Miscellaneous Arts #235A

See Conversion from War to Peace as Promising Era for Trade

by
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While it is never safe to forecast trends because of the many influencing factors, one might assume that there will be an expansion of nurseries, greenhouses and horticultural specialty crops after this war. As prices and demand on stable farm crops decrease, there is often a turn to crops that have a higher elasticity of demand and better chance of selling for higher prices. More intensively cultivated crops are usually grown after wars. This was shown after the last war and will probably occur again. General economic conditions influence demand and prices; however, there is every reason to believe that there should be a turn to horticultural specialty crops of all kinds. Colorado will have a bright future in ornamental horticulture and specialty crops of various kinds, if irrigation water supplies can be further developed.

The remarkable food production credited to victory gardens should bring forth praise for all those who have contributed to the program in any way. It has been estimated that forty-two percent of the fresh vegetables used last year in the United States was produced in farm and nonfarm gardens - 7,940,000 tons in gardens and 6,322,000 tons in commercial truck farms and market gardens. Someone has said that this would fill 500 supply ships or 200,000 freight cars 200 miles long.

Nurseriesmen and florists have played an important part in the national victory garden program. They have (1) contributed services, teachers of garden classes, committeemen and supervisors; (2) furnished land for employees, community gardens and even plowed and prepared land; (3) produced over 500,000,000 plants for gardeners in the United States, and (4) produced food crops for fresh market and canning companies.

Postwar Educational Plans

This year there is a call for still more gardens, and there is a greater need for garden leaders now. New recruits are needed. Even though it is estimated that sixty percent of the people were active last year in the United States in gardens, more are needed for 1944.

It is planned to continue rationing in Great Britain for a period of four years after Japan is defeated. Nationing may continue in the United States after the war is over for a period of one year. There probably will be about a sixty to seventy-five percent conversion of victory gardens to lawns, flowers, shrubs and trees after the war. This means that there will be an excellent opportunity for landscape men and nurseries to do a better job of home grounds improvement, both in the city and country. The present well organized garden programs should be kept together and active after the war. There will be a need for farmstead improvements, community parks, roadside parks, highway plantings, county zoning and landscaping for the millions of new homes that will be constructed. An exceedingly bright future is possible for landscape men and nurseries.
Many general studies and plans have been considered, but not enough of them have been detailed enough to be practical. No one can forecast exactly what the postwar situation may be; so it is better to prepare plans for many possibilities, then select the plan that may fit the situation. Even then new plans may need to be developed quickly. Training programs for industries which have serious shortages of trained men will no doubt receive attention first. Present information indicates that there should be vacancies before training programs are developed in specialized fields. There is a need now for technically trained horticulturists. It is not fair to criticize training programs unless the men and companies will hire the ex-serviceman when his training is completed. We want landscape men, florists and nurserymen to have educational committees to help work out practical courses in the vocational field so that we are training men the way they will best fit into your job. George Kelly has prepared a 2-year nursery training program that shows a great deal of study and is practical and workable. Here the ex-serviceman would work directly with the nurseryman in obtaining his field training. The florists have not presented a program, although this course could well be adapted to training greenhouse operators. If this type of training is permitted, about half the man’s time will be under the nurseryman’s or florist’s supervision in the field where preparation for specific jobs may be possible.

Training is being considered now in horticulture at Colorado State College includes vocational horticulture, trades, practices and skills; rehabilitation courses, both mental and physical; refresher training courses; continuation of present 4-year technical courses, and special courses for disabled men.

Vocational Horticulture

Vocational horticulture will include practice in growing and handling crops and development of skills related to such practices. Possibly this will be used in cooperation with commercial establishments, growers and operators. It will deal with nurseries - growing, handling and selling; floriculture - greenhouse crops, growing, handling and shipping; fruit and vegetable production and marketing, and small tract specialty growing - where partially disabled men may raise food crops and poultry and live comfortably and respectably with their disability allowances.

There will be rehabilitation courses, as in some cases it requires from six to twelve months for ex-servicemen to stabilize and adjust their thinking to civilian life. There is a definite therapeutic value for those with nervous disorders in working with growing plants, which will reduce the time required for adjustment to civilian life. Occupational therapy is a new possible field which can be worked into horticultural courses. Other courses may be developed in special types of disability cases. We have had one call already for a trained horticulturist to work with neuropsychiatric cases at a government hospital.
Technical courses will be open on a 4-year course basis, which will permit the optional selection of majors in floriculture, landscape design, vegetable crop production and fruit production. These courses are already prepared and are similar to past courses of training at the college.

Courses for Disabled Men

Special courses for disabled men are also being considered. This is a possible arrangement whereby disabled men, such as one-armed men and those with other handicaps, can be trained in useful work. If landscape men, nurserymen and florists have any jobs that a disabled man might do, they should let us know. Make an inventory of any such possibilities in your place.

Refresher courses will be review courses for seniors and graduates who went directly into the armed services, but had no opportunity to gain experience. Courses are being planned so that ex-servicemen may have a definite selection of courses, with freedom of selection of electives. Since most servicemen are technically trained, there should be more interest and attention given to cultural subjects of all kinds.

Ex-servicemen, at least the ones overseas, have jobs on their minds as about the No. 1 consideration. They want permanent work, with opportunities for advancement, in interesting fields of employment. They do not want humiliating, charity types of employment or the rattrap job. While some may want more money than you want to pay, remember that there is a feeling among those in the army that civilians made high wages while they were in service. In any case, every attempt should be made to show patience, understanding and a willingness to cooperate with ex-servicemen during the period of adjustment from military to civilian life.

Research needed in ornamental horticulture has been discussed, as well as the need for marketing research, particularly in connection with the development of fast air freight in the transportation of perishable products.

If gardening cuts down juvenile delinquency and is otherwise of great value in wartime, it should be of equal value in peacetime. While gardening is still well organized will be the right time to hold it together during the conversion period. Horticulture, in Colorado has a fine future, and we are looking forward with hope and faith to the better things to come after the war.