

STORIES of New Jersey



Flooding a bog

fruit in September or October.

In January of each year the bogs are submerged and kept flooded until early May in order to prevent winter killing and a too early start of growth. Bogs are flooded again during late May or early June to kill certain insects and the treatment is repeated after the fall harvest. Occasionally a reflow in August is necessary. These periodic reflows must be very carefully controlled. If the plants remain submerged too long the entire crop may be ruined. In most cases the flow must be put on and taken off in 24 hours.

The most troublesome disease is the false blossom, which is spread by a tiny leafhopper. Growers, working with the cooperation of experimental stations, are now able to fight this disease, but in recent years it has been the main cause for the cutting of the cranberry crop from some 200,000 barrels a year to a little over 100,000. Other diseases, such as scald, blast and rot, are caused by fungi. Insects that injure the plants include the yellow-headed fireworm, the black-headed fireworm, blossom worm, cranberry girdler and the common grasshopper.

Although flooding is the most common way of fighting these pests, new methods of control are being developed. Many growers use pyrethrum dust, sprayed by hand dusters, by traction dusters or from autogiros and airplanes.

Frosts are another worry to the grower, for the cranberry bogs are much colder than the surrounding upland on clear, still nights because of the lack of air drainage. Growers watch the temperatures and when conditions threaten frost during the growing season they flood the bogs enough to counteract the cold. Water has a high specific heat, and as soon as it covers a large area the temperature rises above freezing. It is important for the grower to know just what minimum temperature the plants can stand so that the water may be used without waste or without damage to the plants.

apart. Care is taken to weed out any cutting showing disease. Working on his knees and using an ordinary dibble, a man can plant about 10 square rods a day. In about 4 years the ground is completely covered by the vines and they start to bear fruit.

The cranberry plant or vine is a trailing runner along which are distributed numerous erect branches and roots. Both the runner and the upright bear leaves, but only the upright bears fruit. During the winter all the leaves turn red but in the spring they turn green.

Fruit buds first appear in August. In the following spring the new uprights grow from the terminal bud. The vines flower in June and early July and bear