

## **Historic, archived document**

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## Blueberry Culture in Minnesota.

The low-bush Blueberry '*Vaccinium Pensylvanicum*' grows profusely in the wilds of northeastern Minnesota. The crop is marketed in considerable quantities, thousands of dollars worth have been shipped out from Askov, and the demand has never been satisfied! It seems likely that Blueberry culture can be made profitable similar to the cultivation of the American Cranberry '*Vaccinium Macrocarpa*' which belongs to the same plant family, if we study and take advantage of the natural conditions under which Blueberries grow wild. I know the low-bush Blueberries will do well under cultivation if handled right. But it is ~~not~~ rather the high-bush Blueberry '*Vaccinium Corymbosum*' or swamp Blueberry in which I hope to see a big money crop develop in Minnesota on our swamp or peat land when drained and prepared, not only on the northern part of Minnesota but considerable further south, especially along rivers and lakes.

### High-bush or Swamp Blueberry.

The cultivation of unselected plants of high-bush Blueberries, (that is plants taken from the wild at random,) have in a few instances resulted in definite plantations that produced profitable and continuous crops. The first of these known plantings consisted of about 2 acres near Elkhart, Indiana. It ~~is~~ was described in a publication of the U.S. Department of Agriculture in 1910, which says, 'It was started in 1889 in a natural Blueberry Bog which was drained and then set with unselected wild Blueberry bushes.' The Plantation was profitable from the first. Another similar plantation was called a 'Huckelberry Orchard' by its ~~owner~~ originator, who says the bushes grew as high as 10 feet. An account of that plantation was given in *The American Fruit Grower* in November 1919. Mr. Sapp began with a few bushes from a nearby swamp as an experiment in hope of enlarging and improving the fruit in quality and quantity by cultivation. He kept on till he had six acres and he has never yet been able to fill half the orders he receives from the first of June up to September, though he says that he often picks from 10 to 25 quarts at one picking from one clump of bushes.

A few other instances of success have been found which point to the soundness of Blueberry culture, even with unimproved plants. Which means without a doubt a very great new source of satisfactory production from land otherwise waste or nearly so, for the Blueberry requires acid or sour soil.

### Scientific Development of the Blueberry.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture has experimented with Blueberry improvement in New Jersey where several varieties with larger berries of excellent quality have been developed, where about 25 acres are ~~un~~ under cultivation. These Blueberries average well above  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch in diameter with an occasional  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch berry. These plants grow from four to eight feet in height.

### Revenues from Waste Land:

The older portion of this ~~waste~~ trial field produced 96 bushels to the acre in 1919 and 117 bushels in 1920 and sold for an average of \$10 to \$12 per bushel net on the farm.

Blueberries require an acid and peaty soil and a water supply so balanced during the growing season that the roots never dry, yet always have air. Constant cultivation will preserve moisture.

These high-bush Blueberries are not native in Minnesota as far as I have been able to find out. I have experimented in a small way for some years with plants secured from Maryland, they have so far come through the winters without any bad effect, which indicates that they are hardy in our climate and worthy of a trial.

Manure and Lime are detrimental to a healthy growth.

We have only a few plants to spare for trial only, and do not care to sell more than one or at the most five plants to any one party, of the high-bush.

Transplanted for two years	1 Plant \$ \$ 1.00 each
" " " " one year up to five plants	.50 " "
Imported from Maryland not transplanted	Each .25
10 for \$-15.00- \$ 2.00 , 100 for \$ 15. These must be ordered early.	
Low-bush Blueberry transplanted two years	each 25¢ 10 for \$ 2.00
" " " " " " " one year	" 20¢ 10 for \$ 1.50

Ludvig Mosbaek,  
Ferndale  
Askov, Minn.

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