

to give plenty of room for development. Mature plants are about 3 to 4ft. high. Pricking out in pots and careful setting out later will reduce all possible checks.

Egg plants should be kept growing steadily throughout their season with water and fertilisers as necessary. The growing season varies, but in ideal conditions it is about 5 months. Cultivation during the season is similar to that of tomatoes. When plants are about 8in. high growing points can be nipped out to encourage branching. If winds are a problem, staking would be an advantage.

#### Varieties and Uses

There are three main varieties of egg plants: *Esculentum* with large, egg-shaped fruits, *serpentinum* with long and slender fruits, and *depressum*, a dwarf type with small pear-shaped fruits. The first is the main variety grown in New Zealand and produces large, deep purple fruits. Varieties are Black Beauty and New York Improved.

Fruits should be harvested when they are fully coloured but before there is any suspicion of shrivelling. If left until this stage, they are very seedy.

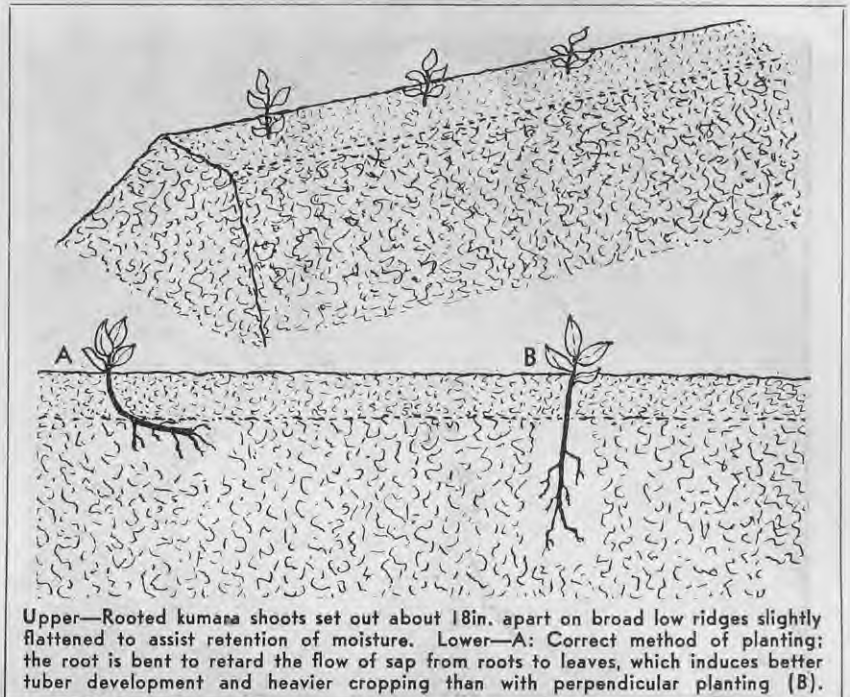
Egg fruit can be baked, boiled, or roasted like pumpkin and served with meat. It can also be stuffed or fried, the latter method being the most popular. For frying the fruits are cut in ½ in. slices like bananas. They can be soaked in salt water overnight or salted and fried in batter immediately.

#### Other Vegetables

Other vegetables that have particular uses in the home garden are red cabbage, endive, and peppers.

#### Red Cabbage

Red cabbage is grown mainly for pickles, to which it gives an attractive



Upper—Rooted kumara shoots set out about 18in. apart on broad low ridges slightly flattened to assist retention of moisture. Lower—A: Correct method of planting; the root is bent to retard the flow of sap from roots to leaves, which induces better tuber development and heavier cropping than with perpendicular planting (B).

appearance. It can, however, be used in salads or cooked like the green types. As most red types are slow maturing, they should be sown in early spring.

#### Endive

Cultivation of endive is similar to that for lettuce, except that plants can be blanched before harvesting. Endive can be boiled as a green or used as a salad.

#### Peppers

Peppers are also known as capsicums and certain varieties as chillies. They grow well in warm districts such as Hawkes Bay and can be used in pickles, chutneys or soups, can be stuffed and baked, and sliced in salads. Peppers and endive will be discussed in an article on salad vegetables in the October issue of the "Journal".

#### References

"Vegetable Crops", by H. C. Thompson. New Zealand Department of Agriculture Bulletin No. 342, "The Home Vegetable Garden".

#### Acknowledgment

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tion such as cloches, hot-caps, or wooden boxes with glass coverings will be necessary for tender plants.

Preparation of the ground for successional sowings and plantings should be continued and the soil made ready for the planting of pumpkins, marrows, etc. Early-planted potatoes should be moulded up as they grow to prevent wind or frost damage. In northern districts regular spraying with a copper compound will be necessary to prevent late blight infection. Growing crops should be hoed frequently, and crops such as cabbage and cauliflower should have the soil drawn up to them to give them support.

Frequent light cultivation is of great benefit to vegetable plants. It eliminates weeds, helps to aerate the soil, and assists in the regulation of soil moisture.

Earlier-sown crops of turnips, beet-root, parsnips, and silver beet will require thinning and hoeing. Where plants are not to be transplanted but are to remain in the bed until required for use, it is usually necessary to thin them; this work should be done as soon as the plants are large enough to pull and before they begin to "draw" or become spindly from crowding. The aim of thinning should be to leave the best plants as far as this can be done to give proper spacing. If plants are not allowed sufficient space, they will produce inferior crops.

To avoid unnecessary consolidation of the soil by walking on it after planting and to save valuable time later supports for tomatoes and runner beans should be placed in position and the soil worked up in readiness for planting. Driving stakes after plants are established may cause serious root injury.

Earlier-sown peas will require moulding up and supporting to keep them from coming in contact with the soil. Small stakes placed along each

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- 229 Vegetable Growing in the Home Garden. 6d.
- 342 The Home Vegetable Garden. 2s. 6d.

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## Work for October



**D**URING October work in the home garden is varied and in many districts that month is one of the busiest of the year. However, discretion is still necessary in sowing or planting frost-tender vegetables. In southern parts of the North Island and in the South Island there is still a likelihood of damaging frosts and some protec-