

1930

## Horticultural Hunches...

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# Horticultural Hunches . . .

By Nellie Goethe

Plant Your Garden on Paper

"WHERE you can't raise flowers, you can't raise kiddies," once remarked a student of science and human nature, who added sagely that a home without horticulture is no home at all, but merely a habitation. Therefore, let's talk horticulture, which from ancient times has included the cultivation of fruits, vegetables, trees and ornamentals.

The living habits of the American people have rapidly and radically changed, and the amount of leisure time has greatly increased. This permits men and women to turn their attention to literature, music, art, flower growing and the arrangement of home grounds.

Horticulture products fall into two classes, those that have to do with food and those that deal with the beautification of homes. Since food is a primary product without which a people perish, the suggestions on the cultivation of fruits and vegetables may well be printed first. These suggestions are given by Mr. J. C. Cunningham, professor in the Horticulture Department at Iowa State College.

Approximately one-third of the food supply of the average American comes

and many, at the same time, add to the beauty and interest of the grounds.

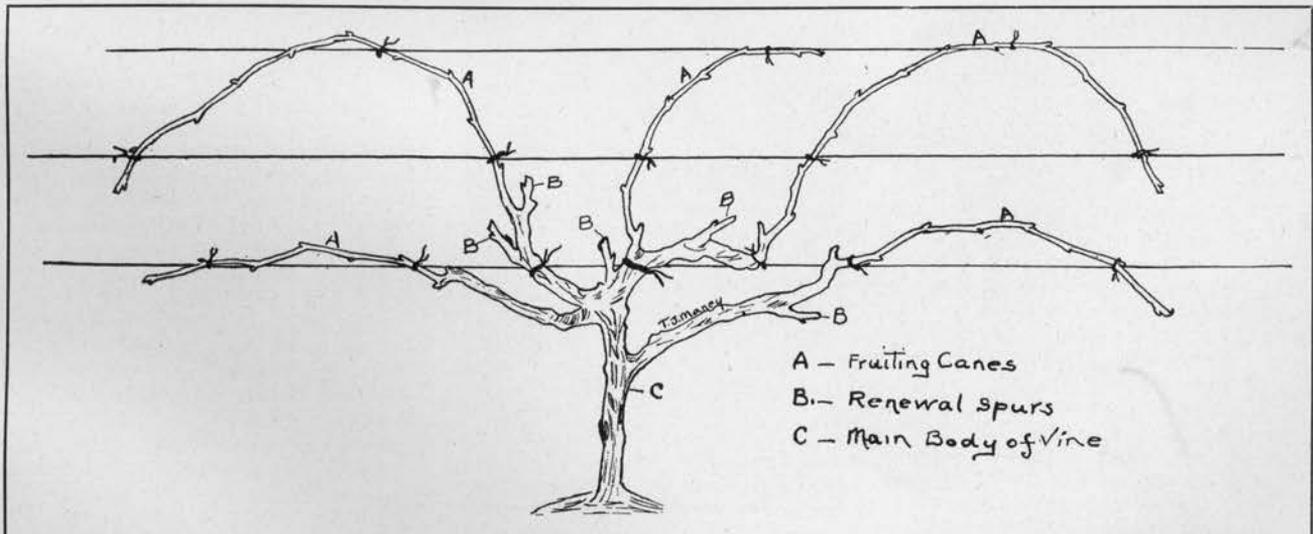
Let us first consider the vegetables. Spring moves northward at the rate of between 10-15 miles per day. Each vegetable has a temperature at which it makes the most satisfactory growth and development. The wise homemaker aims to plant her vegetables at such a time and in such a place as to take the greatest possible advantage of this optimum temperature for growth and development. The best temperature for the growth and development of potatoes, for example, is about 64 degrees Fahrenheit. It so happens that this is the average temperature of the state of Florida for the month of January, and is also the average for the northern part of the states of Wisconsin, Michigan, portions of New York, Maine and certain of the mountain states for the month of July. This means that early potatoes for the 1931 crop were making a luxuriant growth in Florida in January, and will be on the market in the middle of March.

Cabbage, likewise, has about the same optimum temperature as potatoes. This means that the wise homemaker will plant her potatoes and cabbage as early

Vegetables may be divided into two classes: warm season and cool season crops. For the most part, those which are grown for their leaves, stems, or roots, are cool season crops. Lettuce, radishes, carrots, spinach, cabbage, asparagus and celery, to be at their best, must make a rapid growth and mature when the days are cool, either in late spring or early fall, and not during the hot days. Those which are grown for their seed or for fruit are, for the most part, warm season crops and should not be planted until the leaves on the oak trees are as large as rabbit's ears. In this class we find tomatoes, peas, muskmelons, sweet corn, and egg plant.

The homemaker will be interested in getting vegetables as early as possible, when the appetite is keen for them, and the market price is very high. Plants that are started on their way in flats in the house, transplanted to strawberry boxes, or paper pots, can take advantage of the warmth inside and have a running start when favorable spring weather arrives.

The hotbed in which the heat is furnished by decomposition of horsebarn litter will interest a few homemakers; the



Pruning a Grape Vine by the 4-Arm Kniffen Method. Three-fourths of Last Year's Growth May Be Cut Away.

from fruits and vegetables, either in the fresh, canned or evaporated form. Most fresh fruits and vegetables are always welcome, and those which are skillfully produced from the home grounds have an interest from the standpoint of thrift, of satisfaction and of skillful production,

as the ground is ready to receive them, and will expect to harvest fine products early in July. Those which will be ripening in mid-August, or during good corn weather, will give neither satisfaction to the homemaker nor to the members of her family.

cold frame, which has no artificial heat, and is only a sloping box, covered with muslin or glass will interest many homemakers. The planting box, or so-called "flat," which may be kept in the house will interest them still more.

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## Horticultural Hunches

(Continued from page 3)

Cool season crops, sown either directly in the garden or transplanted will respond more quickly to the stimulus of chemical fertilizers. A little sodium nitrate or ammonium sulfate scattered along the row will bring surprising results. As a matter of fact, the homemaker who wishes to have crisp, fresh, tasty vegetables will be concerned with only three items: an easily crumbled soil with sufficient nitrogen, an ample water supply, and an abundant exposure to sun-light. It is quite within the power of the homemaker to make these three items available to the plant.

This is the time of year when the Homemaker loves to use the pruning shears and the spade. A word of caution may be offered in the use of the pruning shears. Agassiz once said: "Study nature, not books." Many homemakers have already done this, and they will recall that the 1930 grapes were produced on 1930 wood. The same is true of the raspberries. The 1931 crop will be produced on 1931 wood. The fruiting branches always come from wood of the previous season's growth.

The raspberry canes which bore a crop last year will be observed to be dead. Their usefulness is past, and the old cane may well be removed, if it has not already been cut. A vigorous cane of 1930 growth, however, is growing from the same root and this may be shortened back and trained into shape for easy picking and for more productive fruit. As spring comes on, a new cane of 1931 growth will be observed growing from the ground. When this has reached about the height of the shoulder the terminal may be pinched out to stimulate branching and to prevent rooting from the end of the cane between the row, in the case of the Blackcap raspberries.

The grape will stand the most vigorous pruning. More than three-fourths of last year's growth may be cut away, and that which remains should have not less than 40 nor more than 60 of last year's buds which will produce the fruiting cane of the present year. The most satisfactory form of training is the 4-arm Knifen method, and the illustration will show the homemaker how this may be accomplished.

The gooseberries and raspberries grown on the home place will need little pruning, except the removal of the whole canes that have grown old.

Apple trees and cherry trees will probably need very little pruning, except the removal of dead and broken branches and those which plainly exclude the sunlight from reaching the center of the tree. Apples may continue to fruit on little branches year after year, for as high as 12 or 15 years.

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