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How to Make Your High-Priced Land Pay Big Money By Growing My Grandpa's Pride Globe Onions

By GILBERTSON

The "Krop-Krank"

At Mason City, Ia.

"It has taken me thirty-three years to write this book. You ought to spend at least thirty-three hours to study it."

—Gilbertson
Read What One of My Papa's Customers from Idaho Says About My Grandpa's Pride

Payette, Idaho,
Oct. 17, 1911.
Mr. A. O. Gilbertson,
Mason City, Ia.

Dear Sir:

In reply to your favor of the 24th of September, will say in regard to the onions that I never saw any better onions than the GRANDPA'S PRIDE RED GLOBE from the fifty-cent trial package I received. I raised fourteen bushels. I have sold ten bushels of them at four cents a pound. The common price here for onions is only one and one-half cents per pound. I have also taken first and second prizes on the Red Globe at the county and state fairs of Idaho.

I will plant about three acres next year of your Red Pride Globe onions, and also some of your red raspberries.

Yours very truly,

RICHARD BENNINGHAUS.

A Crate of My GRANDPA'S PRIDE, from a Photograph
How I Make My High-Priced Land Pay Big Money by Growing Grandpa's Pride Globe Onions

In presenting my book on the scientific growing of onions in a commercial way, I do not wish to convey the idea that I know it all, but I simply wish to give you my father's and my own experience in the growing of onions on a large scale, covering a period of over thirty years, and if you will accompany me on a trip over my onion fields through the pages of this book, I will endeavor to give you some of our experiences and lead you, step by step, through the process of successful onion-growing in a commercial way, or, at least, some of the methods that have proven a success with us. In the first place, I will try and outline a few of the things that we have found absolutely necessary in the successful growing of onions.

The first and most important thing to be considered in the successful growing of onions is the matter of good seed. You cannot be too careful in procuring the very best seed that money will buy. This holds true in all kinds of seed, and especially in the growing of onions in a commercial way, as the difference between the first cost of ordinary onion seed and the best onion seed that you can possibly get is so slight, while the difference at the time of harvest may mean the difference between a big-paying crop and a crop that does not even pay expenses.

The second most important consideration in the growing of a large crop of onions is the thorough preparation of the soil. Of course, I will take it for granted that your soil is thoroughly drained, as you cannot possibly expect to grow onions successfully on anything but well-drained soil. What I mean by a thorough preparation of the soil is the plowing and subsoil of your fields the proper depth. Do not expect to grow a large crop of onions without first thoroughly preparing your soil.

Third—In order to produce a large crop of onions the first year on a field that has never grown onions before, your soil should be made as rich as possible by the liberal application of well-rotted barnyard manure, at the rate of at least fifty loads per acre (and more would be better), as onions will always have a tendency not to ripen up well the first year, unless your ground is made thoroughly rich by a liberal application of well-rotted barnyard manure, as well as a liberal top dressing of some reliable brand of artificial fertilizer containing a large percentage of potash. I might add in this connection that your field should be fertilized to the point where it will produce at least seventy-five to one hundred bushels of corn to the acre.

Fourth (and perhaps as much important as any of the subjects I have mentioned) is the proper distribution of seed. In fact, this was the biggest obstacle that father and I encountered when we started the growing of onions in a commercial way. We tried out every onion-seeder offered on the market, but were unable to find a seeder that would sow the onion seed evenly enough whereby thinning would be unnecessary. Of course, there are plenty of onion-seeders on the market that you can adjust in such a way that they will sow the onion seed thin enough whereby it will not be necessary to thin the young plants but, in doing this, every machine we have tried out that is offered on the market will invariably leave a large percentage of blanks. But, as I take up this important subject later on in my book, I will leave it for the present by assuring
you that father has overcome this obstacle by inventing a machine that will handle such difficult seed as onions and beets so perfectly that thinning will be absolutely unnecessary, and at the same time will not leave any blanks in the rows.

Fifth—The early preparation of your soil. You should by all means start the preparation of your soil and put it in the very best condition just as early in the spring as possible, as onions are a good deal like wheat. If they are not gotten into the ground just as early in the spring as you can work up your ground thoroughly, you cannot expect to grow a large crop of onions, even under the most favorable conditions.

Sixth—Thorough cultivation. Do not start the growing of onions in a commercial way unless you have thoroughly made up your mind to keep your onion field absolutely clean, never allowing a weed to go to seed, as this is the only economical way to grow onions on a large scale. Remember, one year’s seeding makes seven years’ weeding.

Seventh—Economical harvesting of the crop. When I say economical harvesting of the crop, I mean the adoption of the very latest methods and up-to-date machinery, so that the harvesting of your crop can be accomplished as economically as possible, from the fact that this is one of the most expensive operations in connection with the growing of a big crop of onions, as an onion crop is naturally a bulky crop to handle at the best.

Eighth—Storing and curing of the crop. Do not make the mistake that so many beginners have made—that of placing your crop on the market, direct from the field, without first thoroughly curing your bulbs in well-ventilated curing sheds, which will enable you to put your bulbs on the market absolutely clean, by running your bulbs over a screen after they are thoroughly cured, you can remove all dirt and surplus leaves, and thereby establish a reputation over and above all your competitors by putting nothing but clean and thoroughly-cured-out onions on the market, which will in a short time mean that the buyer will be looking for you instead of you looking for the buyer.

Ninth—Buy nothing but the very best seed obtainable, and grow a strain of onions that has been bred up for keeping quality, so that, if necessary, you can keep your bulbs through the winter and put them on the market in the early spring, when good onions always bring a good price.

I have mentioned these nine hints in my introduction as being absolutely essential to the successful growing of onions, in a commercial way. However, I take up each of these points, and explain them in detail later on in my book, and trust that my readers will be able to profit from my father’s and my experience.

**Kind of Tools**

The first tool that you see in the above photograph is a steel roller. We always like to use this tool first on our fields in the spring, so as to thoroughly pulverize the lumps in our fields that might otherwise have become too dry to be thoroughly pulverized by any of the other tools.

Following up the steel roller, you will notice that I use a special drag, or pulverizer, of my own construction, which is made so that I can set the teeth at any desired angle by means of a lever. This pulverizer, or drag, is made with round half-inch steel teeth, twelve inches long, set two inches apart. In operating this pulverizer, it should have a ballast of about 150 pounds to do perfect work.

Following up this pulverizer, I use a Clark’s Double-Action Cutaway Disc Harrow, which pulverizes the ground twice in one operation. This disc harrow consists of thirty-two cutaway discs. The first set of sixteen discs throws the ground outward and the second set of sixteen discs throws the ground inward, leaving the ground thoroughly level. Anyone expecting to grow onions on a large scale should by all means provide himself with a tool of this kind, as it pulverizes the ground much more thoroughly in one operation than an
ordinary pulverizer would in passing over the ground twice, besides leaving the ground perfectly level.

The fourth, or last, tool you see in the photograph is a plank, or float, of my own construction, which puts the finishing touch on the ground ready for the seeder. This plank, or float, is made from five planks, eight feet long and six inches wide, each plank being set about one foot apart and at an angle of about forty-five degrees. This tool should also have a ballast of about one hundred pounds to do perfect work.

You will also notice, in looking at the photograph, that it requires ten large horses to operate these four tools and prepare the soil, as I have described to you, in one operation, thereby preventing the ground from becoming lumpy. In fact, when I have gone over the ground with these four tools, it leaves it absolutely as fine as any seed-bed could possibly be made.

**Early Preparation of the Soil**

We commence the preparation of our soil just as soon as it is dry enough so that it will crumble up nicely, which is usually the first week in April in this locality. Do not wait until your ground gets too dry and hard. In the photograph I have tried to demonstrate to you how we prepare our ground in the early spring, ready for the onion-seeder.

**Thorough Plowing and Subsoiling**

The first and most essential thing in the preparation of the soil is a thorough plowing and subsoiling. You cannot put your soil in the very best condition, so as to carry your crops at a critical time over a dry period, without the proper plowing and subsoiling. In the preparation of my soil on my different farms for the growing of my special crops, I always insist on plowing my land at least eight inches deep and subsoiling from eight to ten inches deep. I always make a practice of subsoiling my land every two years. In this connection it might be well for me to explain the term “subsoiling,” as it may be a new one to some of my readers.

**Subsoiler Explained**

A subsoiler is a plow, on a mould fashion, that is run in the bottom of each furrow simply as a mould. In other words, it does not throw a furrow at all. It simply follows up your stirring plow in the bottom of each furrow and loosens the subsoil. For example, after you have turned a furrow (say eight inches deep), and have followed in the bottom of this furrow with a subsoil plow, it loosens or heaves the subsoil from below to such an extent that this eight-inch furrow will be filled almost level full with loose dirt, so much so that we find it necessary to change the horses on our plow every half day, as the subsoil gets so thoroughly loosened in the bottom of each furrow that the horse working in this furrow cannot stand the work for more than half a day at a time.

**Advantage of Storing Up Moisture in Subsoil**

You will see at a glance the great advantage of this subsoiling in the way of loosening up the soil below, whereby it is possible for this loose subsoil to store up a large quantity of moisture, which will aid you in carrying your next season’s crop, at a critical time, over a dry period. In loosening up this subsoil it acts, you might say, like a sponge in storing up water.
Start Your Wheel Hoe Early

After the onions are out of the ground sufficiently so that we can see the rows, which requires an average from eight to ten days after they are seeded, we start our Iron Age Wheel Hoe at once. Now, I say Iron Age Wheel Hoe, because we have tried every wheel hoe offered on the market, and have found that the Iron Age has proven the most satisfactory with us.

First—Their knives, or blades, are made out of a much better material, so that they will clear readily in almost any soil. Second—They are made lighter and stronger than any other wheel hoe we have tried. Third—They have larger wheels, which makes them operate much more easily in our loose onion fields.

As I said before, we start our wheel hoe just as soon as the onions are out of the ground sufficiently so that we can see the rows. Here is where a great many beginners make a mistake in not starting their wheel hoes soon enough. If your ground is very weedy, you can even start cultivating your onions before they are out of the ground, by setting your knives so that you cultivate between the rows, rather than straddling the rows like most onion-growers do.

Never Let a Weed Go to Seed

We aim to go through our onion fields with our wheel hoe at least once a week, whether there are any weeds or not, as we wish at all times to keep a dust mulch on our onion fields to prevent evaporation. However, in our forty-acre field of onions, after the first hoeing, usually two men have an easy time to keep the entire field clean. We never allow a single weed on the entire forty acres to go to seed, as this is the only economical way to grow onions—by thoroughly cleaning out your soil, never allowing a single weed to go to seed. Remember, one year's seeding makes seven years' weeding.

Harvesting the Crop

Our onion crop is usually ready to harvest about the middle of August. The task of harvesting a forty-acre field of onions, which averages something like 700 bushels per acre, is no small task. We have therefore done considerable experimenting in the cheapest and most effective methods of getting our onions from the field into our warehouses.

Methods Employed in the Eastern Districts

The usual way employed in the large onion districts of the East is to pull ten or twelve rows of the bulbs, and throw them into wind rows, allowing them to lie in the sun and cure out for a week or ten days before they are stripped. After they are stripped they are put into baskets, and then, finally, dumped into sacks and loaded into cars and shipped to market.

There are several objectionable features in handling and harvesting a crop this way. First—As you will notice, your bulbs are handled several times. Second—In allowing them to remain in the field and cure out in the sun in this way, they will always bleach out more or less. Third—in putting your bulbs on the market, direct from the field, in this way, you cannot possibly get them clean so that they will look at all attractive, from the fact that they are not cured enough so that you can remove the dirt and surplus leaves.

Never Tasted Such Sweet Flavored Onions

Hitchcock, S. D., December 8, 1910.
A. O. Gilbertson Co., Mason City, Iowa.

Gentlemen—I wish to say that GILBERTSON'S GRANDPA'S PRIDE GLOBE ONIONS are the best I have ever raised. They are very fine flavored for green table onions, and when matured, a perfect globe onion, with a very fine sweet flavor that I have never tasted in any other kind.

Yours truly,

FRED BLUME
Our Method of Harvesting  
In our method of harvesting our onion crop we use bushel crates, having enough crates to store the entire crop. As soon as the crop is ready to harvest, we distribute one row of crates for every eight rows of onions, and furnish our strippers (which usually consist of women and children) with the best grade of sheep-shears. The strippers, in harvesting the bulbs, pull a handful of bulbs with one hand, and with the sheep-shears in the other hand, clip the bulbs, allowing them to drop directly into the crates. In this way our onions are handled only once in getting them from the field into the crates. Another advantage under our method—our onion bulbs are not allowed to lie out in the sun and become discolored. Our onion-strippers are paid by the bushel, the price ranging from two cents to two and one-half cents per bushel.

Size and Cost of Onion Crates  
Our onion crates are made from extra heavy 16-inch lath for the two sides and bottom, with one-inch board for each end, fourteen inches long and twelve inches wide. This size of crate holds just one bushel. The expense of building crates of this kind, using the very best white pine lumber, as well as the very best extra heavy white pine lath, two inches wide, is about fifteen cents per crate. These crates, if handled with judgment, will last for years and pay for themselves a good many times over in the way of economical harvesting of your bulbs.

More Than Pleased  
Lamoure, N. D., October 11, 1911.
The A. O. Gilbertson Co., Mason City, Iowa.
Gentlemen—I am more than pleased with the GRANDPA'S PRIDE GLOBE ONION SEED. We had all the onions we wanted for our own use all summer, and yesterday dug the remainder of nice red onions for winter use.
Yours truly,
GUST KRUEMPHEL.

Ask the Women Folks—They Know What a Good Onion Is  
Sibley, Iowa, November 20, 1910.
Mr. A. O. Gilbertson, Mason City, Iowa.
Dear Sir:—I received your letter of recent date asking about the onion seed that I received from you. My wife said that they were the best onions she ever saw. They have such a nice flavor, a good size, a small neck, and a very good, red color. Every one who has seen these onions say that they are a perfect globe and the best onions that they ever saw. Yours truly,
JERRY SCHLICHT.

Got Eight Bushels From Twenty-five Cents' Worth of Seed This Dry Season  
Tracy, Minn., November 8, 1910.
Mr. A. O. Gilbertson, Mason City, Iowa.
Dear Sir:—In reply to your favor of the 11th inst., will say, in regard to the onions, I never saw anything like them. I planted the seed as per instructions, and I honestly believe every seed grew. From the 25-cent package I received I raised eight bushels. They were extra large and very uniform in size; small necks, and the color was fine. I think they are a perfect globe and the flavor very good.

I would order some of your red raspberry plants, only I expect to sell out this next summer, and will try a few later.
Yours very truly,
E. D. JENNINGS.

Heavy Yielders  
Maroa, Ill., November 3, 1910.
The A. O. Gilbertson Co., Mason City, Iowa.
Dear Sirs:—In regard to the GRANDPA'S PRIDE GLOBE ONIONS, I would like to say that they are heavy yielders, of fine quality, and of nearly a perfect globe shape.
Yours very truly,
HOWARD GREY.
The Only Absolutely Successful Onion Seeder in Existence Today

The Brains That Made It Possible

Necessity the Mother of Invention

When father manufactured his first onion seeder twenty years ago, he had been working on it for several years. He has never manufactured any other. The only one of his machines that I have seen was a portable one, made in his field. He used it for planting onions, and it is considered to be the best machine of its kind. The machine is so designed that it can be used for planting onions, and it is through their urgent requests that we have decided to manufacture and put a few of these machines on the market.

The Machine

No. 7—Shows our adjustment, whereby it is possible to regulate the sowing width. The operator has only to hold the handle, and the machine will adjust itself to the desired width.

No. 8—Shows our large, adjustable seed hopper. This is a very important feature, as it enables the operator to tell exactly how his seed is working from time to time. As the glass hopper is divided into half-inch sections, running from one to twelve inches, enabling the operator to detect in a moment if his machine is not working uniformly. This feature makes it possible to sow seed in one place, at a uniform rate, and with uniform results.

No. 9—Shows the sprocket wheels which drive our planting disc. We have provided three wheels of different sizes to provide for the different varieties in speed required for the planting of different seeds; also to provide for the variations of different seeds required over rough and smooth ground.

No. 10—Shows our main shaft, or axe. By the use of our adjustable wheels and adjusting the position of the axe, we can change the size of disc to suit any kind of onion, or even to the smallest ones. The axe is equipped with a spreader that keeps the disc away from our marker, or marker, and by being able to change the position of the axe, we can also change the size of disc to suit any kind of onion, or even to the smallest ones.

No. 11—Shows our 20-inch all-steel wheels, which can be adjusted to plant seed in rows from twelve to twenty-four inches.

And the Results

These discs consist of small cups, which are so constructed that they will handle such difficult seed as onions and beet seed, without any trouble. The operator simply places the seed in a hopper and inserts it into the machine, and by using different discs, the operator can change the amount of seed used by using different discs with more or less planting cups. The size of the discs is determined by the size of the seed and the type of onion. The operator is thus able to plant the seeds exactly as desired.

No. 12—Shows a 20-inch all-steel wheels, which can be adjusted to plant seed in rows from twelve to twenty-four inches.

No. 13—Shows the most practical part of our planter, namely, the adjustable handlebars, which are very necessary. The operator can change the position of the handlebars to suit any kind of onion, and it is also very easy to keep a perfectly straight row.

The Only Three Machines Made

Father has only manufactured these three machines. They have been invented and patented by him, and he believes that they will be the only ones which will be used in the future for planting onions. He believes that these machines will be used exclusively for a very long time, as the machine is so designed that it can be used for planting onions, and it is through their urgent requests that we have decided to manufacture and put a few of these machines on the market.

Attracts Attention From Other States

This machine has attracted a great deal of attention from men who have visited our state from other states, and have seen the work this machine is capable of doing. It is through their urgent requests that we have decided to manufacture and put a few of these machines on the market.

Our Claim

What I do claim is this: that I have a machine that will plant your onion seed so accurately that the result will be absolutely unnecessary, and at the same time give you the advantage of having your onion seed distributed evenly in your own fields, and at any time you desire.

First. It saves you the expense of thinning at a time when your onions usually would be too small to thin.

Second. It prevents the disturbance of your young onion plants after they are sown, which is always done in your own fields. It does not force you to do any forced. It is placed in your onions at a less expense per head than having your onions sown with a uniform distance apart, and it does not force you to do any forced.

Third. It will save you from two to four pounds of seed per acre.

Fourth. You can keep your onion field clean at a minimum expense when you have your onion plants planted in a uniform distance apart, thus saving the work of hand-hoeing at a minimum expense.

And the Results

These discs consist of small cups, which are so constructed that they will handle such difficult seed as onions and beet seed, without any trouble. The operator simply places the seed in a hopper and inserts it into the machine, and by using different discs, the operator can change the amount of seed used by using different discs with more or less planting cups. The size of the discs is determined by the size of the seed and the type of onion. The operator is thus able to plant the seeds exactly as desired.

No. 10. Shows the device for thinning crops to any distance desired.
Hauling and Storing the Bulbs

Just as soon as our strippers come to harvest our onions, they are immediately hauled into our warehouses, and stored one crate on top of the other, as shown in photograph "F," where they are allowed to cure out for six or eight weeks. In curing our onions in well-ventilated sheds, the bulbs retain their dark, rich color, which we find sometimes makes as much difference as five to ten cents per bushel when they are placed on the market.

Screening the Onions

After our onions have been thoroughly cured in our curing-sheds, they are run over a screen, which takes out all the dirt and surplus leaves, leaving the onions entirely clean. If the price at this time is satisfactory, they are run from the screen into sacks, and loaded into cars and shipped to market. However, if we decide to hold our onions for a better price, they are run from the screen back into crates and stored in our large cellars and held for winter and early spring shipment. We have made it a rule that if we can get seventy-five cents per bushel, f. o. b. cars, in the fall, after they are thoroughly cured out, we do not usually carry many of them over. However, if the price is below seventy-five cents, we usually hold the biggest part of them for winter and early spring shipment, when good onions always bring a good price.

Advantage of Long Keeper

Here is where the advantage of a long keeper comes in, as it is possible to keep our GRANDPA'S PRIDE until spring in an ordinary cellar without the slightest percentage of shrinkage, and in this way, you can almost demand your own price for the bulbs after the ordinary onions are out of the way.

Stood Drouth; Will Plant No Other

Aldrich, Mo., No. 2, August 21, 1911.

The A. O. Gilbertson Co., Mason City, Iowa.

Gentlemen:—Are you going to have any onion seed to sell for next year's planting? If you are, I will want about five pounds as soon as you get some ready for the market this fall. Send prices of same by return mail.

I tried a sample of your onion seed this season and it stood the dry weather better than any that I ever tried before. I am not going to plant any but your GLOBE ONIONS next year, if I can get the seed. They are the best I ever tried.

Send price and description of your onion-planter. Please send the above at once, as I want to get my onion seed this winter so I will be ready for early spring planting.

Yours truly,

JOHN HARRISON

Grandpa's Pride Stood the Drouth Best

Kansas City, Mo., September 28, 1911.

A. O. Gilbertson Co., Mason City, Iowa.

Dear Sirs:—In regard to the GRANDPA'S PRIDE GLOBE ONION SEED, would like to ask what it will cost me per pound? I have done well with the onion seed that I received from you last spring. I had better luck with the GRANDPA'S PRIDE GLOBE ONIONS than with the other onions that I put in, as yours stood the dry weather far better than the others that I planted and made bigger onions. I want to put in one or two acres if all goes well. I have been working the ground all season. The GRANDPA'S ONIONS did not have more than one-half an inch of rain all season, and you have convinced me that they are all that you claim for them. Yours truly, A. J. WILLIAMS,

1403 Wabash Ave.
The Best Seeds. Regardless of First mercial way, as well as in the Cost, the Cheapest growing of any other crop, you cannot be too careful in sowing nothing but the very best seeds, as the best seeds that you can possibly buy, regardless of the first cost, always prove to be the cheapest in the end. It is not reasonable to believe that you can get a large and paying crop by using poor inbred seeds.

Our best class of up-to-date farmers have for a long time recognized the importance of raising nothing but the very best thoroughbred livestock, and I claim that it is just as important in the growing of our special crops to use nothing but the very best strain of thoroughbred seeds—seeds that have a past history. Remember, that like begets like in plant life as well as in animal life.

100 Per Cent Germination When I say thoroughbred seeds I do not necessarily mean seeds that will germinate 100 per cent, although this is, of course essential, but what I mean is, seeds that have been grown from a strain of onions that have a past history, that have been improved through long years of scientific selection and restriction.

Now, in order to demonstrate my point in this connection, I will take for example the keeping quality that we have been able to produce in our GRANDPA’S PRIDE GLOBE ONIONS through our long years of scientific work, and, as I have told you elsewhere in my book, this wonderful improvement was not brought about by accident. It did not happen over night, but is the result of brains, mixed in with our long years of hard work.

Inasmuch as it costs but very little more to buy nothing but the very best seeds, and as the difference at the time of harvest is so vast, I cannot urge my readers too strongly to insist on using nothing but the very best seeds that they can possibly buy, and especially will this hold true with onions.

Average Seedsmen Do Not Grow Their Own Seeds The biggest trouble with the average seedsmen is that he does not grow his own seeds. A large percentage of the seed stock is grown out on the Western coast, where, owing to climatic conditions, all inferior bulbs, which cannot be used for commercial purposes, are left in the field over winter and allowed to produce seeds the following year. Any one with any experience in the growing of onions can surely see the folly of producing seeds from such inferior stock.

The writer, having business interests at Davenport, this state, has spent considerable time in studying the methods used in growing onions in the large onion district near that place, and as a large percentage of the onion-growers in that district grow their own seeds from year to year, I have spent some time in studying their methods, and must say that I am surprised to see the careless and crude way in which they grow their seeds.

In the first place, instead of placing their seed bulbs in a cellar during the winter, thereby giving the grower a chance to reject any bulbs that showed signs of sprouting, or otherwise did not keep well when the seed bulbs were set out for seed the following spring, they stored their seed bulbs outdoors, allowing them to freeze up solid, and kept them in this frozen condition until early spring, when they are set out for seed.

At first I could not understand their idea in handling their seed bulbs in this way; however, in questioning one of their leading growers, he informed me that they handled their seed bulbs in this way to prevent shrinkage in the way of sprouting and rot, and when I asked him how they could expect to improve the keeping quality in their strain of onions by handling their seed bulbs in this way, he told me that they cared little or nothing as to the keeping quality of their onions as their onion crop was put on the market direct from the field without curing. However, in questioning him further he did admit that some years they were handicapped more or less by being forced to market their onions in the early fall, regardless of price, from the fact that they know their onions will not keep.
Barnyard Manure

The most important step to be considered in the preparation of your soil for the growing of a large crop of onions is the kind and proper amount of fertilizer to be used. We haul and store up large quantities of barnyard manure on our onion fields annually. I wish to call your attention to the above photograph, which shows the way we pile our manure. We never make a practice of spreading barnyard manure until we have piled and repiled it at least twice. For instance, manure that is hauled and piled on our onion field during the winter and early spring is repiled at least once during the summer. The advantage of repiling barnyard manure in this way is: First—You get the manure more thoroughly mixed. Second—It becomes more thoroughly rotted, thereby destroying all foul weed seeds which are always found more or less in barnyard manure.

Quantity Per Acre

In preparing a new onion field that has never been planted to onions before, I always aim to spread about one hundred spreader-loads of well-rotted manure to the acre. This being done, we bring our Clark’s Double-Action Pulverizer into action, and go over the ground at least once—and twice is better. You will understand that this pulverizer works the ground thoroughly twice in one operation, as I have explained elsewhere in my book. Now, this pulverizing the manure thoroughly into the ground before it is plowed is very important, from the fact that if this large quantity of manure is plowed under without being first mixed into the soil, it is liable to dry out the soil the following summer by stopping the capillary action of the soil. What I mean by capillary action is that it will prevent the moisture from coming up from the subsoil.

Some people may criticize this statement of using such a large amount of barnyard manure per acre. However, in my experimenting, I have found it most satisfactory in preparing a new onion field to use about this amount of manure per acre, as a field prepared in this way, and seeded continuously to onions, will last from ten to twelve years without any further barnyard manure.

My argument in favor of using a large quantity of well-rotted manure in a single application is:

First—That this is about the only way that you can get a full crop of onions on a field that has never had onions on before, the first year.

Second—Unless you do apply a liberal quantity (say at least from seventy-five to one hundred loads per acre), your onions will not ripen the first year.

Third—It saves a large expense in keeping your onion fields clean, as, by applying this large amount of barnyard manure in one year, in about two years you will have all the foul weed seeds, that you brought into your ground by applying this manure, cleaned out. In this way you will reduce the cost of keeping your onions clean to a minimum after the first year or two, while, on the other hand, if you apply a small quantity of barnyard manure on your onion fields every year, you are inoculating your soil with foul weed seeds every year, producing an unnecessary expense of keeping your onions clean.

Of course, the most satisfactory way is to summer-fallow your onion ground at least one year before you try to grow onions. I do not say but what you can grow onions fairly satisfactorily on new ground the first year without summer-fallowing, providing you will follow my instructions and treat your soil to a liberal quantity of well-rotted barnyard manure, so that your chances of growing a sufficiently large crop the first year, whereby you can afford the necessary outlay in keeping your onion field clean. Remember, that fighting weeds in a foul onion field is expensive, even with the most improved machinery that you can possibly buy.
Points of Superiority That I Aimed For and Have Produced in My Wonderful Strain of Onions, and What They Mean to the Grower

Extra Long Keeping Quality I know from the experimenting that I have been doing with other strains of onions offered on the market, that my GRANDPA'S PRIDE is the longest keeping strain of onions offered on the market today. As I have told you in another chapter of my book, this long keeping quality in my GRANDPA'S PRIDE was no guesswork. It did not happen over night. It was no accident, but the result of over thirty-three years of careful, scientific selection and restriction.

I go over my onion fields in the fall, before they are harvested, and make a thorough and scientific selection of the very finest specimens for my next year's seed stock. These specimens are selected to comply with a standard that I have set out to produce:

First—Perfect globe shape.
Second—Small neck.
Third—High color.
Fourth—Large size.
Fifth—Almost as hard as a rock.

This seed stock is handled exactly the same as my other field onions, being thoroughly cured during the fall, and when cold weather sets in, it is placed in a warm and rather damp cellar. Now, the reason that I keep my seed stock under these conditions during the winter is to encourage the sprouting tendency in my onion seed bulbs. In this way it gives me a chance to reject any bulbs that show the least tendency of sprouting when they are again sorted in the early spring, just before they are set out for seed.

This may seem a very simple operation, and can, of course, be accomplished by any ordinary, intelligent man, providing that this careful selection and restriction was only necessary one or two years to accomplish these wonderful results. As I said before, the improvement, even under this rigid system of mine, has been so slow that it has not been until the last few years that I have been able to reach the perfect standard that I set up a large number of years ago, and bring out the special points in this wonderful strain of onions of mine.

I leave you to be your own judge as to the keeping quality that I have been able to produce in my GRANDPA'S PRIDE when I tell you that I have a small quantity of onion bulbs that I grew in the fall of 1910 that are today just as hard and sound, without a sign of sprout.

An Absolutely Perfect Globe The best evidence that I can give you as to the perfect globe shape of my GRANDPA'S PRIDE is to refer you to the photographs which I have reproduced in my book. At the first glance, one might take them to be a crate of apples, so perfect a globe and so uniform in size are they.

The greatest trouble that I have found in the different strains of globe onions offered on the market is that, instead of producing a globe shape, they have a tendency to produce an oblong bulb. An onion of this shape is even more undesirable than a flat bulb, from the fact that onions of this oblong shape invariably have a tendency to produce large necks, which, at least in our locality, is very objectionable, from the fact that they are liable to absorb too much moisture at this point during the growing season, which will invariably result in a shrinkage in the way of rot after the bulbs are harvested.

Another disadvantage of growing an oblong onion is that they always produce a large percentage of scullions.

Small Neck In the many years that I have selected my seed stock, I have come to realize more and more that an onion with a small neck has several advantages.

First—It will produce a smaller percentage of scullions, or thick necks, which is proven by the fact that our large onion fields of over forty acres seldom produce as much as a bushel of these scullions.
Second—It is absolutely necessary for an onion bulb to have a small neck in order to be a long keeper, as the small neck will seal up and exclude the air from the bulb.

A Heavy Yieder In the selection of my seed stock to produce these special points, I have not in any way overlooked the importance of selecting and breeding an onion of large size, which is demonstrated exclusively by the record my GRANDPA'S PRIDE has made, covering a period of eleven years, with an average yield of almost 700 bushels per acre, which I consider a phenomenal record when you take into consideration that it was an average of not one or two acres, but of our entire forty-acre field.

High Color This is a point that a great many onion-growers do not take very seriously into consideration. It, however, means a great deal to me, as I find in growing onions on a large scale that some years, under unfavorable weather conditions, I cannot always harvest my onions when they are ripe, and of course, an onion, that is left out in the field any length of time after it is ripe will bleach out or discolor; consequently, ordinary onions, under these conditions, with a poor color to start with, will have absolutely no color at all. In fact, some of them will turn green, and knowing the value of a high-colored onion when placed on the market, I have always been a
crank on this point, and have selected my seed stock in order to produce in my GRANDPA'S PRIDE RED GLOBE ONION bulb with a dark, rich, red color, and in my YELLOW GLOBE a bulb with a dark, rich, yellow orange color.

Quality and Mild Flavor Extraordinary

Being very fond of onions myself, I have been just as particular and cranky in producing an onion with a mild flavor as I have been in producing any of the other points, and it goes without saying that wherever my GRANDPA'S PRIDE is placed on the market, it is the mildest and sweetest flavored onion, except the Bermuda or Texas onion, which for a good many purposes is almost too mild to be recognized as an onion.

A Great Drouth-Resister

We have on a number of occasions planted our GRANDPA'S PRIDE right in the same field with several other varieties in order to test its drouth-resisting quality as compared with other strains of onions, and we have found that it possesses a wonderful drouth-resisting quality, over and above any other strain that we have ever tried out.

A Word to the New Beginner

I wish to caution my readers not to become too enthusiastic and try to start out with too large a field of onions the first year, especially if you do not have your ground in the best of condition. My advice would be rather to put in less acreage and be sure that you are in a position to give your onion field the proper attention. Remember, “whatever is worth doing at all is worth doing well.” Perhaps, in this same connection, it might be well for me to mention what I mean by your field or soil being in the best condition. In the first place, I would not advise any one to try and grow onions on a very large scale, providing their soil is very foul. Second—Providing the soil is not rich enough. Third—Providing you are not in a position to be able to hire the necessary extra help required to tend to a large field of onions.

To demonstrate my point, I will give you some figures taken from our records. When father and I first commenced the growing of onions a number of years ago, we found that it cost us over thirty-five cents a bushel to produce a bushel of onions, while, in later years, after we had received the results of the points which we have been able to obtain in our “Grandpa's Pride Globe Onions” and using up-to-date machinery, of which the most important of them all is our patent seeder, we have produced our onions at a cost of seven cents a bushel—a difference of twenty-eight cents a bushel in the cost of production.

Summer-Fallowing

While I do not claim but what, all other conditions being favorable, you can grow a paying crop of onions on your ground without summer-fallowing, we always make a business of summer-fallowing our land the first year, planking and replanking, and replowing it, and cultivating it; in other words, killing all the foul weeds as near as possible, thereby saving the enormous expense of fighting these same weeds among your small onions the following year. But, what I do claim is that it will not pay you to grow a crop of onions on your soil the first year without summer-fallowing, unless, first, you have your ground extremely rich, so that your onions will ripen up the first year so that they will produce a full crop; second, so that you will be in a position to be able to stand the extra heavy expense of fighting the weeds in this foul ground and still leave you a profit over and above your expenses; third, unless you can get an onion-seeder that will distribute your seeds even enough whereby you will not be forced to go to the extra expense of thinning your fields, and at the same time produce an even and full stand with absolutely no blank in the rows.

Big Profits

Do not be afraid to spend a liberal amount of money and time in preparing your onion fields in the way of fertilizer, thorough preparation of the soil, thorough cultivation, keeping them absolutely clean, etc., from the fact that a crop of onions, properly handled, will return sufficient profit, so that it will stand a large expense per acre and still leave you a good, reasonable profit, even under seemingly unfavorable conditions.

Raised a Good Crop of Onions

Decatur, Mich., August 22, 1911.

A. O. Gilbertson Co., Mason City, Iowa.

Gentlemen:—Most of the onions sown here will not be more than one-half a crop. On my farm I had the best show for onions that I ever saw, but the dry weather cut them short a good deal of what they would have been, and yet I think I will have about 600 bushels to the acre. I just began pulling onions today, and that is my estimate of the crop. I think that if we could have had rain ten days earlier they would have gone 200 bushels more to the acre than they will now.

People came from miles around to see my little two and one-half acres of onions grown from our seed. Up to the time of the drought they grew to beat anything that people here ever saw.

Any information that you can give me regarding this season’s crop and this season’s price will be gladly received. Thanking you in advance, I remain

Yours very truly, DEXTER E. BRIGHAM.
**Best Seed He Ever Had**

Eagle River, Wis., November 11, 1911.

A. O. Gilbertson Co., Mason City, Iowa.

Gentlemen:—I am writing you a few lines in regard to the onion seed I bought of you last spring. I must say they were the best seed I ever had. 'Out of the fifty cents' worth of seed I bought of you I raised fifteen bushels of good big onions.

Would you kindly let me know how much seed it will require to sow one-half an acre, and what it will cost me? Would also like to know if you have any yellow onion seed.

Yours truly,

HERMAN RADE.

**Largest and Best**

LaConner, Wash., October 6, 1911.

A. O. Gilbertson Co., Mason City, Iowa.

Dear Sirs:—I planted a trial package of GRANDPA'S PRIDE GLOBE ONION SEED this spring. I am well pleased with the onions. They are larger and better than any onions I have seen around here.

Yours truly,

HENRY PHerson.

**Grew Large Ones**

Gladstone, Minn., September 5, 1911.

A. O. Gilbertson, Mason City, Iowa.

Dear Sir:—Without any doubt can say that the onion seed I bought of you turned out to be the best ever grown in this part of the country. Half of my onion beds washed away, but still have about ten bushels of the nicest onions I ever saw. More than half of them measure three and four inches across the bulb, so next year, if I am going to raise onions, I want some more of your seed.

Yours truly,

E. J. EINUM.

**Speaks of Fine Flavor**

Walnut, Ill., November 6, 1911.

A. O. Gilbertson Co., Mason City, Iowa.

Dear Sirs:—I will try and tell you how we liked your GRANDPA'S PRIDE GLOBE ONION SEED that we got from you. They are simply fine onions—the best onions I ever ate; such a mild flavor—not rank and strong like most onions. One cannot say too much in their favor. It was a very dry season here, so the yield was not so large, but they did well for this season. They were a perfect globe; small neck and a fine color. Will try them again.

Yours truly,

W. A. DURHAM.

**Grandpa's Pride the Best Out of Five Varieties**

Viroqua, Wis., November 24, 1910.

A. O. Gilbertson Co., Mason City, Iowa.

Dear Sirs:—Will you kindly quote me prices on your onion seed before spring? Among five varieties, your onions came out ahead. And they are a perfect globe—good color and fine flavor, and have a small neck. My neighbors that have seen the difference will want onion seed from Gilbertson next spring. I have given some of my neighbors your address, and they are likely to call you up before spring.

I will want only one variety for next spring, and that will be GRANDPA'S PRIDE GLOBE ONIONS.

Yours truly,

ARNT JOHNSON.

**Finest Onions He Ever Ate**

Gillette, Mont., October 12, 1911.

The A. O. Gilbertson Co., Mason City, Iowa.

Gentlemen:—I am writing just a few words in praise of GRANDPA'S PRIDE GLOBE ONION SEED. They produce the finest onions I ever ate. Success to the producers of such good things.

Very truly yours,

WM. CLIFF, JR.

**Great Surprise to the Grocer**

Woodson, Ill., No. 1, April 18, 1911.

A. O. Gilbertson Co., Mason City, Iowa.

Dear Sirs:—Please find enclosed draft, for which please send me GRANDPA'S PRIDE GLOBE ONION SEED. My groceryman wants to know where I kept those onions. They kept so nice and are such a nice shape and hadn't any of them started to grow yet, and they were also so nice and firm.

Please mail these seeds at once, for it is time they were planted.

Yours truly,

S. M. BUTLER.

**Spoke of Fine Flavor**

Spokane Bridge, Wash., Dec. 6, 1911.

A. O. Gilbertson Co., Mason City, Iowa.

Dear Sirs:—Your GRANDPA'S PRIDE ONIONS were highly praised by all who saw them, both while growing and when matured. They thought they were a wonder, sure. I took three sacks of them and two sacks of the common white onions to Coeur d'Alene and peddled them at 4 cents for the Grandpa's Pride and 3 cents for the common onions, per pound, and when I had sold the three sacks of Grandpa's Pride I had sold only 10 pounds of the common onions.

I had 27 sacks, but sold a lot of green onions during the summer.

Yours respectfully,

C. A. PHILLIPS.

**Belgrade, Minn., Dec. 4th, 1911.**

A. O. Gilbertson, Mason City, Iowa.

Dear Sir:—Gilbertson, your onions are by far the best onions I ever raised. I gave your onions a good test. I planted them side by side with three other varieties from a different seed company, and gave them the same care, but yours were the biggest and more of a uniform size. In spite of the dry weather and the grub-worms last spring, they certainly did fine. Some were over twelve inches in circumference.

Yours truly,

A. F. ADRIAN.

**Best for Eating and Keeping**

Harpers Ferry, Iowa, No. 1, Feb. 22, 1911.

The A. O. Gilbertson Co., Mason City, Iowa.

Gentlemen:—Your GRANDPA'S PRIDE GLOBE ONIONS did the best of any with us last summer. It was dry here all through the growing season, so they were not very large, but had such very small necks, and they are keeping fine—better than the yellow or white that were grown right beside them—and we like them the best for eating, so I want to try them again this summer.

Yours respectfully,

MRS. M. T. PHIPPS.
In the winter months, store our onion bulbs at the building and is used for the entire onion.

Our New Seed Warehouse


My Grandpa's Pride