

Spinach should be sown at once if this has not been already done. Thin the plants as soon as they can be handled, to about 8 in. apart. Remember that this crop will stand through winter, and that single leaves are pulled for use, not the whole plant; therefore the better each plant grows the larger the leaves will be, and the more succulent and the greater the total amount of produce. Market-gardeners act differently; as it would be very difficult to tie the leaves in bunches they pull the whole plant; consequently they do not thin much; but every one knows that shop spinach is but poor stuff at the best. The soil should be frequently stirred between all growing crops, not only to suppress weed-growth but to keep the surface loose. A clean condition and loose surface has a very beneficial effect on plant-growth.

Cabbages, broccoli, and similar crops are greatly benefited by light dressings of nitrate of soda. Half an ounce per square yard is sufficient, repeating the dressing five or six weeks after, the two dressings being sufficient for any crop. As evidence of the effect of nitrate of soda it may be of interest to mention a case that recently came under notice. A grower of lettuce asked to be told of a lettuce that would not grow very large but would make a solid heart. It appeared that former crops had been watered every other day with nitrate of soda, the result being very large plants without hearts. This case affords evidence of the potency of the salt in forcing growth and the evil resulting from its excessive use. It has the same effect on cabbages. A proper amount promotes healthy growth, an overdose makes the plants too leafy. Leeks that have commenced to grow after transplanting, and celery and lettuce, are also greatly benefited by light dressings of nitrate of soda. Sulphate of ammonia is another nitrogenous fertilizer, but is much slower in action than nitrate of soda.

Onions are ripening off, and should be lifted when the tops are dead or nearly so. When the bulbs are pulled they should be laid on their side, so that the root ends are not in contact with the soil. If they are, and rain should fall before the bulbs are dry enough to be carried off, new roots would soon push out and the bulbs be ruined for keeping. When the bulbs are reasonably dry they should be relieved of the tops and loose skins, and placed in a dry airy shed. Keep them in a thin layer till thoroughly dry, when they may be more conveniently placed in larger heaps. Where the quantity is small they are best kept for home use by stringing them and hanging them up in a dry shed. This may be done at first carrying if desired. Garlic and shallots should be thoroughly dried in an airy shed; they may then be kept in bags or in any convenient place that is dry.

Winter rhubarb will benefit by a good mulch of manure. It will keep the soil moist until autumn rains fall, which will wash the nutrient properties of the manure into the soil. Failing manure, give blood-and-bone, about 4 oz. per square yard, with a fourth that amount of sulphate of potash; or dress liberally with dry wood-ashes in lieu of the potash.

Summer rhubarb should be allowed to grow as long as it will without pulling. The purpose of growth at the present time is to form crowns for next season. If any of the stalks are pulled the spring crop, which is the most valuable, will be wanting, cropping being delayed till new crowns are formed.