



[Sparrow Industrial Pictures Ltd. photo.]

To produce good-quality lettuce an abundance of plant food, together with adequate moisture and good growing conditions, is essential.

Potatoes

In northern districts not subject to early frosts a small planting may be made of early maturing potatoes such as Arran Banner, Supreme, or Epicure. Planting at this time of the year may not always be successful, as success depends upon subsequent rains and warm weather, but if the ground is available, a trial is worthwhile.

Peas

Peas, one of the most popular vegetables, can still be sown in most districts, provided an early maturing variety is chosen. Though they prefer cool conditions, peas will not grow in cold weather. They do best in fertile, moist, deeply cultivated soils and usually do well after a crop that was well manured. Where it is intended to grow peas on soils low in fertility a mixture of equal parts by weight of blood and bone and superphosphate and 1/20 part of sulphate of potash applied at 4oz. per square yard and thoroughly worked into the soil will be beneficial. Nitrogenous manures should be used sparingly for this crop as they promote excessive leaf and stem growth and make the plant more susceptible to attack by disease. Peas do not do well on acid soils and this condition should be rectified by applying a dressing of carbonate of lime at 4oz. per square yard. Drills spaced 2ft. 6in. apart may be drawn 3in. deep with a hoe and the peas scattered the width of the drill; allow from 1 to 2in. between the seeds. As the plants grow the soil may be drawn up to them to provide support.

Suitable varieties for sowing now are: Earlycrop, W. F. Massey, Little Marvel, and Utility.

Tampala

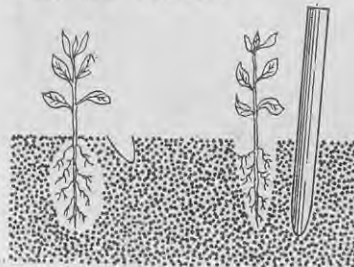
Tampala is a vegetable that does well if sown now. It is frost tender and will flourish in hot, dry weather when it is rather difficult to produce spinach, and it does not bolt to seed so readily. The plants take about 6 to 8 weeks to reach a usable size and are ready for use as greens when 6in. high, at which stage the entire plant may

be pulled and cooked, leaves and stalks together, like spinach, which it resembles in flavour, or it may be left to grow 3ft. or so tall, and repeated pickings can be made. Greens gathered from tall plants are free from the soil splashes so common on spinach.

Tampala requires a rich, well-worked soil which has previously received a dressing of lime. For most soils a good general mixture is equal parts of blood and bone and superphosphate plus sulphate of potash equal to 20 per cent. of the weight of the first two manures. This should be broadcast and worked into the soil several days before sowing at the rate of 4oz. per square yard.

Sow the seed thinly 1/4in. deep in rows 18in. apart and later thin the plants from 4 to 12in. apart in the rows. The wider spacings are necessary when the plants are to be left to grow to their full size.

Culture of celery, celeriac, leeks, parsnips, broccoli, cauliflower, kale, savoy cabbage, carrots, brussels sprouts, and beans was dealt with in last month's "Journal."



Cross-section of land illustrating the use of the dibble in setting plants. Left—Improperly set plant. The dibble has been inserted in such a way that only the top portion of the soil has been pressed against the plant, leaving air spaces round the roots. Right—Showing how the dibble should be inserted so that the soil can be well pressed around the roots.

Control of Pests and Diseases

Most home gardeners have experienced the disappointment of seeing their vegetable crops attacked and spoiled by insects and diseases. After spending time and effort in producing good plants the gardener should be prepared to deal effectively with attacks by pests and diseases.

Many gardeners have gained from experience a knowledge of successful cultural practices and produce excellent crops, but fail to protect them adequately from attack by insects and diseases because of a lack of knowledge of diseases and control measures. In these and succeeding home garden notes it is intended to deal briefly with a number of the more common diseases and pests of the home garden and to describe control measures.

Insect Pests

For general purposes the insects which attack vegetable crops may be classified into four groups: Sucking insects, leaf-feeding insects, boring insects, and underground insects.

Sucking insects: In the group classified as sucking insects are those which have the mouth parts modified to enable them to suck up the sap of the plant. The plant tissues may be punctured and the sap withdrawn, or the surface of the tissue may be rasped by the insect and the exuded sap sucked up. Examples of insects which puncture the plant tissues are black and green aphides and the green vegetable bug. Thrips and red mite are examples of insects which rasp plant tissue. As the insects in this group do not eat the surface tissue of the plant, they cannot be controlled by poisonous sprays, and materials are used which cause paralysis or suffocation and death by contact. Nicotine sulphate is the most generally used contact spray. Thrips may be controlled by nicotine sulphate, but are more satisfactorily controlled by D.D.T.

Leaf-feeding insects: In the group classified as leaf-feeding insects are caterpillars, beetles, grubs, crickets, etc. These insects feed by biting off pieces of plant tissue, which are masticated and swallowed by the insect. They are readily controlled by a stomach poison such as lead arsenate which is applied to the plant surface and is ingested by the insects when feeding. D.D.T., which is not a stomach poison but causes paralysis and death by contact, has also proved successful in controlling the insects in this group.

Boring insects tunnel into the roots, stems, branches, and tubers of plants. Common examples are the potato tuber moth and the tomato stem borer. Control is best effected by the use of D.D.T.

Underground insects include cut worms, wireworms, and eelworms, which attack the plant roots or underground stems of plants. Control measures include soil sterilisation and the use of poison baits and D.D.T.

Diseases

Most plant diseases are caused by fungi, bacteria, or viruses. It is not intended here to deal with troubles caused by faulty nutrition and growing conditions.

Fungous diseases are the most common diseases affecting vegetables and under favourable conditions they reproduce rapidly by means of minute