

WINTER AND SPRING PROTECTION OF STRAWBERRIES.

The necessity of protecting strawberry plants to prevent winter killing, in high latitudes, is well known; yet even as far South as North Carolina exceptionally cold weather, when it comes unaccompanied with snow, may bring serious losses to the strawberry grower who has neglected to protect his plants.

Plants should never be covered before the ground becomes frozen hard, and the work may be continued until snow prevents it. Where pine straw is plentiful, as with us, nothing else is thought of. For five dollars a year I buy all that is needed for ten acres of berries and for the stables, with only half a mile to haul it.

Some growers draw an inch or more of earth on the beds; but my experience with this mode is that it not only leaves the plants too dry when drawn off in the spring, but that, when practiced on a large scale, it is almost impossible to ever get it off at all. And of all things, the strawberry is most intolerant of earth smothering, in budding and bearing time. It not only decreases the yield of berries, but also makes them later. Still, on a small scale, and in a very cold climate, no doubt a shallow covering of earth, put on somewhat later and removed somewhat earlier than other protection would be, in degrees, would, of course, be better still.

If pine straw is to be used, it should be hauled in time, and thrown out in convenient piles around the fields. In we seasons, wagon wheels may work great harm among the plants. If the straw is hard, an early freeze can be taken advantage of to drive over the land without damage to the crop. The straw is far better than the pitchfork to apply the covering. Half an inch of straw over the beds will answer. If the plants are grown in stools, instead of matted rows, a strip not less than fifteen inches wide should be covered. There is little or no danger of covering deeper, provided the excess of straw above what is needed for a mulch is taken off just as the plants begin to bud in the spring. The surplus straw can be scattered in the middle where it will, when turned under, pay for itself in the benefit to the soil, especially if the land is heavy or hard. In localities where pine straw is scarce, it is taken off, stacked dry, and made to do service for several seasons, but where, as with us, the whole cost is not more than two dollars an acre, it pays to leave it on the fields.

This straw also can be turned to excellent account as a protection against late spring frost when the plants are in bloom. From where it lies between the rows it can be quickly drawn over the plants with rakes, or prong hoes. A brisk man will cover an acre in this manner in an incredibly short time. It may remain on for three days without injury, and then be drawn off as quickly as it was put on. Whole crops have been saved in this manner, and brought high prices, owing to the fact that all those not so protected were killed. In the eastern part of North Carolina, where the blossoms come out earlier than with us, this plan is generally followed. Indeed, without it, a full crop could hardly ever be gathered. With the introduction of very early varieties of strawberries, protection from spring frost becomes more and more imperative. Only last year all the early crops in this section, not so covered, were lost.

As the weather signal service rarely fails to give warning of the approach of frost, this method is all the more practicable. We usually have fully six hours' notice even after the morning papers come in, and a live man, with a well-organized force within call, can cover eight or ten acres in much less time than this. The strawberry grower who does not avail himself of these means, so easily within his reach, can hardly expect profitable crops.—O. W. Blackwell, in American Agriculturist.



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SECOND DECLARATION OF AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE.

Platform Adopted by the Confederated Industrial Organizations at St. Louis, Mo., Feb. 22-24, 1892.

PREAMBLE.

This, the first great labor conference of the United States and of the world, representing all divisions of urban and rural organized industry, assembled in national congress, invoking upon its actions the blessing and approval of Almighty God, puts forth to and for the producers of the nation this declaration of union and independence. The conditions surrounding the best justify our co-operation. We meet in the midst of a nation brought to the verge of moral, political, and national ruin. Corruption dominates the ballot-box, the legislature, the Congress, and touches even the ermine of the bench. The people are demoralized. Many of the States have been compelled to isolate the voters at the polling places in order to prevent universal intimidation or bribery. The newspapers are subsidized or muzzled; public opinion is silenced; business prostrated, our homes covered with mortgages, labor impoverished, and the land concentrating in the hands of capitalists. The urban workmen are denied the right of organization for self-protection; imported labor beats down their wages; a hiring standing army, unrecognized by our laws, is established to shoot them down; and they are rapidly degenerating to European conditions. The fruits of the soil are boldly stolen to build up colossal fortunes, unprecedented in the history of the world, while their possessors despise the republic and endeavor to transfer from the same prolific womb of governmental injustice the two great classes—peasants and millionaires. The national power is used to create money appropriated to enrich bondholders; silver, which has been accepted as coin since the dawn of history, has been demonetized to create a paper money, and to increase the value of all forms of property, as well as human labor, and the supply of currency is purposely abridged to fatten usurers, bankers, and capitalists, and to create a conspiracy against mankind has been organized on two continents, and is taking possession of the world. If not met and overthrown, it forbids terrible social convulsions, the destruction of civilization, or the establishment of an absolute despotism. In this crisis of human affairs the intelligent working people and producers of the United States; have come together in the name of peace, order, and society to defend liberty, prosperity and justice.

WE DECLARE OUR UNION AND INDEPENDENCE.

We assert our right to the full and equal enjoyment of the fruits of the soil, and we boldly demand that the controlling influence dominating the old political parties have allowed the existing conditions to continue to develop without serious effort to restrain or prevent them. They have agreed together to ignore, in the coming campaign, every issue before us. They propose to drown the outcries of a plundered people with the uproar of a sham battle over the tariff; so that corporations, national banks, trusts, "watered stock," the demonetization of silver, and the oppression of usurers, may all be lost sight of. They propose to sacrifice our homes and children to the greed of manumission, to Savannah, all Florida points; Atlanta, Birmingham, Memphis, New Orleans and all points South and Southwest; Darville, Richmond, Lynchburg, Washington and all points North. They urge Pullman sleeping car from Raleigh to Asheville on train leaving at 6:30 p. m.

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Second—Wealth belongs to him who created it. Every dollar taken from industry without an equivalent is robbery. If anyone will not work, neither shall he eat. The interests of rural and urban labor are the same, their enemies are identical.

Third—We demand that the amount of circulating medium be speedily increased to not less than \$50 per capita.

Fourth—We demand a graduated income tax.

Fifth—We believe that the money of the country should be kept as much as possible in the hands of the people, and hence we demand all national and State revenue shall be limited to the necessary expenses of the government economically and honestly administered.

Sixth—We demand that the savings banks be established by the government for the safe deposit of the earnings of the people and to facilitate exchange.

Seventh—The land, including all the natural resources of wealth, is the heritage of all the people and should not be monopolized for speculative purposes, and alien ownership of land should be prohibited. All land now held by corporations in excess of their actual needs, and all lands now owned by aliens, should be reclaimed by the government and held for actual settlers only.

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