

will stand all winter, and will go to seed in the spring. New Zealand spinach is a holding crop, and sown now would remain in use till next spring or early summer. It is very productive, being similar to ordinary spinach, but with smaller leaves. It has a branching habit, hence its productiveness. Some think the variety known as prickly, or winter, spinach is the New Zealand variety. This is wrong. Round spinach is the best variety.

Artichokes that are well above ground should be moulded up, like potatoes.

All the gourd family, pumpkins, &c., should be in the ground before now, if not, sowing should not be delayed.

Rotation work includes sowing peas, French beans, radish, lettuce, turnips, but in small quantities as regards the two last named.

Golden cress is very useful as a salad of the cut-and-come-again type. It looks very pretty if sown along the edge of a path.

Asparagus planted this season should not be cut from even if strong enough, and very little should be cut from beds planted last season; none at all is best. From older beds all the stems, large and small, should be cut. The thin heads are nice in soup. Cutting should cease as soon as the early peas are fit for use.

PRUNING AND SPRAYING.

DEPARTMENT TO GRANT CERTIFICATES.

MANY owners of small domestic orchards are desirous of obtaining the services of men to prune and spray their fruit-trees. They have complained to Orchard Instructors that some men undertaking this work are not qualified.

With a view to assisting both the competent workman and the small grower, the Minister of Agriculture, the Hon. Mr. T. Mackenzie, has authorized the Director of Orchards to arrange for examinations and issue certificates to those who can prove their competency.

Following are the conditions under which the Department is prepared to conduct examinations, and issue certificates of competency:—

A. (1.) Identifying insect and fungus pests. (2.) Written or oral examination in the life-history of pests and diseases, and the correct time at which to apply treatment. (3.) Each candidate will be required to give practical demonstrations of the preparation and application of sprays, &c.

B. At the proper season examinations will be conducted in the theory and practice of pruning.

Intending candidates should make application to the Director of Orchards, Gardens, and Apiaries, Customhouse, Wellington, who will fix the dates on which the examinations are to be held.