

**THE GARDEN
FARMER: PROFITABLE
MARKET GARDENING**

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The Garden Farmer: Profitable Market Gardening by William Earley

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WILLIAM EARLEY

**THE GARDEN
FARMER: PROFITABLE
MARKET GARDENING**

THE GARDEN FARMER.

PROFITABLE
MARKET GARDENING.

ADAPTED FOR THE USE OF ALL GROWERS
AND GARDENERS.

BY

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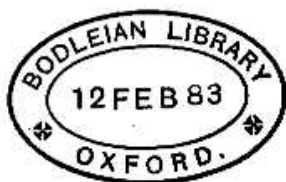


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PREFACE.

MUCH has been written on the cultivation of vegetable crops, but, nevertheless, the fact must be admitted that, even to this present date; whilst all else seems to be advancing, very little improvement from very old-fashioned ways has taken place in Home Gardens and Allotment Gardens.

Seeing this to be the case, we have prepared the following chapters on all essential crops, founded upon long practical experience and observation, and trust that the information contained in them may go some way towards securing beneficial results in the shape of larger and better crops in gardens of limited area, and will aid those engaged in this particular industry.

WILLIAM EARLEY.

Ilford, 1882.

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PROFITABLE MARKET GARDENING.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.—THE SOIL: ITS PREPARATION, ETC.

In writing a work on the culture of "open air" plants we do not intend to follow the customary plan, consisting, as it does, of stereotyped repetitions regarding manuring, digging, trenching, &c., for it is certainly not the one pursued by market gardeners with the good results which usually attend their operations. The soil with its proper preparation is doubtless the medium through which their success is attained, but they are accustomed to proceed on broader considerations and more matter-of-fact knowledge.

The chief considerations with successful culturists are three, viz., abundance of manure, thick and constant cropping, and little hoeing.

The Soil.—The ground will not bear heavily unless it be well manured. It will, indeed, unfailingly return threefold more on the outlay than will "poverty fare" in this respect, however well it may be worked by means of spade or fork.

Not that we advise a too limited forking or digging for the purpose of fine individual produce; but in dealing with a practical method to be followed, in view of good results from a moderate outlay, it is imperative to state facts as they are.

The market gardener invariably manures heavily after each crop, and before the next is planted. And there should be no time lost between the crops; indeed, it is no uncommon thing to observe a crop being removed one morning and on the following day to find another on the point of being planted in its place. Though the ground is heavily manured, in the majority of cases it is only once ploughed, harrowed, and planted.

Some soils require to be ploughed deeply at times, on account of the nature of certain crops, but it should be observed that the deeper the ploughing the less power has the harrow, which follows, to break up the lower layer of land.

The inevitable conclusion from this fact is that the top spit is turned down below and there merges with the fresh fertilising manure given, and the action of the manure and the latent moisture pre-existing in the ground so ameliorate or soften the hardened surface clods as to make them useful and proper mediums or roadways through which root-growths can travel, and amongst which the extreme and minute root-mouths or spongicles can feed freely.

It explains, besides, a truth which too few culturists give heed to, viz., that if by means of the proper manure a fertilising medium exists, roots really like a moderately firm soil, and

develop a far better surface growth than would be the case in a too loose one.

It is especially important to note this fact in connection with late spring ground workings, and when a dry period may prevail. For, far too generally, ground which is dry late in the spring—as many vegetable grounds invariably and improperly are—becomes too dry, and it needs no great skill to know that the less such ground is manured and the more it is manipulated or broken fine with spade or fork the drier it becomes.

If these facts were recognised more than they are, it would be well; they are worthy the deepest thought of all who would be growers for profit, as they really indicate the *pro* and *con* of successful growth, or the reverse.

Thick Cropping.—Whenever the ground is well prepared, it stands to reason that it ought and will give heavy crop results; and, whether in the case of green cabbage, kale, or broccoli and bean crops, &c., the small home grower will do well to follow the grower for profit in this respect. There is little, if any, reason why almost double the number of plants of every sort should not be grown on all limited vegetable grounds. It will be seen hereafter that as much as 15s. per acre is paid for putting in vegetable plants on field-garden grounds. Now, were these not planted more thickly together upon given areas than home growers usually put them, a price equivalent to 6s. per acre would often suffice. Yet does the result, as seen in the excellent produce supplied to our metropolitan and large town markets, speak loudly in justification of the means which we commend to notice. Consideration should, as a matter of course, be given to all unduly shaded sites, &c. This matter of thick cropping has, beyond doubt, great influence on the extent of subsequent outlay.