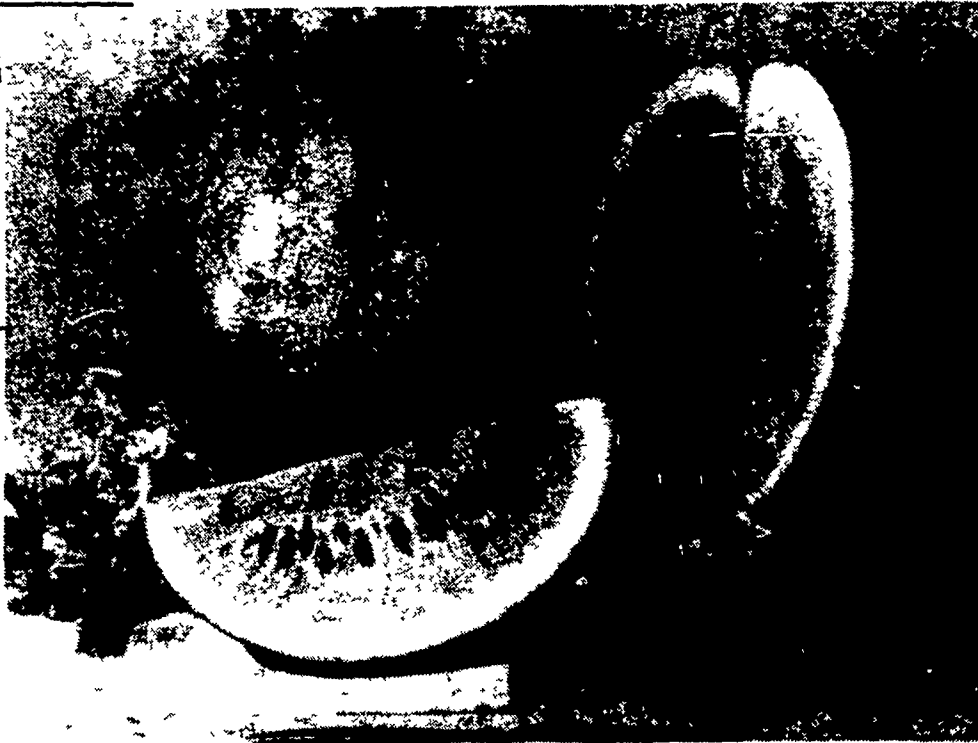


From watermelons to flowers, Burpee seed company develops seeds for the avid gardener. And, while the flowers, below, look like chrysanthemums to most people, Burpee identifies them as "Fantastic Marigolds." If this is the case, it emphasizes the point that Burpee's work with various new strains does come up with surprising results. On the other hand, there's nothing surprising about the watermelon to the right it's as delicious-looking as ever.



These tomatoes look taste-tempting, although we really can't look forward to eating them until Summer. Seed companies, on the other hand, never really forget the work they have to do with these plants since they are always testing new strains of vegetables for marketing.

Photos courtesy of Burpee Seeds

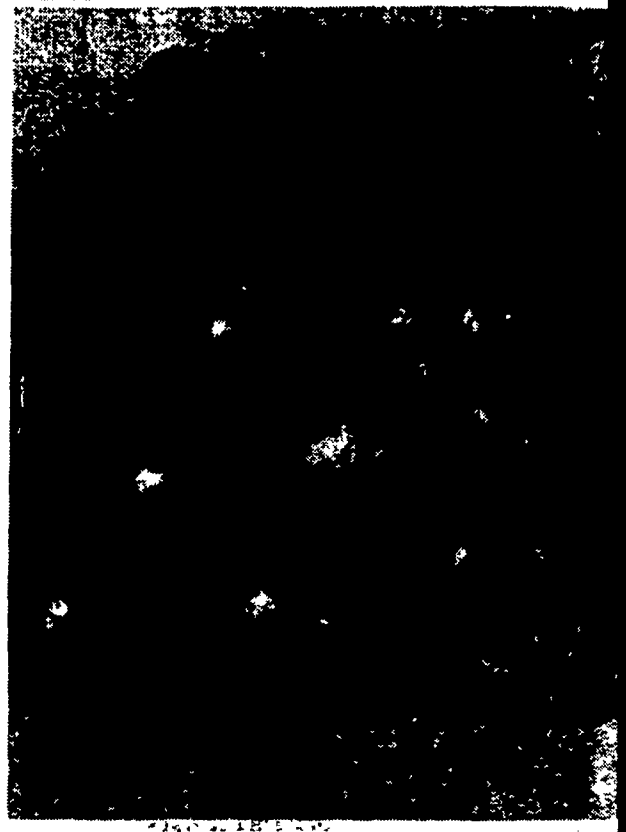


Burpee prepares for Springtime

By SUSAN KAUFFMAN
Feature Writer

Positive signs of Spring's arrival trigger many experienced and novice gardeners' imaginations. These individuals draw up visions of a plot of ground flourishing with appetite-tempting tomatoes, cucumbers, sweet corn, cantaloupes, and spirit-reviving colorful flowers. A daydreaming trip out of the Winter doldrums into a sunny garden scene spurs ambition and hope for tilling the soil in a few weeks.

Just when Winter-weary souls need it the most, the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society sponsors its annual Philadelphia Flower and Garden Show. Having organized the first flower show in America in June, 1829, the society is celebrating its 150th anniversary this year the week of March 13 through 20. As one of the largest horticultural exhibits in the country, it draws huge crowds who come to marvel at the beauty of living plants. But, many of the visitors miss the ingenuity of mankind exhibited there in that the beauty results from behind-the-scenes scientific processes and time-consuming hand labor.



Homestead Notes

One of the many exhibitors at the flower show which has part of its enterprise established in Lancaster Farming's coverage area is the W. Atlee Burpee Co. According to Jeannette Lowe of the gardening information department at Burpee's, the company, which was founded in 1876, offered the first American-produced seeds. Prior to that time, seeds were imported from Europe. The Fordhook Farms in Doylestown, Pa., were established in 1888. Floradale Farm was established in 1909 near Lompac, Calif., and Santa Paula Farm, near Ventura, Calif. was established in 1944.

Most of the commercial seeds are grown in California for Burpee customers because growing conditions are ideal for developing vigorous strains. Thirty to 40 acres at each California farm are used for trials to see that marketed varieties are vigorous and true to type. Also at these farms, new varieties are developed. According to Burpee information, it usually takes 10 to 15 years to develop a new variety, and during this time many "hopefuls" are discarded.

At the Fordhook Farms in Doylestown, the new varieties are tested under eastern growing conditions. There are large trial fields of Spring flowering bulbs at Fordhook and extensive programs of vegetable breeding and testing. This week, however, Fordhook Farms is busy getting the last plans completed for the

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It's a little too early in the year to really be thinking of Halloween and Halloween pumpkins, but not so if you look through seed catalogs. To a gardener, dreaming of a pumpkin on a cold Winter's night is simple. By the same token, looking forward to an arrangement of marigolds from your own flower beds is both easy and enjoyable with a seed catalog by your side.



When you think of snapdragons, you automatically think of Summer, OR you think of the Philadelphia flower show to be held very shortly in the City of Brotherly Love. Burpee seed company has long been preparing for the yearly event and is now closing up all preparations and getting ready to transport their flower gems to the show.