ONIONS

The creole onion is the only commercial onion which will withstand high temperatures prevalent during our spring harvest season. Originally this onion came in a wide variety of colors, but the colors have now been segregated and straight strains of red and brown are now available and they are transported from Lafourche and Pointe Coupee parishes where grown, to New Orleans either by truck or rail where they are assembled for boat shipment to Cuba and other tropical countries. They are largely put up in the 50-pound and 100-pound open mesh sacks.

CAULIFLOWER — FLOWERING BROCCOLI

Louisiana has an excellent market for these two products during November and December, and early January. The northern crop has disappeared by that time and it is not worth planting early for the present it is in the territory around Bunkie and La Place but it is well adapted to other sections of the State where irrigation water can be supplied to the crop. It is planted around August first. At present the demand is so great for these products that trucks from nearby cities come to the farms for them and purchase them in bulk. For outside shipment they are packed in the flat cauliflower crate. From 6 to 15 heads of cauliflower are packed per crate depending on the size, and one or more heads of the flowering broccoli are tied to make a bunch and the bunches are then packed from 10 to 15 bunches per crate. Railway cars should be kept iced. Where handled by truck crushed ice should be scattered through the load to prevent the heads heating in transit.

Shallots are packed 5 dozen bunches to the one-bushel crate, 6 dozen to the crate in the one and one-third bushel crate and 10 dozen bunches to the four-bushel barrel.

Bunched shallots are thoroughly washed to remove all dirt and loose outside skins.
Louisiana produces a juicy orange of thin skin and excellent quality. From our old methods of handling them in bulk unwashed we have progressed to the point where they are now all packaged; and all of the tight skinned varieties are washed to free them from scale and the dirty sooty mold fungus which discolors them in our moist climate. In addition about 80 per cent of the oranges are mechanically sized.

Today there is such a demand for our oranges that only a small percentage of the crop is moved by rail. The remainder is moved by boat to New Orleans for the city trade, or is sold at the packing houses to trucks for cash. These trucks are sent there by various stores throughout the state, or come from surrounding states.

There are three types of commercial oranges produced in Louisiana. The first is the “Kid-Glove” type with loose skin of which the most hardy is the satsuma. This orange is found in small orchards throughout south Louisiana and in larger commercial orchards in St. Tammany, St. Bernard and Plaquemine Parishes. These oranges begin ripening in October and are generally packed in the “half strap” crates or in bushel or half-bushel tubs. The picking season extends into December.

Tangerines and mandarines are also of this “Kid-Glove” type and are grown near the mouth of the river in St. Bernard and Plaquemine Parishes and are picked in December and January. The tangerine is tan in color and the mandarine, which is very susceptible to frost injury, is a lemon-yellow in color. These are packed similarly to the satsumas. They are of nice flavor and beautiful appearance; and many are sold for the Christmas trade.

The “Louisiana Sweet,” which is our main crop, and which is quite similar to the “Parson-Brown” of Florida, is a thin skinned, juicy orange of excellent flavor. It is packed in the standard citrus crate and the bushel tub basket. This orange ripens from October 15th on and is usually picked between October 15th and March 1st. The “Valencia,” which is another tight skinned orange, does not begin ripening until February and is picked during the late spring months after the other oranges are gone.

The naval orange, of which the “Washington” is the most desirable variety, is largely picked during November and December and on account of its excellent flavor usually brings a premium. Many firms put up special packages for the Christmas trade.

Dumping the field crates on the apron which delivers the oranges to the washing tank.
Washing solution contains borax or other disinfectant. Oranges emerging from the washing tank.

Grading is done on the carrier which delivers the oranges to the sizing machines.
Each Orange is wrapped in oiled paper and the boxes are stamped as to count and grade. The sizing machines automatically deliver the properly sized oranges to different bins.