

and are ready for forcing. In case a hotbed is used, a layer of sifted earth 1 inch deep is placed on top of the manure to prevent the roots from coming in contact with it. Within 10 days shoots of marketable size may be harvested, and thereafter shoots may be gathered every day, since they often grow 2 to 5 inches in a day. They are very easily broken off, since the crown of the root is practically exposed. The roots continue to produce for 6 weeks or 2 months; they are then exhausted and are thrown away. M. Compoint, one of the leading growers, fertilizes his asparagus fields almost exclusively with garbage collected in Paris. He has a contract with the city of Paris to collect garbage in a certain quarter, and applies it directly to his fields. A high percentage of phosphoric acid is very desirable, and a fertilizer containing too large a proportion of nitrogen does not produce plants suitable for forcing. This culture is of immense extent, and in the season M. Compoint employs as many as 30 hands to pack the asparagus, which he ships principally to England and Russia. He also forces blanched asparagus, which is done by leaving the mature plants in position in the garden, digging trenches between the rows, and filling them with fresh manure. The plants are then covered with a layer of earth 8 inches deep inclosed in cold frames. These blanched asparagus shoots are stouter than the green asparagus described above, and of course sell at much higher prices. In general this culture is very much like that of Argenteuil, except that the plants are forced into growth out of season.

2606. ASPARAGUS OFFICINALIS.**Asparagus.**

From Argenteuil, France. Received through Mr. W. T. Swingle, February, 1899.
 "Medium Louis L'Herault." A medium sort. (See No. 2605.)

2607. ASPARAGUS OFFICINALIS.**Asparagus.**

From Argenteuil, France. Received through Mr. W. T. Swingle, February, 1899.
 "Late violet." A late variety. (See No. 2605.)

2608. ASPARAGUS OFFICINALIS.**Asparagus.**

From Argenteuil, France. Received through Mr. W. T. Swingle, February, 1899.
 "Late rose." (See No. 2605.)

2609. ASPARAGUS OFFICINALIS.**Asparagus.**

From Argenteuil, France. Received through Mr. W. T. Swingle, February, 1899.
 "Verte dite aux petits pois." A very tender and delicately flavored variety. (See No. 2605.)

2610. ASPARAGUS OFFICINALIS.**Asparagus.**

From Argenteuil, France. Received through Mr. W. T. Swingle, February, 1899.
 "White rose." (See No. 2605.)

2611. FIGUS CARICA.**Fig.**

From Argenteuil, France. Received through Mr. W. T. Swingle, February, 1899.

"Blanc d'Argenteuil." The following methods of growing figs are in use by the best growers at Argenteuil. Figs are trained horizontally, the trunks close to the ground, the top pointing toward the south. In winter the canes are buried under 6 inches of soil. They are covered in October and are dug up again in March. Care is taken to remove all the leaves before covering them. Pruning consists in cutting off all the branches which have borne fruit, leaving only new wood for the next year's crop. This is usually done immediately after the crop has been harvested, in August. As the stems get old they are cut away and replaced by new shoots. The variety chiefly grown is "Blanc d'Argenteuil." Two others are also recommended. Rooted layers, called "Marcottes," may be obtained in any amount from nurserymen at a cost of from 30 to 60 cents per dozen, or cheaper in larger amounts. Fig culture can be carried on in America south of the latitude of Washington, D. C. The fresh figs sell for from 4 to 5 cents each, wholesale, in the Paris markets. They are wrapped in paper and packed in mandarin cases.

The best varieties of figs are, in the order of merit: (1) Blanc d'Argenteuil, (2) Barbillonne, (3) Dauphine d'Argenteuil, (4) Dorée.