

# Gardening

May 4 - 11 is tree planting week



"You have to admire their enthusiasm for National Forest Week"

## Apples grown here for centuries

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Apples have been grown in Ontario since the early 17th Century when our forefathers introduced seeds and seedling rootstocks to the area.

The development of the industry was slow in the early years, due mainly to difficulties of transportation and communication.

However, almost every homestead had its orchard; and apples, whether fresh, dried, or juiced were an important part of the diet.

By the mid-1800's, there were some 45 varieties being grown in Ontario; a few of these were: Duchess, Gravenstein, Ribston, Fameuse, Tolman, Northern Spy, Golden Russett and R.I. Greening.

By the early 1900's, variety listings showed several additional such as: McIntosh, Chenango, Roxbury Russett, Red Astrachan, Yellow Bellflower, Wealthy and Ben Davis.

Today, many of these varieties are still with us.

but with the addition of new varieties such as Red and Golden Delicious, Spartan, Idared and Empire, and in the era of specialization, many of the older varieties are being removed.

The late 1800's began the era of specialization in Ontario, when four experimental stations were established to carry out research and to provide information to fruit growers.

Today, research is a very important part of the apple industry; and basic and applied research on all phases of apple production is carried out at research stations of Agriculture Canada, the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food, and the agricultural colleges in Ontario.

By the early 1900's, there were approximately 7,700,000 apple trees planted in Ontario, producing about 6 million bushels of apples. In 1971, we had approximately 1,480,000 apple trees on seedling and size-controlling rootstocks, producing approximately 6.5 million bushels of apples.

According to past census figures, acreage of apples has declined markedly in the

1900's. Around the year 1900 there were about 250,000 acres of apples; in 1921 there was 181,000 acres, about 69,000 acres in 1961, and about 28,000 acres in 1971.

In 1931 the Census of Canada indicated there were 54,000 farms in Ontario producing apples; in 1971 the Tree Fruit Census of Ontario indicated we had just over 2,000 farms producing apples.

However, about 500 farms produce the majority of the 6.5 million bushels of apples, with a farm value of approximately 12 million dollars.

It is interesting to note that on a production-per-tree basis, yields have increased from 2 bushels per tree in 1930 to 7 bushels per tree in the late 1960's. Apple growing is, today, a specialized business, and one in which the grower must constantly make changes and adopt new production and management practices.

His greatest ally, and foe, is Mother Nature, and it is usually Mother Nature who determines success or failure.

## Plant vegetables to suit your needs

Don't plant that vegetable garden until you have decided its purpose.

"Different vegetables are suited to different types of gardens," explains J.K. Muehmer, horticulturist at the Ridgeway College of Agricultural Technology.

"So it is best to know before planting what you expect from that garden plot. Do you need an inflation-fighting garden, a hobby garden or a fresh-produce garden?"

The inflation-fighting garden is usually planted with vegetables best suited

for freezing or canning; although peas, sweet corn, peppers, cauliflower, broccoli, Brussels sprouts and carrots are known for their freezing ability; others are also available.

Consult seed catalogs for suitable freezer varieties. Unusual vegetables can add interest to the hobby garden.

The tender parts of the kohlrabi — an enlarged stem — freeze well and taste similar to turnip. Celeriac, golden beets, chicory, summer turnips, leeks, and special squashes, such as

zucchini, may also be tried. Salad vegetables frequently get the lion's share of space in the fresh vegetable garden.

Successive plantings of different varieties of lettuce and radishes are recommended, as are peppers, tomatoes and herbs, such as parsley, chives and fennel. To get early peppers, plant the pimento varieties — Vinedale and Vinette.

Early Alaska type tomatoes and cherry tomatoes usually ripen by the first week in July, well ahead of the main crop.

## Enjoy Ontario's spring wild flowers

"At this time of year, a walk in the country to see Ontario's spring wild flowers makes a happy family outing," says Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food horticulturist J.K. Hughes.

"There are many parks, as well as conservation and recreation areas within easy reach of most population centers, with a wide variety of colorful and interesting spring flowers."

Jacks-in-the-pulpit, yellow dogtooth violets, hepaticas, bloodroot and the early May Flower are just a few of the wild flowers that bloom in

April, May, and June.

Ontario's Provincial flower, the Trillium, which comes in white or shades of mauve and purple, also puts on a good show.

To add to the enjoyment of

the nature walk, take rubber boots, a warm spring coat, and a booklet or publication on identifying wild flowers.

But try to resist the temptation to pick them, so that they can multiply and provide future enjoyment.

## Gardening tips for May

May is planting month, so be sure the garden is ready.

"Give the soil a spring tonic," suggests Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food horticulturist R.F. Gomme.

"Mix a quart each of bone

meal and dried sheep manure into a bushel of peat moss. Spread it generously on the soil and spade it under before planting."

Start the vegetable garden by sowing peas and onions as soon as the soil is workable and warm.

Wait until the danger of frost has passed, usually about May 24, before planting tomatoes and pepper.

Gladiolus and dahlias can be planted soon. Successive plantings of gladiolus every 10 days will provide blooms over several weeks.

Water recently planted nursery stock often, so that it becomes established before the hot weather arrives.

Permit flowering bulbs to bloom and then wither in their original location. If they are in a lawn or other spot where this is not practical, transplant them into a shaded area until their tops are dried and brown.

Then dig the bulbs and store in a dry place until fall planting time.

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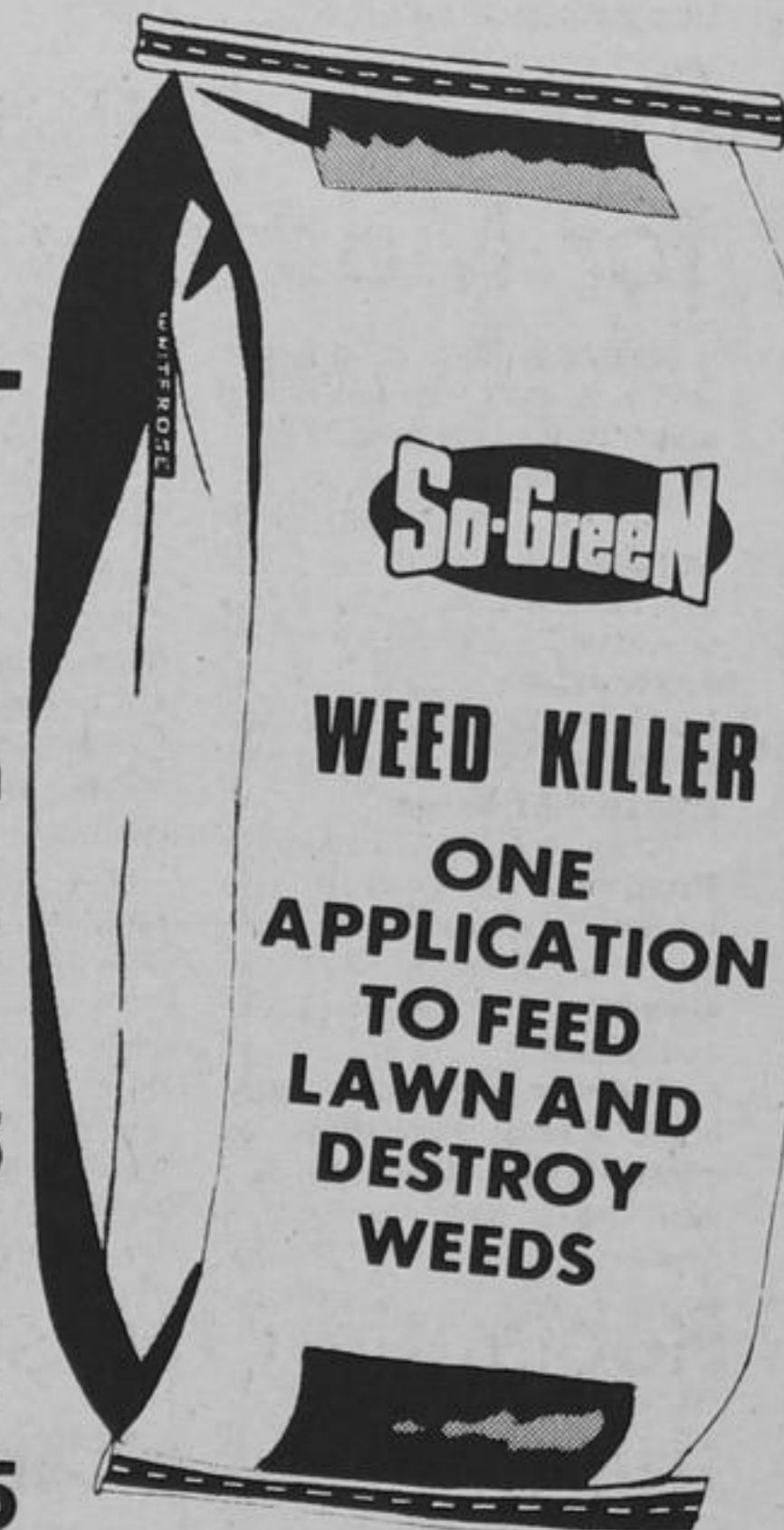
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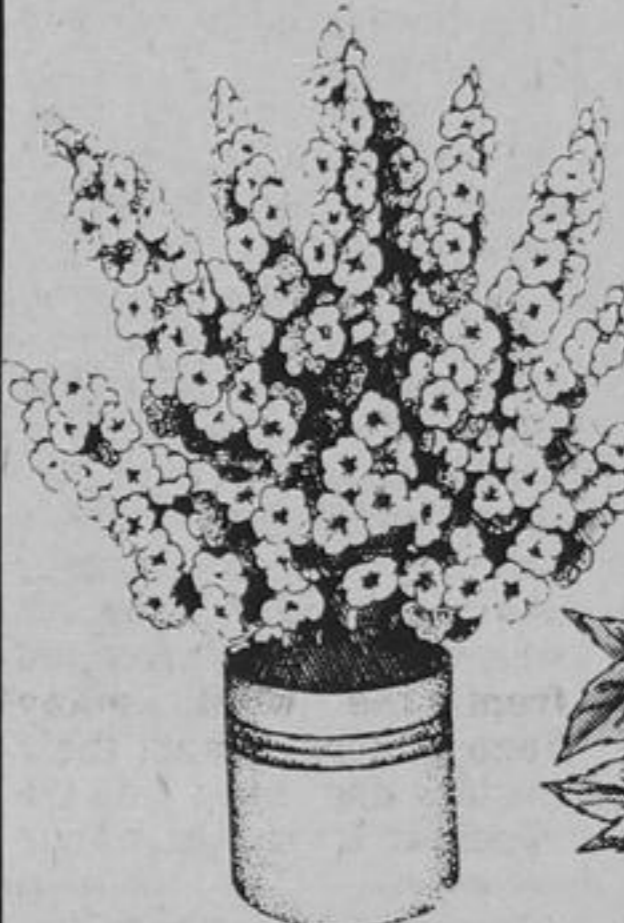
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