

and interfering with the roots, thus weakening the plants and disposing them to the attack of any diseases that may be present. Where the land has been well prepared a firm bed with shallow cultivation will usually give the sturdy fruitful growth that is desirable.

A few years ago the small tomato-moth caused some consternation by suddenly destroying fine crops just as the fruit had set, but before it had time to ripen. The attack, which was without precedent, was confined to the collar of the plant, and was unnoticed generally until it was too late. It has been prevented since by spraying, that portion especially, with arsenate of lead during the early summer. Vigilance and prompt action when necessary will prevent this attack recurring: the danger is greatest when long periods of fine weather occur at the season mentioned.

Small-fruit Crops.

In a rich light soil in warm localities Cape gooseberries may now be planted out 3 ft. apart and 6 ft. between the rows. If the land is well prepared the plants will probably have a satisfactory crop annually for two or three seasons, if attention is given them in the way of cultivation and fertilizers. These autumn berries ripen when fruit of that class is rather scarce, and preserves made from them are deservedly popular.

The passion-fruit is another crop which is planted out at this season in well-sheltered localities. It comes into bearing the second season after planting, and with good treatment the crops should be profitable for a period of six or seven years. Plants are sometimes found carrying a heavy crop under very poor conditions, but to maintain a good cropping record and produce well-flavoured fruit the land should be good and well prepared. Plants are now usually set 10 ft. apart and 9 ft. between the rows. The vines are trained on a post-and-wire fence: the posts being 5 ft. out and 2 ft. in the ground with two top wires, one on each side of the post, the wire below being 2 ft. from the surface of the ground. A light stake should be inserted and tied to the wires for each plant, which should be set firmly at the base of the stake and trained up it by stopping each lateral after a few leaves have formed.

To maintain moisture in the beds and keep the berries clean, it is necessary to mulch strawberry-beds as soon as the crop commences to set. Mulching is often preceded by a good dressing of guano or other organic or chemical nitrogenous fertilizer which is worked in before the straw mulch is laid. Where straw is not available, rushes make a good substitute between the rows with pine-needles about the plants; any kind of hay is unsuitable owing to the many seeds it contains. The fruit can be very attractive if it is presented in a suitable manner; the demand depends very largely on doing this properly. Clean punnets well filled with selected berries picked with a short stem look well and sell readily. Undersized and misshapen berries should be placed in a separate receptacle for culinary use. All ripe berries must be gathered or they will be overripe at the next picking, and if packed will crush and stain the containers. For local and immediate use the berries should be well coloured; for long distance shipping, especially in warm weather, they should be less mature. In humid localities where brown rot is present long-distance shipping should not be attempted. The realization from a crop depends very much on the careful supervision of pickers to see that these principles are consistently maintained.

The Homestead Garden.

Towards the end of the month of November, when half-hardy annual bedding plants are in their flowering quarters, biennial and perennial