

The Garden

Gardening was a big job for both Pop and Ma. Pop started all his vegetables in large homemade wood framed boxes (hot beds) with glass over the beds for sunlight during the day. When the plants were strong enough, they were transplanted to their proper places in the large garden areas. When peppers and tomatoes were planted, horse manure was placed around each plant and covered with a bit of lime to keep the odor down, but still there was a faint smell in the area. When the tomatoes were ripe, the family often picked them off the vines and just ate them without being washed. That also went for the lettuce. The outer leaves were taken off and only the tender center was eaten. The outer leaves were given to the chickens.

The Cess Pool

Cesspools were in all yards in the neighborhood so at times the cesspool would fill up and had to be emptied by the cesspool man. After awhile Pop started to build another one for the overflow. Pop dug and dug until it was deep enough so that a pipe could be connected to the first cesspool to ease the overflow from the first one. I can still see him down in the cesspool with his ladder lining the hole with large stones till he got to the top.

The Pig

Killing the pig was a big thing in the neighborhood each year. All the neighbors helped each other, but this “took the cake.” When ready for the kill, the pig was tied by its hind legs and hoisted with the rope around the huge trunk of the apple tree. Well, with neighbors gathered to prepare for the kill, everyone pulled, and guess what? Yep, the rope slipped and the pig fell to the ground. Talk about ants going crazy! Well, Pop and the neighbors couldn’t believe what had happened--laughing, shocked, all helped to hoist the pig into the air again. A large knife was nearby for the killing of the pig. The knife was jabbed into the poor pig’s throat several times until it stopped fighting for its life. After it was lifeless, boiling water was poured slowly over each part of the pig’s body, and its hairs were skinned off with the large knife. The pig then was taken down, all intestines removed, and last but not least, all the meat was cut up in small and large pieces for cooking or storing for the winter.

The Apple Tree

The king of our back yard was the huge Red Delicious apple tree. It produced many baskets of apples every year for the family to enjoy and also bags for the neighbors, Pop and Mom’s