

THE GLOBE ARTICHOKE

By M. F. WHARTON, M. S.

Newly Developed Crop Well Adapted to Arizona Conditions—Market Conditions Indicate Artichokes Are a Valueable Product.

ONE of the most recent introductions into the vegetable world to meet with widespread popularity and demand has been the globe artichoke. The leading hotels and restaurants are offering it on their bills of fare and there is hardly a housewife that has not served it on the home table. As a salad and as a vegetable dish it has been accepted and demanded in season and out of season. The plant itself is easily grown and is well adapted to soil and climatic conditions of Southern Arizona and should be included in every home garden.

The globe artichoke is propagated in three different ways: Directly by seed, by divisions or offshoots of a mature plant, and by root cutting. Planting seed directly has many drawbacks. The worst of which is that the plants do not come true to type. There is an unusually large number of reversion types and these do not produce desirable buds. Division of the mature plant offers a limited means of propagation but on a large scale is out of the question as one mature plant usually will not furnish more than eight desirable transplants. Root cuttings furnish plenty of plants and these plants come true to the parent from which they were derived.

Root cuttings should be made during the dormant season, usually in the late winter or early spring, before the parent plant has started growth. Cuttings should be made of roots from one quarter to three quarters of an inch in diameter and should be from six to eight inches in length. These root cuttings may be started in a nursery row and the best plants later transplanted or they may be set directly in the field where they are to grow.

In setting the root cuttings in the nursery row they are usually planted on the shoulder of a ridge or bed and covered to a depth of at least three inches. They should be spaced from eight inches to a foot apart in the row. Where setting is accomplished directly in the field the cuttings should be set the proper distances for the mature plants. This should be from six to eight feet apart in the row and rows from eight to ten feet apart. The

reason for this distance is that the plant is a heavy feeder and has a widely distributed root system, also the tops often develop to a height of from four to six feet with a diameter of from six to eight. These distances will allow for proper irrigation and cultivation practices after the plants are mature. The soil should be worked down to a good mulch and a bed prepared so that the cuttings may be planted on a ridge and not flooded by irrigation. As soon as the cuttings are set it is advisable to water them immediately to prevent drying out and to properly settle the soil of the bed around them.

Any deep, fertile, well drained soil is suitable for artichoke culture but as in all truck crops the sandy loam type that is well filled with humus is much preferable. Not only is it easier to work but it also will produce an earlier crop in the spring. If the soil is not of high fertility it is wise to apply from six to eight inches of well rotted barnyard manure and plow under several weeks preceding the time that the plants will be set out. Old alfalfa or grass sod is an ideal condition but care must be taken that it is plowed early enough to eradicate the grass and weeds.

The globe artichoke is a perennial and requires but little attention after it has once become established. Frequent irrigations are necessary during the growing and harvesting season as there is a large amount of growth made at this time. Cultivation enough to keep down the weeds and to prevent the surface soil from becoming hard and baked is all that is necessary. After production is started it is a good plan to apply a heavy mulch of manure every two years during the dormant season. This should be worked into the soil and will become decomposed in time for the plant to use it in the growth period.

Globe artichoke buds are harvested according to size and are cut from the plant leaving an inch or more of the stem attached. The market demands a bud no smaller than a baseball and the larger sizes obtain the fancy prices. The faster the growth of the bud the better will be its qual-

ity and size. Buds should not be allowed to become too old on the plant as the flower parts will form in the center, the leaves will become coarse and stringy and the market value of them will be materially decreased.

The production of globe artichokes has expanded in California and in many places there are large fields of them. The prices have been favorable and on the local markets in Arizona a person rarely sees them priced less than ten cents a bud. A healthy mature plant should produce from forty to fifty buds each season so it is readily seen that there is money to be made from them, in a limited production at present, to supply our local markets. One of the drawbacks in the planting of an artichoke bed is the fact that a person does not realize a crop the first season. This period of time is utilized by the plant in developing an extensive root system and top. Care should be taken during the first season to allow the plant to make all of the growth possible as this will insure productiveness in later seasons.

—A— BULLETIN SENT OUT FROM LOCAL STATION

"Pruning Deciduous Fruit Trees in the Southwest" is the title of a bulletin recently published by the Agricultural Experiment Station of the University. This work is by Regent F. J. Crider, of the Boyce Thompson arboretum.

The bulletin contains 20 cuts and is a very important bulletin. It should be in the hands of every fruit grower in Arizona. It discusses fruit growing and explains the significance of pruning with its relation to best production.

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If the pan is sufficiently hot for pan-broiling steak, the meat will not stick even though no fat is used.

—A—
Carry vegetables in the lunch box in fresh form, as washed carrots or celery.

—A—
"Well, everything I say goes."
"Come out in the garage and tell it to the Ford."