



\$509 an Acre *Netted* from Delaware Strawberry Plot.

By CLAYTON A. BUNTING
Selbyville, Sussex County, Delaware

THE strawberry industry of the eastern section of the United States is wide, varied and interesting. It is also in too many instances conducted on an all too slipshod basis, resulting in little, if any profit, rather than the rather handsome \$509 per acre net we realized last year from a rather large test plot of the variety Dorsett being grown for market.



On the Del Mar Va Peninsula, strawberries have declined somewhat as a crop during the past few years as a result of the wearing out of strains rather than from the non-existence of good productive varieties. It remained for the United States Department of Agriculture to present to growers Dorsett and Fairfax, the two finest strawberries for any purpose in our generation. Not until last season under the test of market production did I arrive at a decision as to the better of the two—the Dorsett. So close are the two varieties it is easily possible for one to lead, depending on the section of the country. The fruiting season of both varieties extends over a good three weeks or longer. It is necessary to pick fruit from the plants about ten times during the season.

Market Expansion Seen

Prior to the introduction of these two varieties, varieties highly acid in content were grown to assure shipping quality. Flavor to distant markets was sacrificed in favor of shipping quality. Both varieties have low acid content, yet ship well.

Intensive cultivation of land prior to it receiving a planting of strawberries is necessary to realize a weed-free strawberry field the following year. It is impossible to grow a bumper crop of berries amidst a bumper crop of weeds. Most any type of well drained soil can be made almost weed and grass free over a period of three years of intensive cultivation to any other crop. For best results, plan ahead for handling this crop. Set your plants in this type of soil. Give them frequent cultivation to keep plants free from other vegetation.

Plant Feeding

During the war years, due to scarcity of potash, this element became a forgotten product for growing farm crops. Many strawberry growers located in poultry raising sections, use exclusively the almost free chicken manure. This manure contains lots of nitrogen in ammonia form and lacks potash, a necessity to successful strawberry culture. An application of potash, ten pounds to every 100 yards of row should be made in September. Apply this along the side of the row, being careful not to let any hit the plants, particularly if they are damp. Cultivate in immediately. This will result in a heavier root system

Proper procedure of the top dressing of strawberry plants is to apply a fertilizer analyzing 4 per cent ammonia, 8 per cent phosphoric acid and 10 per cent potash. Instead of being broadcast in the strawberry rows in April, this application should preferably be made in January or February, which gives the potash ample time to act. Potash disseminates slowly and when applied in April has little value to a crop which ripens in May and early June in most of the sections of the East and Central West. With the more balanced plant food, you will get a more moderate leafage which will admit both light and air, necessary to the good development of fruit. The potash will also result in a tougher foliage less likely to

suffer from dry periods and will add firmness and color to the fruit. A more sturdy root system will develop from the addition of potash.

Mulching Profitable

Mulching with wheat straw, salt hay or pine needles, will be found profitable and is of vital importance. It will keep the soil cool and will prevent splashing of sand or other soil on the fruit from hard showers.

The package in which the fruit is shipped to market is important. It has been customary for years to ship in a crate containing 32 to 60 quarts. The practical package contains 16 to 24 quarts. The smaller package is much easier to handle and less subject to shake-up and damage. Further, the trade that

wants fancy fruit prefers a smaller package.

I used 24-quart crates when marketing Dorsett and Fairfax last spring and labeled each crate with an attractive label in color. This served as a trademark and held customers throughout the season. The "would-be" new customers were unable to get our special mark, the result being that prices held remarkably well even in the face of general market decline.

The future holds much for the market grower of strawberries, if he will do the little important things and grow the right varieties, and right varieties at our place now means Dorsett and Fairfax after a most profitable experience growing them.

Camera Glimpses in the "Old Dominion" State



When it's apple blossom time in the beautiful Shenandoah Valley of Virginia thousands of tourists will be here for the "Apple Blossom Festival" at Winchester. The date for the opening of the famous festival is announced some ten days before the colorful event is staged. Left, above, are apple blossoms near Bedford. Above, these young Virginians and their pony have their own festival.

(Virginia State C. of C. photos)



Constantly learning by doing, these Virginia 4-H Club boys (above) learn to survey through the assistance of their county farm agent. The state's 1,293 clubs last year had an enrollment of more than 32,702 members. Gordon A. Elcan, state boys' club agent assures they're still growing this year. Right, 4-H'ers mix compost for a cold frame.



Prominent among Holstein-Friesian dairy herds in Virginia is the Meadow Farms in Orange County. Pastures are considered a crop. (Below).

85¢ WALL PAPER
To Paper a 10x12 Room
A. F. Dudley, 63 N. 2nd St., Phila. Pa.