

earlier and continued longer; ploughing and subsequent cultural operations are easier; the soil does not "set" hard; better root crops may be produced; and the temperature of such a soil will be higher during the growing season. Such soils will, of necessity, require heavier dressings of organic materials, such as farmyard manure and green crops, and more care both in the selection of commercial fertilisers best suited to the soil and crops to be grown on the land and in their composition and distribution. On such soils irrigation is necessary.

While swamp and peaty soils will produce good crops of all vegetables, they are particularly suited for growing celery and onions. They are rich in organic matter, and invariably require heavy liming. They must be adequately drained.

Silty loam soil is generally considered favourable for the production of main and late crops, and constitutes a good percentage of the soil on which vegetable crops are grown in New Zealand.

Heavy clay soils should be avoided for vegetable culture. If a soil is chosen which is deficient in organic matter, this condition can be remedied by growing green crops and ploughing them in. If it is intended to produce early crops, sandy soils are most suitable, while heavier soils will be best for main and late crops.

Climate

It is sometimes possible to capitalise climatic advantages by growing early crops, which may be placed on a mar-

ket at a period when growers less favourably situated are unable to compete. Cooler locations may be suitable for supplying late-maturing vegetables, particularly those of the brassica family, when harvesting in the warmer districts is finished. In colder situations vegetable pests are rarely as troublesome as in localities where winter conditions are not so severe or of long duration.

Water Supply

The water supply should be thoroughly investigated before finalising any contract to purchase a property. Facilities for irrigation in some form are essential, and should be provided to ensure that the ground is maintained in an adequately moist condition, particularly during the period of crop growth. When it is considered that 27,000 gallons of water are necessary for the application of one inch of water to an acre of land, and that, with respect to some crops, this may be required several times during the growing season, it is evident that an abundant supply of water should be assured.

Cost of Supplies

A small acreage conveniently situated to a cheap supply of stable manure might be preferred to a larger area on which it would be necessary to grow soil-improving green crops. The question of the cost of lime, manure, artificial fertilisers, and, indeed, all necessary supplies should be investigated, not in relation to where these might be purchased, but delivered on the garden. If the property is an inconvenient distance from rail and shipping facilities, the cost of transportation of these essentials might increase the cost beyond the point of profitable production.

Crops

The crops it is intended to grow or in which it is intended to specialise will, in a great measure, be determined by the nature of the soil, the method of sale and distribution of produce, the available supply of labour and the extent to which the markets it is intended to supply are being met with vegetables of the kinds which the land

is suited to grow. During the harvesting period of such crops as beans, peas, berries and tomatoes it may be necessary to employ additional labour. The amount of labour available will constitute a guide to the acreage which may be profitably cropped.

Markets

Unless profitable markets are within a radius of economic transportation, no scheme of commercial gardening is likely to prove a financial success. This factor, with those already mentioned, will largely govern the extent of the area of land to be acquired and the price which may be paid for it. Land situated on a main highway where a considerable quantity of produce might be disposed of direct to

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