

The American Food Garden

By W. J. COLLINS

A GREAT many of our thinking people are well aware of the fact that the nation is to-day face to face with a national emergency, an emergency which will call for the very best efforts of everyone.

The recently created National Emergency Food Commission has stated, after the most rigid investigations, that we will this year experience a serious food deficiency—unless favored by a much larger and more general crop than any we have had during the last two years, and to ensure to the nation this extra-production, they are advocating with all their energy and ability the planting of home gardens as the only means by which we can overcome this oncoming unwelcome condition.

This is a measure of economic preparedness, and of vital importance to the welfare of this nation, and by supporting the measure we will in the case of military necessity (and that is by no means improbable), release thousands of cars that would otherwise be required to carry food and food products in the usual course of distribution. It would greatly relieve transportation difficulties in all large distributing centers, the congestion at which to-day is in a measure the indirect cause of our high cost of living. The way to meet and overcome this danger is by enlisting our boys and our girls, our men and our women, in this "plant a garden" movement.

Therefore, those of you who are able and have ground available must plant vegetables more abundantly this year than ever. You must also encourage others who previously never had a

garden to plant some dependable vegetable crops. You must make use of every inch of your garden, your vacant lots or grounds, and in doing this you are doing something not only for the protection of yourself and family but also for less fortunate neighbors, who are existing under extremely congested conditions in our cities. Thousands and thousands of these people would eagerly grasp the opportunity which you people have. Bear in mind you will also be helping to guarantee to our military and naval forces the full rations which they so well deserve.

We, as citizens, must give prompt and serious consideration to the plan of the National Emergency Food Commission, and we must act promptly and not sparingly along the lines which they have suggested.

Again I say we face a national emergency which may result in a national calamity if we are not equal to it, not only for our own nation, but for all the nations engaged in the greatest and most destructive war the world has ever known. The nations of Europe have for years depended upon us for certain food supplies. The fact that the man-power of these nations is to-day fighting and destroying instead of sowing and reaping makes them doubly dependent upon us, and we as brothers and sisters, for such we are, must give them what assistance we can under present conditions.

Our crops last year and the year previous were short, due to the poor season. This year, however, the drafting of men for our national defence, for the naval and military branches of

the services, will make labor scarce, and scarce labor means scarce crops. Therefore, you can readily see and understand our problem is a serious one. Something must be done and done quickly to ensure substantial increase in the production of foodstuffs, and the plan of the Commission, which is feasible, rational, and simple, has been worked out and is being given to the people all over the country with the hope that they will accept it and enter into it with the spirit of true Americans.

The Commission expects to induce more than one million young people and men and women to plant food gardens who have never before done so, and those who have previously had gardens are expected to doubly increase their efforts for a maximum production. This plan alone, if supported, would add more than \$200,000-000 in food value to the annual food supply of this nation. It will mean also the creating and tilling of a million more vegetable producing gardens in the backyards and lots of thousands of our cities, towns and villages, and the utilization of idle lands all over our country. In the adoption of this plan we may be wisely laying the foundation upon which may be built the future self-sustaining agricultural policy of every American household.

There are to-day in this country hundreds of thousands of individuals and thousands of organizations and clubs who are ready and willing to raise vegetables in home gardens, school gardens, and vacant lots, if they but had the opportunity, knew how and were properly apprised of the necessity for doing so. The National Emergency Food Commission has undertaken to arouse these people and tell them how

this can be done. It has secured the cooperation of hundreds of newspapers and magazines, which are daily printing and publishing, and will continue to print and publish, expert instructions on when and how and what to plant in the vegetable garden. In this work they are being assisted by thousands of garden experts, who represent the leading horticultural and agricultural societies all over our country, and by thousands of city and town officials, civic bodies and home garden associations. It is men who are looked upon as the ablest trained thinkers identified with the food conservation problem who make up this newly created Emergency Food Commission. All of these men believe in the wholesomeness of home-grown vegetables, and point out that fresh vegetables from the home garden are at all times superior to those purchased in the market, because they are not subjected to exposure in our markets or in transportation from the farmer to the market, and consequently are not liable to become infected in any way.

And again, many garden products lose their characteristic and appetizing flavor when not used within a few hours after gathering, but with the home garden the vegetable supply for the family is directly under your control, and, in the majority of cases, is the only way whereby clean, wholesome vegetables may be secured.

It is not difficult to estimate the benefit we would derive once this plan was under full operation and in good working order. Take children, for instance. For them it will mean more outdoor exercise, better health, added strength, pleasure in their work, and will instill in them habits of industry

that lead to a better understanding of the value of money as measured in terms of labor, and will give them a direct knowledge of the forces of nature, which is necessary for a better understanding of most of the school lessons. They will also learn something of the economic principle that every man and woman must make his or her own living, and must by some kind of labor, whether of the head, hand, or heart, contribute to the common wealth as much as he or she takes from it, and must pay in some way for what he or she receives.

And, aside from the fundamental and essential reason why the nation should take up wholeheartedly the Commission's plan to produce, and produce at once, the fact that a generation of men and women would be produced who would find recreation in the evenings at the close of their professional labors in profitable home gardening, is a phase of the situation which should commend itself to all, for a man's worth is measured by his ability to produce, and the wealth and prosperity of any nation is mainly dependent upon the productive powers of its people.

Business and professional men appreciate the value of recreation, but they often neglect it for lack of interest. Now, if such men understood the principles of gardening, they would find in it a sufficient incentive to exercise and would take much pleasure from a little work in their home garden in the evening hours.

We, as patriotic Americans, want to help our country. We can best help by relieving the Government of this food problem. We can solve this eco-

nomie crisis and benefit ourselves both financially and physically by planting food gardens. In this way we will do our part toward an economic victory. Are we doing so? If not, it is not too late to start now.

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you never saw a more surprised man than he when I marched him out and put a steel tape across the widest part, where it was 65 yards. I consider this too much, even for the grumblers but I have observed that they who grumble about narrow fairways and demand 80 yard widths really have no idea of how absurdly wide such as these are.

When we got Wild quieted down we got back to the Club house and went over the score card. I had made notes of the varying widths of our two-shot hole Fairways, and found the average width about 50 yards, and I know that they compare favorably with the best ones. Very few find fault with them at any rate.

We agreed that we dislike regular-lived Fairways on any holes; you know the kind that looks like Mary's garden.

The gracefully bending Fairway opening out gradually and then closing in again between shots so to speak, suit us all. But I will have more to say of them another time.

First Caddie (meeting second caddie on course): "How's your man going?"

Second Caddie: "Fair. How's yours?"

First Caddie (contemptuously): "He ain't no golfer, he's a gardener."