

and can be applied with the fertiliser. Seed should be sown thinly $\frac{1}{2}$ in. deep in rows 12 in. apart and the plants thinned when about 3 in. high to 3 in. apart. A quarter of an ounce of seed will sow 100 ft. of row.

Types

Types may be classified as follows:—

Long-rooted: Mature roots may be 10 in. or more long and taper to a distinctly long drawn-out point. They penetrate deeply and therefore the plants may get more water when established than shorter-rooted kinds. This may be important in dry seasons in certain areas. Long-rooted varieties do best on a comparatively light, deep soil of medium quality. Recommended varieties are Intermediate and Altringham.

Medium-length: These are usually less than 8 in. long. The varieties of this group include Chantenay, Earlykrop, and Manchester Table.

Short, stump-rooted types are useful for heavy or for shallow soils. Examples are Oxheart (Guerande) and Early Scarlet Horn.

Recommended varieties for December and January sowings are Chantenay and Earlykrop.

Asparagus

To encourage development of the fern growth necessary for building food reserves in asparagus crowns for next season's crop the cutting of spears should cease about 8 weeks from the first harvesting (usually about the end of November for northern districts and toward the end of December for southern districts). The beds should be weeded and lightly forked over and should receive a dressing of blood and bone at the rate of $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. per square yard plus $\frac{1}{2}$ oz. of sulphate of potash a square yard; if wood ashes are available, a dressing at the rate of 1 lb. a square yard can be substituted for the potash.

Well-rotted stable manure or compost spread over the surface of the



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Good-quality rhubarb may be obtained by applying an abundance of plant food and by not weakening the plant unduly by stripping it of foliage at any time.

bed will also assist the growth of strong healthy fern. Heavy fern growth also assists in the suppression of weeds and once it becomes established the beds should require little attention during summer.

Celery

Celery can be planted out in the garden from December to March. Most home gardeners will prefer to purchase plants from seedsmen rather than raise them from seed, as few gardeners except those in the warmer and more sheltered districts can sow and raise plants successfully without a cold frame or small glasshouse.

Raising Plants from Seed

Where plants are to be raised seed should be sown fairly thickly—about a level teaspoon to a standard tray (22 in. x 12 in. x 3 in.)—and covered very thinly by a sprinkling of soil, which is then firmed with a flat piece of board. The seedlings should appear in 1 or 2 weeks and during this period the seed-box should be kept moist by careful watering. Seed should be sown about 10 weeks before the plants are required for setting out in the garden. When the seedlings are large enough to handle, usually about 3 weeks after emergence, they should be pricked out 2 in. apart each way into seedling boxes.

Planting Out

Four to 6 weeks from pricking out, plants will have made sufficient root growth to enable them to hold the attached soil when cut out of the boxes in squares. They may then be planted out in the garden, and if care is taken in planting, little check to growth should occur. If celery is planted out in the garden too early in the season, the plants are liable to receive a check in growth through adverse weather conditions, which may cause them to bolt to seed. For February-March planting seed may be sown in December in an open nursery bed. The seedlings should be watered thoroughly before they are set out in prepared beds or trenches. Trenches are preferable where conditions are dry, as beds are usually more difficult to water. The plants are set in double rows in trenches. For early or late planting they can be set out on level or slightly raised beds in which are planted 4 or 6 rows 12 in. apart with 8 in. between the plants in the rows. Trenches should be shallow except where it is intended to earth up the plants for blanching later. The soil in the trenches should be enriched with well-rotted farmyard



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Carrots are particularly desirable, especially for children, as they are a good source of vitamin A and a fair source of vitamins of the B group and vitamin C. Good-quality roots for winter use can usually be obtained from a sowing made in December.