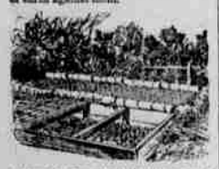
COLD FRAMES IN WINTER.

Some of the Work That Is Accomplished with Them by Vegetable Gardeners.

In these days of progressive farming cold frames form an important adjunct to both the vegetable and the flower gardens. Each successful gardener has his own ideas as regards the details of these useful frames. Here is what William Falconer, editor of Gardening, says concerning his cold frames:

A cold frame is a board or brick lined pit rising a few inches above ground and covered with sashes. The common frame is made of common pine plank or hemlock boards, with 2 by 3-inch or 3 by 4-inch scantling for cross or rafter bars; 5 feet 9 inches wide inside and 4 to 10 inches higher at the back than at the front. The sashes for such a frame should be 3 feet wide, 6 feet long, by 1½ inches thick. The frame may be any length to suit the number of sashes. Plain cold frames usually are one board (10 inches) high in front, and two boards (20 inches) high at back, but where these frames are permanent fixtures, and where at times used for hotbeds as well as cold frames, a pit 18 to 24 inches deep is dug out and lined with boards or plank, three or four boards high at the back and two or three boards high in front. In the inside and under each end of each crossbar there should be a post and the ends of the crossbars notched to fit on to them, as shown in the illustration; this serves as a brace and prevents the sides being pressed in by the weight of earth against them.



CORNER OF VEGETABLE FRAME GROWN.

Cold frames for winter work should face the south or southeast to give them the benefit of the sunshine, but wherever cold frames are placed protect them from the north and northwest winds. In small gardens this shelter is generally afforded by close board fences, hedges or contiguous buildings, and on truck farms the market gardeners build high, close wooden fences around their frame grounds to protect them from the winds. Our illustration shows a corner of our vegetable frame ground. It is protected on the north and west sides by a makeshift thick fence of cut pine branches that rises higher than a board fence would and answers the purpose admirably. We first sink and firm some posts in the ground, then run a string of saplings along near t. e top from post to post and fastened to the posts with wire, and against this bar we stand up the side branches with their butts sunk into the ground, and tie the main limbs to the crossbar with marlin. It makes a capital windbreak. These frames are filled with heading lettuces and are protected from frost by covering the sashes with thick straw mats you see rolled up there, and in the event of quite severe weather we add some sedge over the mats and thin board shutters, if we have them to spare, over all. We also bank around them up to the brim with earth or fodder. This helps to keep them warm and spills the water.

In January the lettuces in the frames will have been cut and the frames ready for another crop. Jan. 1 we sow lettuce seed in a box in the greenhouse and prick it off into another box within two or three days after it comes up, and in a week or ten days more pot the little plants (fifty to a 5½ or 6-inch pots, still keeping them on a shelf up near the glass in the greenhouse and ready for transplanting into a hotbed whenever the weather may permit. As soon as this frame is emptied of its crop we throw out the loam, which is about six inches deep, into a heap at the side; then the old manure that is in the bottom of it (for it was a last spring's hotbed and the old manure is in it yet) is thrown out and carted away. In the meanwhile we will have in readiness a lot of fresh manure for a hotbed and make up the new bed in the frame. When the heat is well started the loam is put back again, and in a few days, or as soon as it is safe to do so, we transplant our lettuces from the pots in the greenhouse to the hot beds. We will expect to begin cutting from this frame about the end of March. By that time the heat will be pretty much gone, but by planting at once we can get another crop of lettuces fit to cut in May. We leave the manure in the frame all summer so as to have the frame full enough in fall, but it often happens that we have to add a good deal more filling in the fall because the manure has rotted down considerably.

Growing Celery.

At a meeting of Illinois horticulturists a successful celery grower advised trying celery on the new plan. The new plan, he explained, is to have the ground very rich, and plant it 7 by 7 inches each way, with plants four to six inches high, wetting the plants well as fast as planted, to keep from wilting. The ground is kept free from weeds and nicely cultivated. A special fertilizer is used several times during the season, soaking the ground well with water after each application. Success depends on rich ground, close planting and plenty of water. For a small family he suggested planting a space 4 by 16 feet, which will give about 200 plants. Put a board a foot wide all around, and it will all bleach.

Do Not Keep Too Many Drakes.

Do not keep too many drakes; one to every five ducks is enough. More than this simply adds to the expense.

The Cheese Factory.

I think the Babcock test is very little understood by the average dairyman, and the benefits thereof are scarcely realized by those who use it. The benefit to cheese factories is not only a just and equitable division of the actual value of the milk delivered by the patrons, but will also show them whether their cows are turning their costly feed into milk nearly all water, and consequently of little value, or whether they are turning it into butter fat, which brings the cash.

There is no doubt in the minds of our most intelligent dairymen that the butter fat is 99 per cent of the value of milk made into butter or cheese. Such being the case, it is evident that any test not with accuracy measure the butter fat in milk will give its actual value. Patrons, remember when you take your large mess of low per cent milk to the factory that the same feed would probably have put more money into the pail had you delivered a smaller quantity of better quality milk.

Maybe you don't see the point, but the maker can't get more out of the milk than there is in it, and you will have to take part of your dividend in this whey. Where the dividends are made from the weight of the milk alone, you may think the more milk the more money, but remember every man is thinking the same thing, and maybe somebody else is ahead of you in the race for quantity.

You can have this consolation, however—if he is ahead probably the money he has put into the pail has cost him more feed than what you put in has cost you. I believe it to be a fairer and better way, and patrons and makers will be benefited by making the dividends by the test.—W. H. De Long in Practical Dairyman.

Hands Off the Butter.

"Keep your hands off the butter" is not a very elegant precept, but its inelegance is due to the untidiness it forbids. "Touch not—with your hands" is the constant entreaty of the gilt edge article from the time the golden granules are taken out of the churn until the finished product is placed on the table of the consumer.

We probably have no ex-school teachers among us, but a strict grammarian might object to the word precept in this connection, since it applies more especially to rules of moral conduct, but as cleanliness is said to be next to godliness the word is used advisably here. The same rule should be applied to the handling of the cream. Avoid the use of the hand; use a whisk broom or a spray from the nozzle of the hose.—Exchange.

A Dairyman's Leisure.

What little leisure a dairyman enjoys comes largely to him in the cold months, and then he cannot make money any faster than to turn student. This statement isn't bosh or theory, but simply a plain, common sense fact.

Whether you believe it or not your neighbor does, and he is making a third more money than you are, and out of a third less number of cows.

Study the principles of your calling all you can in the institute and in your stable, and give your hey even better opportunities of learning than you have had. Your own welfare will be improved and your boy a future success assured by the means.—George E. Newell in American Cultivator.

A Proud Welsh Boy.

A proud Welsh boy attached, boasting that an English duke employed six men cooks during the period that he kept open house, or rather open castle, in "the north, amazed at the alleged magnificence.

"My father does better than that," said Griffy ap Jones. "At our very last party before I left Cwydrdmynydhyd we had twenty-four mer cooks, all employed in dressing the supper."

This would have gone down easily, and Griffithap Jones would have established his paternal magnificence for ever, had not a companion of an inquiring turn of mind discovered the real state of the case and announced to his school fellows that, although the Welshman had spoken truly, the company at the supper to which he alluded consisted of twenty-four of his near relations, and that every man toasted his own [illegible] from "The Fire."

In spite of learned opinions that drinking water does not distribute cholera germs, the fact remains that the greatest cholera epidemic which ever visited London—that of 1848—was directly traceable to the water of the River Lea. Some cholera infected immigrants inhabited a cottage on the banks of this river, and the house drainage emptied into the Lea. The consequence was 16,000 deaths from cholera in London. Germs of many deadly diseases, both in man and beast, are conveyed in drinking water—a fact that all the world ought to heed.

The person who will not be kept down never is kept down.

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