THE ANNUAL CONVENTION

By E. R. McIntyre

Confronted with the war-time duty of developing to the utmost the commercial fruit and vegetable industries of the state on the one hand, and assuming direct leadership in teaching intensive home gardening as well, the fifty-second annual convention of the Wisconsin State Horticultural Society held at Madison, December 11–13, took on a most serious and deliberate tone. Sessions were held in the state capitol.

At the outset of the convention, the keynote of the situation was expressed by Secretary Frederic Cranefield, who emphasized the fact that it is now the absolute duty of every public or semi-public organization concerned in the production of food to postpone for a time such activities as relate only indirectly to that problem, and put extra force into methods of increasing and conserving the commissary stores.

In this line of work the State Horticultural Society has taken a leading part. It was the first in the field with a publication intended to aid the amateur gardener, namely, the special edition of the society's magazine, Wisconsin Horticulture, which was mailed to members and others interested on April 17th.

This initial drive for better home gardens as national food defense measures was quickly followed by the organization of The Wisconsin Gardener's Advisory Council, a group of volunteer workers who directed local efforts in fruit and vegetable growing.

Secretary Cranefield declared that nothing in his fourteen years of service as an official of the society equals the spirit and results accomplished by this brigade of garden guardians.

Members of the Gardener's Advisory Council went on record at the convention as firm believers in the ultimate good of the movement in which they were engaged, and promised to continue the work with added reinforcements next spring. Many of the members stated that winter garden conferences have been planned in their districts in order to review the past season's successes and failures and create wider enthusiasm for future work.

They believe that the sum total in production from 100,000 well worked tenth-of-an-acre gardens is of greater economic importance than 10,000 acres devoted to market gardens. Mr. Cranefield said that Wisconsin does not have quite 5,000 acres devoted to commercial vegetable gardening, while it is not an overstatement to place the Wisconsin home garden area cultivated in 1917 at 200,000 gardens of one-twentieth of an acre each, or 10,000 acres.
Wives of the visiting delegates and others interested in county
council of defense garden movements lent aid to the program. Mrs.
H. H. Morgan, chairman of the women's committee for Wisconsin of
the National Defense Council spoke in support of the state-wide garden
movement, as did Miss Abby L. Marlatt, head of the home economics
department of the University of Wisconsin and home economics repre-
sentative of the United States Food Administration.

Mrs. Morgan urged closer unity and more thorough local organization
of all women to the end that war work may become a vital part of home
life and ambitions. Miss Marlatt dwelt in particular upon the con-
servation of fruits and vegetables, and asked horticulturists to support
all present and future plans based upon intelligent and rational me-
thods of kitchen economy. Miss Marlatt placed the service of herself
and members of the home economics staff at the university at the dis-
posal of women engaged in all phases of food thrift.

Mrs. C. E. Strong, of West Allis, presented the results of the war
garden movement in that city. There during the past summer the
loyal populace, aided by public information from the State Horticul-
tural Society and the College of Agriculture, planted and cultivated
fully 1,200 gardens, averaging 60 by 120 feet in size. Similar accounts
of personal interest and devotion to back-lot farming were outlined
by Mrs. J. J. Ihrig, Oshkosh, who gave a brief synopsis of garden plans
mapped out for that city next season.

N. A. Rasmussen, president of the society, aided by A. Martini, Lake
Geneva, secretary of the Walworth County Foremen's and Gardeners'
Association, then provided some technical information to aid the di-
rectors of forthcoming garden campaigns. They explained soil re-
quirements and soil management, and gave hints on early crops, suc-
cession crops, and the storage of different varieties of fruits and
vegetables. Next spring both Mr. Rasmussen and Mr. Martini, through
the society's publication and by means of special lectures, will con-
tinue to lend help to the cause in many parts of the state.

Owing to the severe weather many of the numbers scheduled on the
program had to be omitted. The illness of two members of the society
also reduced the exhibits somewhat. The display of Wisconsin grown
apples and vegetables in the rotunda of the second floor of the capitol
was, however, worth coming long distances to see. Hardly without
exception, the exhibits of apples were placed by commercial growers,
and represented the best products of the Bayfield peninsula, Door penin-
sula, the Lakeshore district, from Kewaunee county southward to Mil-
waukee county, and including choice specimens from the famous Kicka-
poo Valley orchards of Crawford county. Sauk county, with A. K.
Bassett, of Baraboo, as its champion, came through the ordeal with a
long string of prizes to its credit. Jefferson county was represented
no less thoroughly by Fremont Lounsbury, Watertown, who likewise
made some "cleanings" in standard varieties.

Nevertheless, there still continues to be a lamentable lack of in-
terest in the annual state apple and fruit show, a fact not easily explained in a casual manner. Some attribute this indifference to a lack of suitable premium awards; some say it is due to the more pressing duties brought about by the national call to arms, while still other members believe the state fair and county and district horticultural shows have weaned away some of the faithful. Judging of exhibits was left to members of the horticultural department of the University of Wisconsin, J. G. Moore in charge.

Some interest was attached to the annual report of the trial orchard Committee, William Toole, senior, Baraboo, and M. S. Kellogg, Janesville. In addition to maintaining a trial vineyard at Sparta for the past seven years, the society has eight different test orchards leased and under its personal management. In this work the Wisconsin society leads all other state horticultural associations. The orchards are maintained for the sole purpose of determining to a nicety the sections of the state which can be recommended for this branch of food production on a commercial scale.

The vineyard at Sparta will be abandoned. After seven years' trial the society has found that grapes cannot be grown commercially with any assurance of success in that region. The decision need not act as a check on the efforts of home growers, however, the committee stated, but the fact remains, nevertheless, that only one profitable crop of grapes suitable in every way to Wisconsin conditions could be produced during the seven years in which the Sparta plot was in operation. The best of care and attention was given the project from the start.

The Wisconsin apple grading law, which makes compulsory the exact grading and packing of all apples for sale in the state, was discussed, and seemed to meet the hearty approval of the members. It is the first law regulating the fruit industry to be placed on the statute books in Wisconsin, and Dr. E. D. Ball, of the state department of agriculture, has charge of its administration.

The discussions brought out the fact that the law must be respected and upheld if for no other purpose than to open the way for further favorable legislation. To disregard the provisions of the law, which provide that all apples consigned to the regular box and barrel channels of trade must be marked according to four classified and one unclassified descriptions, would be suicide to the progress of Badger horticulture.

The future of Wisconsin horticulture and some things it must stand for was the subject of an address by J. G. Moore, college of agriculture. Mr. Moore's keynote was that Wisconsin commercial fruit growers must aid farmers in adopting better methods of caring for their home orchards. The commercial man has in some cases, Mr. Moore believes, been loath to impart his trade secrets or give useful suggestions to neighboring farm orchardists for fear that these private fruit growers might in time come in line for competition in the open market with a product equal to his own.
He said that the most significant thing in recent horticultural circles in Wisconsin was the awakened interest evinced by the average farm orchard owner in properly caring for his trees. With this in mind, Mr. Moore urged all commercial growers to at least "practice what they preach on their own holdings."

They must spray and prune and cultivate their orchards for the benefit of their farm neighbors as well as themselves. The speaker pointed out that the danger of possible competition from strictly amateur-grown fruit need not worry the commercial grower.

This is true because of two things, he said, namely, that a commercial man really suffers the most damaging sort of competition when lots of inferior, scabby fruit is thrown on the market. The poor stuff sets the price level. Then the premium price above that level which the commercial man gets for his improved article may not be as high relatively, after all, as would be the case in a market where plenty of excellent fruit establishes a higher average price level to start with. The other point is that consumption and demand are always greater and more even when an abundance of high-grade stock is on the market for the public to admire and buy more generally and readily.

Strawberry culture, particularly that of the late varieties, was discussed by M. S. Kellogg, Janesville. These everbearing, "double-barreled" varieties will yield a late summer crop of excellent quality with proper care. They have probably shown success as a home garden crop rather than a commercial proposition in Wisconsin thus far in the trials, Mr. Kellogg stated. Their backwardness in securing public favor as a dependable commercial crop was laid to the strong competition which the everbearing kinds must face in a market glutted with peaches, pears and early apples. From now on the success of the everbearing kinds depends solely upon a vigorous campaign of education, to set the public at rest as to their merits and calling the housewives' attention to the fact that all homegrown strawberries are not gone by the second week in July. Mr. Kellogg also urged farmers to consider small fruits more carefully next spring, as they would aid the sum total of food production on odd corners of the farm at little expense in time and a relatively small labor outlay, results in average seasons considered.

The best varieties, honesty and care in packing—with or without a state law—were the maxims for successful commercial apple production set forth by A. K. Bassett, well-known Baraboo fruit farmer. When Mr. Bassett bought his present farm it contained a fifty-year-old, neglected orchard. He cleaned, renovated, sprayed and pruned and has since set out sixty-five acres to apple trees. Although receiving an average of $6 a barrel this season, f. o. b. Baraboo, for his winter stocks, with less valuable kinds selling for 75 cents a bushel, containers returnable, Mr. Bassett complains of labor shortage as a drawback to expanding his business just now. His earlier varieties are the
Snow or Fameuse, McIntosh, Wealthy, Northwestern Greening and the extra early Duchess of Oldenburg. For strictly winter keeping qualities, he supplies his trade with Salome, Windsor, Russett and Tolman Sweet. All these he has found adapted to south-central Wisconsin conditions over a period of ten years. Mail order shipments direct to consumers took 40 per cent of his crop this year, and dealers in northern and western Wisconsin towns took most of the remaining lots.

Not forgetting the side of home life which ministers to the soul, and helps to imbue a stronger love of country, talks on farmstead planning for beauty as well as utility were given by F. A. Aust and Cecil Britt, University of Wisconsin. Mr. Aust explained the elements to be sought in landscape architecture, using good, hardy Wisconsin vines and shrubs advocated by the college of agriculture and the horticultural society. Mr. Britt, a veteran gardener who comes from Warwickshire, England, with much lore about rose culture, gave the society an interesting ten-minute talk on the chief things which Wisconsin must look for in the successful growing of the national flower of Albion.

R. H. Roberts, of the university horticultural department, in his paper on the cause and control of winter injury to cherry blossom buds, attributed it chiefly to the condition of the buds when winter starts. The more developed the buds are at this season the more susceptible they are to harm. These observations lead one to conclude that much of the winter injury common to older, weaker-growing trees could be prevented by maintaining a more vigorous tree, and thus arrest the extreme development of the blossom buds to the stage at which they are found to be very subject to frost.

More action for central frost-proof warehouses where cranberries could be sorted and shipped with less delay and loss due to frequent and careless handling is the crying need of Wisconsin, said E. K. Tuttle, Tomah, in a brief discussion. At present each grower in the Badger cranberry area works practically alone in his own warehouse in spite of greatly improved conditions brought about by recent successful organizations. Wisconsin raised between 20,000 and 30,000 barrels of cranberries this year, Mr. Tuttle says. Most of the larger, fancy varieties are shipped west, although Chicago annually receives much Badger stock.

Excellent progress in control investigations with respect to the cherry leaf spot was reported by G. W. Kellett, plant disease specialist, University of Wisconsin, who has been conducting cooperative experiments with Door county growers for the past three years. Turning under of dead leaves before blossoming time, plus two, sometimes three spray applications later in the season works wonders against this disease of the cherry. Mr. Kellett and cooperating growers found that three pounds of copper sulphate mixed with three pounds of fresh lime to fifty gallons of water was as effective for commercial control of cherry leaf spot as the 4-4-50 solution. In times of high prices for
spray chemicals this means quite a saving besides. The only possible substitute for Bordeaux mixture in times of high prices is lime-sulphur, Mr. Keitt says. This, at the rate of five to six quarts to fifty gallons of water in combination with arsenate of lead for insect control, is advised.

THE PRIZE WINNERS.

Annual Convention, Madison, Dec. 11-13, 1917.

Best collection of apples—First, A. K. Bassett, Baraboo; second Fremont Lounsbury, Watertown; third, F. B. Sherman, Edgerton.

Best five plates, commercial—First, Kickapoo Development Co., Gays Mills; second, H. H. Harris, Warrens; third, A. K. Bassett; fourth, Carl J. Baer, Baraboo.

Plate Ben Davis—First, Fremont Lounsbury; second, J. A. Hass, Ellison Bay; third, A. K. Bassett.

Delicious—First, D. E. Bingham; second, L. E. Birmingham.

Plate Fameuse—First, A. K. Bassett; second, Carl J. Baer; third, L. B. Irish, Baraboo; fourth, W. A. Toole, Baraboo.

Plate Gano—First, Carl J. Baer.

Plate Gem—First, A. K. Bassett; second, L. B. Irish; third, W. A. Toole.

Plate Gideon—First, Fremont Lounsbury; third, F. B. Sherman.


Plate Grimes Golden—First, Arno Meyer; second, F. B. Sherman.

Plate Jonathan—First, Fremont Lounsbury; second, A. K. Bassett; third, Rudolph Schultz, Lake Mills; fourth, W. A. Toole.

Plate Maiden Blush—First, N. A. Rasmussen, Oshkosh; second, Fremont Lounsbury.

Plate McIntosh—First, Kickapoo Development Co.; third, A. K. Bassett; fourth, F. B. Sherman.

Plate McMahan—First, Fremont Lounsbury; second, H. H. Harris; third, L. B. Irish; fourth, F. B. Sherman.

Plate Newell—First, Kickapoo Development Co.; second, Carl J. Baer; third, A. K. Bassett; fourth, W. A. Toole.

Plate Northern Spy—Third, Fremont Lounsbury.

Plate Northwestern Greening—First, Kickapoo Development Co.; second, A. K. Bassett; third, Carl J. Baer; fourth, H. H. Harris.

Plate Patten—First, H. H. Harris.

Plate Pewaukee—First, A. K. Bassett; second, N. A. Rasmussen; third, Arno Meyer; fourth, Fremont Lounsbury.

Plate Plumb Cider—First, Fremont Lounsbury; second, A. K. Bassett; third, F. B. Sherman.

Plate Salome—First, H. H. Harris; second, Rudolph Schultz.

Plate Seek-No-Further—First, A. K. Bassett; second, Fremont Lounsbury; third, W. A. Toole.

Plate Scott Winter—First, Carl J. Baer; second, H. H. Harris; third, W. A. Toole; fourth, L. B. Irish.

Plate Tolman—First, Carl J. Baer; second, A. K. Bassett; third, Kickapoo Development Co.; fourth, F. B. Sherman.

Plate Twenty Ounce—First, Fremont Lounsbury.

Plate Utter—First, A. K. Bassett; second, Fremont Lounsbury.

Plate Wagner—First, Fremont Lounsbury.

Plate Wealthy—First, Carl J. Baer; second, H. H. Harris; third,