

Deiter's Greenhouse

(Continued from Page B2)

"We work on quality. The better you tend it the better the crop. You must put yourself into it and we say you must do it right or not at all."

The Deiters rely on word of mouth advertising. "We let the quality of our plants do the advertising," Paul says.

Although now is their busy season, the work at the greenhouse continues year round. Delores is responsible for ordering the seeds and keeping records. She says, "I write down from year to year so we know what to order. When more and more people ask for something we usually get it." Mrs. Deiter adds, "By the time you are finished selling you have to order for next year. You must think a year in advance. We usually try to have a few new varieties each year."

While they have been offering a wide variety of annuals, for the first time this year the Deiters are offering 24 different kinds of perennials.

"More and more people want plants to come up year after year," Delores explains. "People also want plants so they will bloom from spring to fall." They offer 35 kinds of bedding plants.

Because they plant in the winter, sell in the spring and harvest produce in the summer, one wonders when there is time for a vacation. Delores explains, "Variety is our vacation." And indeed, each season brings new work and new challenges. So far they do not grow herbs, but Delores says that could be something for the future. "We only have so much space," she explains.

With increased interest in both vegetable and flower planters, they offer a variety of planters suitable for patios and porches. "People work in their back yards and want to enjoy flowers. Flowers are cheerful," Delores says. She says they have some customers who say they would rather spend money on flowers than on vacations.

Delores states, "I enjoy working with something living, watching them grow from seeds to mature plants. When you grow up with it it's part of you."

While the largest number of customers come locally, the Deiters get people from York and Dauphin counties as well as from the city of Baltimore. At the market stand they get many

Transplant for an early crop

NEWARK, Del. — All vegetables can be started successfully in a garden, but to ensure an early crop, start seeds in flats and transplant them to peat pots, styrofoam cups or plastic pots. Push-out sectional plastic trays also make good plant containers.

Vegetables such as cabbage, cauliflower, eggplant, peppers, sweet potatoes and tomatoes are commonly started from transplants. But certain others, such as corn, are difficult to start this way because of the quickly spreading root system, says Delaware extension garden agent Willie

Adams. If you must transplant young corn plants, carry a wide ball of soil along with each, and water promptly to firm the soil and reduce air pockets.

Transplant vegetables on a cloudy day or in the evening, and handle them carefully. Several hours before transplanting, water the plants and the soil where they are to be placed. Dig a hole larger than the root ball, then set the plants slightly deeper than they grew in the containers. Finally, use a starter solution to get them off to a fast start.

tourists from out of the area. Meeting the customers is a joy for the family, as they get to know those who return year after year.

Deiter is a minister in the Rheems Mennonite Church, a job which he concedes takes quite a bit of time. But he enjoys talking and working with people, and compares the "lambs" in the church with his lambs on the farm. "I like the 'lambs' at church better," he says with a smile.

The 75-acre farm and 50,000 broilers are operated primarily by son Jay, who works in the greenhouses as he has time. There are about 65 head of sheep, and the Deiters grow their offspring for the Easter and Christmas lamb

market. At one time they had 300 head of sheep, but have decreased that as the flowers have increased.

Along with plants the Deiters sell produce in the summer, including watermelons, cantalopes and sweet corn. They have been irrigating their crops for 25 years, so they enjoy a good harvest annually.

Paul seems to speak for the family when he says, "There is

nothing I like better than to see things grown and prosper. We give the Lord all the credit. We sow the seeds and watch His hand at work. The Lord gives the increase."

The greenhouses bring the Deiter family much pleasure and joy as they work at nurturing the plants they offer to others. The joy continues as the plants thrive and bring pleasure to homeowners and gardeners in the area.

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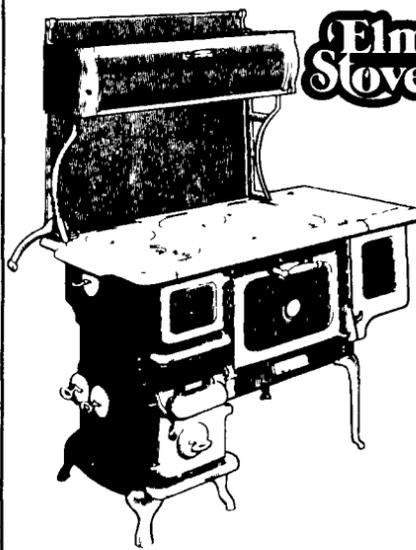
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