

Outstanding W. Va. 4-H Boys and Girls



Shown in the picture are: Back row, left to right—Keith Pickens, Harrison county 4-H club agent and coach of poultry judging team; Denver Bragg, Harrison county, member of poultry team; Lakin Ours, Grant county, member livestock judging team; Harold M. Hyre, extension poultryman; Merlin Bergdoll and Alva Sites, Grant county, members of livestock judging team; C. L. Stickler, Grant county agent and coach of livestock judging team; middle row—Gladys M. Scranage, state girls' club agent; David Bergdoll, Grant county, member livestock team; Jack Tyree, Cabell county, state gardening champion; Richard Pharr, Harrison county, member poultry team; Paul Nay, Harrison, state boys' 4-H health champion; James Washburn, Harrison, member poultry team; C. H. Hartley, state club leader; front row—Neil Bratton, Mercer county, bread-making winner; Pauline Morris, Nicholas county, food preparation champion; Virginia Eaton, Wood county, champion club girls' record for home economics projects; Margaret Hager, Mercer, canning champion; Maple Myers, Lewis county, bread-making winner; Phyllis Curry, Harrison, champion in State 4-H Style Dress Revue; and Janet Harper, Pendleton county, state girls' 4-H health champion. Glenn Phillips, Wetzel county, state potato champion, who was also a member of the delegation, was ill the day the picture was taken and is not in the group.

Growing Peas for a Profit

By ROBERT W. PHILLIPS

WITH the coming of the new year the farmer starts concentrating on crops he will plant in the spring and summer. Usually the progressive farmer has planned his crops well in advance and knows about what will be planted in certain fields for three or four years in advance. This is particularly true when his thoughts turn to the growing of peas for canning purposes.

Certain facts are known and recognized as being essential to the successful growing of peas. Probably the most important of these is, that your land must be either neutral or possibly better, just slightly acid. Peas will not thrive in very acid soil. A field that starts to "burn" after peas have reached the height of about five to eight inches shows distinctly the effects of lack of lime in the soil.

Lime can not be applied to the soil only a few days or weeks before seeding and produce anywhere near good effects. It is a fact that lime is very slow to act and contrary to belief, lime does not move in the soil to any great extent, except through the application of mechanical means.

Lime should be applied to the soil in early fall for the next spring's crop. Lime applied in December or January for March sowing is not always successful. Even better than application in the early fall is the application of lime before you plant this year's crop in order

to have your soil prepared for the following spring planting.

The importance of having a properly prepared seed bed can not be emphasized too much. After you have your land to the proper acidity, it is fruitless to apply seed unless your land is well worked up.

At sowing time work thoroughly ahead of your drill with a disc, drag and scrub. Be sure your land is level.

With the use of regular commercial fertilizer you should put it in the ground about one week before sowing your seed. If a cyanamid mixture is used you should allow two days for every hundred pounds used. I would recommend not less than 600 pounds of either per acre.

If this is the first year your land has been in peas it is well to use a double amount of inoculation. After the first year a single dose is sufficient.

As yet we have not mentioned the type of land best suited for the growing of peas. The first essential is well drained land. It does not have to be high, but it does necessarily have to be well drained. Cold or wet land is not suited for this crop.

Peas react very favorably to stable manure and requires land well supplied with mumas.

The best recommendation I believe is this: put peas in land you would consider safe for the growing of a good crop of early potatoes. If you choose this type of land I believe you will get a good crop of peas, except of course pea land must be properly limed.

Remember this, do not expect a bumper crop the first year, it very seldom happens. Your second year (in the same piece of land) should be better than the first and the third year should be better than either the first or second.

If you are a gambling man, put peas in the same land four times. If you don't want to take a chance, prepare another piece of land well in advance and start new again. I think you will win in the long run.

The Use of Hotbeds and Coldframes

By A. P. DYE

Department of Horticulture, College of Agriculture, West Virginia University

HOTBEDS and coldframes for growing plants are indispensable to many gardeners. They make possible many things for the gardener that otherwise he would not be able to have. All gardeners, however, may not need hotbeds or coldframes as a supplementary aid in their gardening work. The may not have sufficient need to justify the extra work; they may not have a suitable place for construction; means of artificial heat may not be available at justifiable cost; and most important of all, if many plants are wanted, a small greenhouse is much more valuable to the gardener than a large hotbed.

Advantages of Greenhouse

The advantages of a small greenhouse, say 8 by 12 feet that can be built for \$100 or less, are so many that if the funds available for construction will permit, the greenhouse is to be recommended instead of the hotbed. A few of its advantages are: (1) heat for forcing purposes can be generated cheaper by coal than by the fermentation of manure, or by electricity; (2) all cultural conditions can be better controlled in a greenhouse than in frames; (3) the labor expenditure required on a given area is less in a greenhouse than in frames; (4) the shelter provided by the greenhouse permits work to be done whenever desired or needed, thus insuring better growing conditions; (5) greenhouses can be used throughout the entire year, while hotbeds can be used to advantage only during the spring, summer, and fall.

A few of the uses for hotbeds and coldframes are as follows: (1) many

additional species and varieties of plants can be grown through their use that otherwise could not; (2) both vegetables and flowers can be started earlier; (3) coldframes make ideal places for overwintering many tender and semi-hardy perennials and biennials; (4) vegetables such as lettuce, radishes, etc., can be grown much earlier in the spring and later in the fall; (5) frames provide a convenient place to hold and harden-off plants that have been transplanted or potted in a greenhouse until weather permits setting them in the garden or field.

Southern Exposure Desirable

Hotbeds and coldframes should be located near a building in which the garden tools may be kept. The beds and frames should have a southern exposure, if possible, and be protected by a building, board fence, wall, or hedge. The area occupied by the bed or frame should be well drained and slightly sloping.

Hotbeds and coldframes differ in that the former are heated while the latter are not. Coldframes are, therefore, built on top of the ground while hotbeds are usually constructed in part at least below the level of the ground so that heat can be held in the soil more easily. Both should be constructed so as to make use of standard sash, 3 by 6 feet, and so placed that the length of the sash will face south. The width of the bed may be that of one sash or two or more. The construction may be temporary or permanent; if temporary, boards should be used. Permanent beds may be built of brick or concrete.

The construction of a pit for a hotbed will depend on the type of heat used. If manure is used, the pit should be at least 2½ feet deep, while a six-inch excavation is sufficient for a bed to be heated electrically.

Covering May Vary

The covering for the frames may be glass substitute, of which there are several kinds on the market. Most of the glass substitutes have proved to be satisfactory. The cheaper ones, of course, are not as durable as the more expensive materials. In extremely cold weather the sash must have added protection, such as burlap, straw mats, hay, etc. Strawmats may be bought for any size hotbed, or old carpets may be used. Hay or straw, however, is quite satisfactory, though somewhat less convenient to handle.

Caring for a hotbed is very exacting if satisfactory results are expected or to be obtained. If manure is used for heat, the preparation of the bed must be made with great care, so that proper heating will result. If electricity is used to supply heat, soil temperature may be easily regulated. Air temperature is controlled by the covering, ventilation, and amount of sunlight. On days when the sun plays hide-and-seek, hotbeds require almost constant care in ventilating.

Time to Water Plants

How and when watering is done probably has more influence on the control of diseases in the frame than any other factor. Plants in the hotbed should never be watered in the evening or on cloudy days unless absolutely necessary. Plants should always go into the night with dry leaves.

To obtain the best results with growing plants in a hotbed one must know the specific requirements for each plant, and then meet these requirements just as closely as possible. Information on the growing of early plants may be found in Farmers' Bulletin No. 1743, entitled "Hotbeds and Coldframes," copies of which may be obtained upon request without charge so long as the supply lasts by writing to the U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C.

VIRGINIAN TELLS of FUZZLESS PEACH

A fussless peach, the equal of the Georgia Belle, possessing a good flavor and considered hardy enough for the climate of Virginia has been developed by Dr. F. W. HofMann, horticulturist of the Virginia Agricultural Experiment Station at V. P. I., Blacksburg.

The peach, in addition to being more readily and comfortably eaten "au naturel" can be preserved whole and unskinned, and Dr. HofMann believes the smooth-skinned variety will be of great value in the drying industry.

Dr. HofMann in addressing the thirty-first annual convention of the Tennessee State Horticultural Society held in Cleveland, Tenn., said:

"There is nothing so new or remarkable about a peach without that outer covering which botanists dignify with the term pubescence," Dr. HofMann said. "Oriental history and literature mention them occasionally; but most of these Oriental smooth-skinned peaches are either too small or, in many cases, too tender for commercial planting in the United States."

Dr. HofMann, coming to the Virginia Agricultural Experiment Station in 1926, made crosses of several of the standard American peaches, such as Elberta and Georgia Belle, with some of the hardier, smooth-skinned varieties of Chinese origin. Further developments of these crosses have been made at Blacksburg.

First generations of such crosses are invariably fuzzy, but in some instances the pubescence is not so heavy as that of the fuzzy parents; and the size is about the average of the sizes of the two parents.

The second generation, if developed in a number of different combinations, has resulted in a progeny which Dr. HofMann regards as especially promising. In size, it is as large as the Georgia Belle—and it's fuzzless. He also has under observation another large, golden-yellow, smooth-skinned, freestone hybrid.

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