by cultivation and thus prevented from using the water that falls. Cultivation also checks the loss of water from soils by direct evaporation. Stirring the soil loosens the surface, hastens the process of drying the surface layer, and decreases the points of contact between the soil particles, so that the water from below can not so readily reach the surface by capillary action. In other words, we purposely sacrifice the moisture in the cultivated layer in order to conserve that in the deeper levels.

SUCCESSFUL EXPERIENCE WITH TOMATOES

A Delaware county, New York, farmer tells an interesting story of his experience in tomato growing, and gives the result of his efforts to supply a public demand for large fruit for slicing at a time when there is a dearth of fancy tomatoes. He had observed that most of the regular truckers and gardeners had always relied upon the yield of vines set in the spring, and that a tomato vine will continue to bear until frost, but as it encounters the heat and drouth of the late summer with its vitality impaired by long production, its fruit grows smaller and smaller and the runout stuff in the market does not tempt the public to buy. Perceiving an opportunity here, he sowed seed of the Ponderosa tomato about June 1 and soon had a good stand of plants. About July 1 the plants were set out in well prepared ground that had formerly been used as a strawberry bed, and watered. Most of the plants lived, but made little growth until a heavy rain about the middle of July, after which the plants grew very fast, and were soon large enough to interfere with the cultivator. They were not staked, and were placed four feet apart each way. Three rows were mixed varieties, but the rest of the fourth acre plot were Ponderosa. The tomatoes began to ripen about

August 1, and the plants bore uninterruptedly up to November, until the first hard frosts. With the small stuff on the market selling at 25 to 50 cents per bushel, this grower had no trouble in disposing of his product at \$1, and this was the average price until the end of the season. As a result of this experiment he sold \$125 worth of tomatoes for cash, or at the rate of \$500 per acre, and carried over twenty bushels of large green tomatoes.

This crop was grown practically without rain, for not a drop of rain fell from the time the plants were 18 inches high until fall. This grower is a firm believer in the Ponderosa tomato, and says the other three rows planted to other varieties bore no comparison in size and yield. In spite of the drouthy conditions prevailing during this experiment, the Ponderosa continued to bear large quantities of fruit of the most excellent quality, some of the vines carrying as much as a dozen tomatoes averaging a pound each.

THE LATE GARDEN

The old excuse of being "too busy" to make garden in May or June need not prevent the planting of many things even as late as July. It is surprising how some vegetables will grow which are planted in the warm soil in July and how much less hoeing is necessary. Cucumbers and pickles, string beans, late sweet corn, winter beets, cabbage, cauliflower, tomatoes, lettuce, radishes, peas, onions can be sown and transplanted in July.

An ounce of beet seed planted in a row one hundred feet in length and covered a half-inch deep will supply beets all the fall and winter. The half-long sorts are the best keepers.

Plant another quart of bush beans for snaps, covering them with an inch of fine soil. Plant a row of wax or yellow podded snap beans. They have a flavor of their own and are preferred by many to the green podded sorts.

Prepare a bed or row and sow an ounce of late cabbage seed. When the plants are two inches high, transplant to rows three feet apart and two feet apart in the row. Work well and you will have cabbage all winter. Many spots vacated by the earlier crops can be utilized very

nicely by filling in with cabbage plants.

Get a package of Brussels sprouts and treat the same as cabbage. This is a particularly well flavored vegetable. The little round heads are delicious and frost seems to improve their flavor. An ounce of seed will give 3,000 plants.

An excellent salad plant for winter use is kale. Sow seed shallow in June or July and transplant when plants are two inches high to rows eighteen inches apart, setting plants a foot apart in the row. Cover with hay in October and leave out all winter. Freezing improves the quality.

Sow an ounce of carrots, covering the seed one-half inch deep. When mature store like turnips.

A quart of sugar corn planted now will supply sweet, tender corn until frost.

Sow an ounce of white Lisbon parsnip seed in rows two feet apart. Cover the seed a half inch deep. Cultivate like carrots but do not store. Leave in the ground all winter, pulling the tender roots as needed.

A quart of early green peas planted late will give fine, succulent green peas just before and after frost. Don't cover the seed as deep as you do in spring.

It is not yet too late to plant potatoes for a late crop, if attended to immediately. Plant in rows three feet apart and drop eighteen inches apart in the row, covering two inches deep with lo e soil. Gather right after frost and store in frost-proof pit or cellar.

Winter radishes should be planted now. Treat like other radishes, pull before frost and place in box of sand and keep in cellar. Keep up successive plantings of the early varieties for late summer and fall use.

Get a hundred Ponderosa tomato plants and set them out in a shaded spot. You will be rewarded with the finest flavored tomato you ever tasted. The vines may be pulled before frost and hung up in the cellar. The green tomatoes will ripen slowly and ripe tomatoes may be had until Christmas.

An ounce of turnip seed sown broadcast will furnish an abundance of salad or greens for the winter fare, while any surplus can be used to good advantage in the poultry yard.

GROWING ASPARAGUS

It is the common belief that the culture of asparagus is a difficult matter, and that heavy fertilizing is an essential requirement. The experience of a New York grower, however, does not seem to bear out this impression. It is his belief that anyone can grow good asparagus with less care than strawberries, and says that any good corn land will do. His stock was grown from seed, and planted in white clay subsoil with only a slight covering of vegetable mold, a soil not recommended by books on asparagus culture. Ten years ago he planted 36 rows 125 feet long, 4 feet apart, the plants two feet apart in the row, from yearling plants. It has been picked now for eight seasons and the prospect is good for eight years more. This grower says he has a better grade, that is a larger number of mammoth stalks, than his neighbors who are extensive gardeners, although they manure their field two or three

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