

be made out of ordinary commercial fertilisers, using nitrate of soda, superphosphate, and one of the forms of potash (the sulphate, the chloride, the 30 per cent. salts, or kainit). These can be mixed in the proportion of 1 part of nitrate of soda, 4 parts superphosphate, and 1 part potash.

The mixture should be stored in a dry place in airtight tins or jars. If exposed to a moist atmosphere, it is inclined to set. Its effectiveness, however, does not deteriorate, and, as it is used in solution, it is not important that it be in a granular condition. The mixture does not dissolve completely, but forms a milky suspension.

A level tablespoonful of this mixture to a gallon of water is the strength at which it may be used, and it may be applied at weekly intervals, if desired.

When Marrows Fail to Set

FREQUENTLY, bush marrows bloom but do not develop; the flowers merely wither and drop off. The plants carry both male (pollen-bearing) and female (fruit-forming) flowers. These are not difficult to distinguish, the female flowers showing an enlargement behind the petals which develops into the marrow. The male flower shows no such enlargement.

If the male flower is removed from the plant and the petals torn from it, leaving only the centre portion holding the pollen, this may be inserted into the female flower, and there should be no further difficulty in getting the marrows to set.

The Flower Garden

General Work

DURING the hot season there is not a great amount of work to be done in the way of planting out. Bulbs which have been lifted and which it is intended to replant, however, should be replanted immediately or stored in a cool, dry, airy place and planted not later than the end of March.

Sowings may be made of hardy annuals and biennials in boxes or beds for transplanting in the autumn. The soil should be protected from the direct rays of the sun until the plants appear above ground.

Strict attention should be paid to the control of weeds to prevent seeding. The dry weather offers an excellent opportunity to eradicate twitch grass and difficult perennial weeds.

All spent blooms should be removed regularly, and, as suggested in these notes last month, the flower stalks cut back to buds, which should produce strong growth for later blooming.

When watering, the soil should be thoroughly wetted in the evening and

Seasonal Don'ts

Don't

waste lawn clippings. They are a very valuable source of humus. In the summer they may be placed, about 2in. deep, over the ground between rows of vegetables, where they remain on the surface as a mulch and keep the ground cool and moist. When the autumn rains come the mulch will rot quickly and, worked into the ground, will provide a beneficial increase to the humus supply.

Don't

burn anything (except potato haulms and tomato vines and leaves) that will rot fairly quickly and form humus. It is much better placed on a compost heap if there is not a trench open in which it may be thrown and buried. The compost heap provides very valuable material for digging in. The heap may be a place where all forms of garden and house refuse can be deposited. A certain amount of soil is added from time to time with weeds and the roots of plants. The mixture forms a very friable material when it rots. It is unwise, however, to use anything that is diseased or seedy, as the compost is likely to perpetuate disease fungi, and would propagate weeds. Should weeds appear when compost is used, they should be hoed off. The humus contained in the heap more than compensates for the trouble involved in destroying any volunteer growth which appears. The compost heap should be located in a shady place where it will remain reasonably moist at all times.

the surface loosened next day to reduce evaporation of the water. It is almost useless to spray the plants and the surface of the soil for short periods at frequent intervals. It encourages a root development near the surface of the ground and not in lower levels.

Bulb Planting

BULBS which are not benefited by a long storage season, and those which produce winter and early spring blooms, should be planted as soon as possible. This applies in particular to narcissi. The depth of planting depends largely on the condition of the soil, but as a general rule they are planted at such a depth that the top of the bulb is twice the length of the bulb below the ground.

The growth of the bulbs is improved if well-rotted farm manure or a cover crop is trenched into the ground. The cultivation should be deep, and this material should be as near to the bottom as possible. The soils most favoured are well-drained loams overlying a porous subsoil. The artificial manures recommended are of the slow-acting phosphate type. Finely-ground bonemeal or the coarser bonedust are both very suitable, and may be used at the rate of $\frac{1}{2}$ ton to the acre (equivalent to 4oz to the square yard).

Tulips require similar conditions, and for best results on light, well-drained soils may be planted as deeply as 9 inches. It is an advantage to plant these as soon as possible to avoid the spread by aphides of the virus causing striping. Tulips will not bloom earlier with early planting.

In warm districts anemones for winter flowering should be planted as soon as supplies of the corms can be obtained. They should be grown in well-prepared soil, which should not be allowed to dry out and interrupt their growth.

Small Fruits

Cover Crop

THE small fruit plantations from which fruit has been picked should now receive some attention. After the necessary thinning out and pruning (as described last month) has been done, a dressing of farm manure and artificial fertilisers should be applied and ploughed under. This ploughing should be shallow to avoid root injury in established plantations. For raspberries, red currants, and gooseberries sulphate of potash should be included in the dressing of artificial manures.

Where farm manure is not available, a cover crop may be sown after the land has been cleaned up and ploughed.