

terested in the growth and development of the orange industry to experiment to the extent of expending several thousand dollars in putting up sheds. The ultimate success, however, depends to a great extent on the weather. If we should have a succession of winters such as we have

had in years gone by, the outside grove will be the one to realize the money from, but should we again have our hopes blasted by the cold air from the northwest, the one who has his shed well built, well fired and well taken care of will be the one to realize handsomely on the investment.

Report on Strawberries.

By S. Powers, of the Committee.

The strawberry industry has shared in the depression produced by the unfavorable climatic influences which have affected nearly all the crops of the State. An abundant precipitation in the fall of 1902 enabled the growers to plant a wide acreage and to secure an almost perfect stand.

If the rainfall had thereafter been confined to the seasonal normal, the strawberry output would have been very large and of a superior quality.

But instead of that, it continued to rain and as the season advanced there was harder rain and more frequent; and the plants began to suffer, especially since the strawberry is usually planted on low, moist ground. Wherever there was any clay or humus in the soil it became sodden and compacted.

The strawberry is comparatively a weak feeder and it feeds close at home. It is advisable generally to close cultivation when the blooming activity begins, at which time or a little before the mulching is applied. The downpour still persisted, and the plants were now imprisoned in a hardened soil and further confined by the mulching. A few planters removed the

mulching, cultivated and replaced it, only to see it rain some more. A few went along the rows with a prong-hoe, struck it deep down under each hill and carefully pried it up a little.

The result of this excessive rainfall was that the plants made very little, if any, spring growth, which usually adds a second story, serving as a roof to protect the berries from the frost. Lacking their customary protection, the berries were more easily touched by late frosts. They were sodden and rotted by the rain, the pollen was beaten out and the percentage of fertilization diminished. On lands naturally or artificially well-drained, however, the production was large, as the great number of blossoms formed more than compensated for the washing away of the pollen.

In sporadic cases the thrips appeared; in one instance, in Clay county, a correspondent reports a loss of seventy-five per cent, from the ravages of this insect, which is usually most troublesome in rainy seasons.

Neither did the growers have the compensating advantage of the tomato growers, in receiving an enhanced

price for the proportion of the crop which was left. The berries were soft from an excessive percentage of moisture; they did not ship well; they went down soon after their arrival on the markets and even in instances while still under refrigeration. The prices suffered. In Lawtey, for instance the growers received normally good prices only one week where they usually have them for a month or more. They netted only about \$2.50 a crate, while last year they netted between \$4.50 and \$5.00.

At my request C. H. Churchill of Lawtey gave me the following notes on new varieties tested there:

Duff (P), shipping, medium size, long conical, bright red, good quality, medium firm but a good shipper, medium early,, healthy strong grower, very productive.

Klondike (S.), best shipper, all purposes, average large size, heart-shaped, dark red, quality best, firm, good shipper, medium early, extra strong grower, extra heavy yielder.

Lady Thompson (S.), shipping, medium to large, broad conical, color from pale pink to bright red, quality good, flesh medium firm, midseason, vigorous grower, heavy yielder.

Mr. R. K. Muirhead of Pasadena also contributed the following notes:

Statement by R. K. Muirhead.

Mr. S. Powers. Dear Sir:—Enclosed I send you a few notes on what plants we have grown this last year. We have tested hundreds of different varieties from California, New York, Maryland, England, etc., and found the seven varieties I have written about by far the best for our part of Florida.

Our strawberry land is of several differ-

ent kinds—low, wet hammock (bayhead) rising into pine hills thirty to forty feet high. They have all, however, a clay subsoil, and although quite dry on the surface have moisture underneath; and all our land has a decided fall, that is our strawberry land. The low land we have ditched so that we can run the water off if too wet, and also stop the ditches so as to retain all the moisture when too dry; also we can lead water over some of the drier portions.

Strawberries.

Brandywine.—I think the Brandywine heads the list of all the different varieties grown in Florida. It is very much larger than any other variety; we have filled a quart basket with 17-18-19 berries on the same day. The flavor is excellent; it is of a beautiful crimson color with large, dark-green cap. This season we picked nearly 600 quarts off one acre in three pickings in one week, Monday, Wednesday and Friday. It is, however, very liable to rust or leaf-blight, and requires to be sprayed very thoroughly with Bordeaux mixture. It is a staminate and a very heavy pollenizer, and is recommended to be used to pollinize pistillate varieties. It, however, requires a special quality of land; we have found it to do well only on dark, sandy loam with clay subsoil and moderately moist.

Excelsior (S.).—Our next favorite is the Excelsior. This is the earliest of all the strawberries grown here, and bears more heavily than all other varieties. This season we picked nearly 3,000 quarts from one acre and now a second crop is coming on too late to ship.

This variety requires to be manured very heavily and several times, at least

three applications. Its bad feature is that it sets too many small berries that worry both the pickers and the packers.

Lady Thompson (S.).—Comes third on the list, is also an early berry and a heavy cropper. Good flavor and large size, but is pale in color and soft, so it does not ship well except on ice.

Klondyke (S.).—Is also a splendid berry, but has not been long enough with us to gain a decided character.

Hoffman.—Is far too shy a bearer to pay the grower. It is, however, a splendid shipper, large in size, good flavor, fine color and brings the top price in markets.

Early Michel (S.).—Early Michel is by far the best variety for dry land and in a dry season it cannot be surpassed. It has the best flavor of all the berries mentioned. We would recommend it as the best variety for home use. It is rather too soft to ship except on ice early in the season.

Newnan, (S.).—The Improved New-

nan is the old Florida standby and in some seasons pays better than some of the newer varieties.

Imported plants do not do well the first season they are planted, so all growers should get Florida-grown plants if at all possible.

Dewberries.

We have tried both the Austin and the Lucretia dewberries and have no hesitation in recommending the native dewberry as far superior. If cultivated it is much earlier than those and quite as large and more prolific.

Mulberries.

We have two varieties—the Downing, which blooms very early and is usually caught by Jack Frost; and another which blooms late and always has a heavy crop and ripens its fruit in June and July. We have no name for it. My son says it is called Everbearing because it bears nearly all summer.

New Fruits for Florida.

By E. N. Reasoner, of the Committee.

Not heretofore in our official catalogue, but now sufficiently tried to warrant being listed and classified, are the following fruit trees and plants:

Rubus trivialis, the Manatee dewberry, which has found a welcome in Texas and far away India. This bears an abundance of black berries of a melting, luscious quality fit for any table or market. The fruit is improved by keeping cool for at least a day after picking.

Rubus ————.?. The Northey berry, supposed to be a hybrid dewberry-blackberry, from Lake County, Florida. The fruit was shown and described by Prof. Rolfs at our meeting in Orlando in 1898. Color, wine-red; size, medium to large; quality soft and delicious, of a delicate raspberry flavor, richly sub-acid; far ahead of any *rubus* yet grown in South Florida. The habit of the vine in growth and fruiting is similar to the dewberry,