

injured by it. In bitter cold weather, they will not pursue their customary pleasures, particularly the women and the children; for the men do not care so much for the cold days in winter as they do for the hot days in summer.

*Of the Products of Kitchen Gardens\**

The garden products in the New Netherlands are very numerous; some of them have been known to the natives from the earliest times, and others introduced from different parts of the world, but chiefly from the Netherlands. We shall speak of them only in a general way; *amateurs* would be able to describe their agreeable qualities in a more scientific manner, but having been necessarily occupied with other subjects, we have had no leisure to devote to them. They consist, then, of various kinds of salads, cabbages, parsnips, carrots, beets, endive, succory, finckel, sorrel, dill, spinach, radishes, Spanish radishes, parsley, chervil (or sweet cicely), cresses, onions, leeks, and besides whatever is commonly found in a kitchen garden. The herb garden is also tolerably well supplied with rosemary, lavender, hyssop, thyme, sage, marjoram, balm, holy onions (*ajain heylig*), wormwood, belury, chives, and clary; also, pimperl, dragon's blood, five-finger, tarragon (or dragon's wort), &c., together with laurel, artichokes, and asparagus, and various other things on which I have bestowed no attention.

The inquirers into nature inform us that plants are there less succulent, and therefore more vigorous than here. I have also noticed that they require less care and attention, and grow equally well; as for instance, the pumpkin grows with little or no cultivation, and is so sweet and dry that it is used, with the addition of vinegar and water, for stewing in the

\*The omission of this chapter by the Translator was discovered too late for its insertion in the proper place (page 27), and the absence of Mr. Johnson in attendance upon the State Legislature, of which he is a member, has rendered it necessary for the Editor to supply the omission by translating the chapter, and inserting it out of its original connection.

# A DESCRIPTION OF THE NEW NETHERLANDS

ADRIAEN VAN DER DONCK

Edited with an Introduction by

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same manner as apples; and notwithstanding that it is here generally despised as a mean and unsubstantial article of food, it is there of so good a quality that our countrymen hold it in high estimation. I have heard it said, too, that when properly prepared as apples are with us, it is not inferior to them, or there is but little difference, and when the pumpkin is baked in ovens it is considered better than apples. The English, who in general think much of what gratifies the palate, use it also in pastry,\* and understand making a beverage from it. I do not mean all sorts of pumpkins and cucurbites that may be found anywhere, and of course in the New Netherlands; the Spanish is considered the best.†

The natives have another species of this vegetable peculiar to themselves, called by our people *quaasiens*, a name derived from the aborigines, as the plant was not known to us before our intercourse with them.‡ It is a delightful fruit, as well to the eye on account of its fine variety of colours, as to the mouth for its agreeable taste. The ease with which it is cooked renders it a favourite too with the young women. It is gathered early in summer, and when it is planted in the middle of April, the fruit is fit for eating by the first of June. They do not wait for it to ripen before making use of the fruit, but only until it has attained a certain size. They gather the squashes and immediately place them on the fire without any farther trouble. When a considerable number have been gathered, they keep them for three or four days; and it is incredible, when one watches the vines, how many will grow on them in the course of a single season. The vines run a little along the ground, some of them only two or three steps; they

\*By the *English* the author means the inhabitants of New England, where *pumpkin pies* still hold a prominent place among the luxuries of the land.—Ed.  
†The Spanish or mammoth pumpkin is still preferred. See *Bridgeman's Gardener*, New York, 1840.

‡Roger Williams, the celebrated founder of the colony of Rhode Island, describes the same plant in the following manner:—"Askutasquash, their vine-apples, which the English from them call *squashes*; about the bigness of apples, of several colours, a sweet, light, wholesome refreshing."—*Key into the Languages of the Indians*, London, 1643. Reprinted in Collections of Mass. Hist. Society, 1st series vol. iii. Dr. Webster, in his quarto Dictionary, derives the name of this vegetable from a *Greek* root.—Ed.

grow well in newly broken woodland when it is somewhat cleared and the weeds are removed. The natives make great account of this vegetable; some of the Netherlanders too consider it quite good, but others do not esteem it very highly. It grows rapidly, is easily cooked, and digests well in the stomach, and its flavour and nutritive properties are respectable.

Melons, likewise, grow in the New Netherlands very luxuriantly, without requiring the land to be prepared or manured; there is no necessity for lopping the vines, or carefully dressing them under glass, as is done in this country; indeed, scarcely any attention is paid to them, no more than is bestowed here in the raising of cucumbers, and the people in that part of the world have every reason to be well content. They plant no more than they think will come to maturity, but when it unfortunately happens that any are destroyed, they put fresh seeds into the ground. Melons will thrive too in newly cleared woodland, when it is freed from weeds; and in this situation the fruit, which they call *Spanish pork*, grows large and very abundant. I had the curiosity to weigh one of these melons, and found its weight to be seventeen pounds. In consequence of the warm temperature of the climate, the melons are quite sweet and pleasant to the taste, and however many one may eat, they will not prove injurious, provided only that they are fully ripe.

The citrull or water-citron\* (*citerullen ofte water-limoenen*), also grows there, a fruit that we have not in the Netherlands, and is only known from its being occasionally brought from Portugal, except to those who have travelled in warm climates. This fruit grows more rapidly and in greater abundance than melons, so much so that some plant them,

\*The watermelon, as it is now called. The French give the name of citrull or *citroutille*, to the pumpkin. The fruit mentioned by our author under the name of *melon*, seems to have been the musk-melon, which, being then cultivated in Holland, did not require a particular description. But the watermelon at that period was comparatively little known, as Van der Donck states, and not regarded as a melon. On this account he describes the fruit so minutely that it cannot well be mistaken. It was sometimes termed by English writers the *Citrull cucumber*. Botanists place the watermelon in the same genus as the pumpkin, calling it *Cucurbita citrullus*.—Ed.

even among those who are experienced, for the purpose of clearing and bringing into subjection the wild undressed land to fit it for cultivation. Their juice is very sweet like that of apricots, and most men there would eat six water-citrons to one melon, although they who wish can have both. They grow ordinarily to the size of a man's head. I have seen them as large as the biggest Leyden cabbages, but in general they are somewhat oblong. Within they are white or red; the red have white, and the white black seeds. When they are to be eaten, the rind is cut off to about the thickness of the finger; all the rest is good, consisting of a spongy pulp, full of liquor, in which the seeds are imbedded, and if the fruit is sound and fully ripe, it melts as soon as it enters the mouth, and nothing is left but the seeds. Women and children are very fond of this fruit. It is also quite refreshing from its coolness, and is used as a beverage in many places. I have heard the English say that they obtain a liquor from it resembling Spanish wine, but not so strong. Then there is no want of sweetness, and the vinegar that is made from it will last long, and is so good that some among them make great use of it.\*

Cucumbers are abundant. Calabashes or gourds also grow there; they are half as long as the pumpkin, but have within very little pulp, and are sought chiefly on account of the shell, which is hard and durable, and is used to hold seeds, spices, &c. It is the common water-pail of the natives, and I have seen one so large that it would contain more than a bushel.† Turnips also are as good and firm as any sand-rapes that are raised in the Netherlands. There are likewise peas and various sorts of beans; I shall speak of the former under the

\*Prof. Pallas, in the account of his journey to the southern provinces of Russia, in 1793-4, speaking of a colony of Moravians at Sarepta, or Sapa, on the Volga, says, "The ingenious inhabitants of this town brew a kind of beer from their very abundant and cheap water-melons, with the addition of hops; they also prepare a conserve or marmalade from this fruit, which is a good substitute for syrup, or treacle." Other instances of a similar character might be adduced to confirm the general correctness of the author's observations and statements, but it seems to be unnecessary. His remarks betray no want of familiarity with the subject of gardening, notwithstanding the modest disclaimer which he makes at the outset.—Ed.

†The Dutch bushel (*schepel*) is about three pecks English.

head of *field products*. Of beans there are several kinds; but the large Windsor bean, which the farmers call *tessen*, or house beans, and also the horse-bean, will not fill out their pods; the leaf grows well enough though delicate, and ten, twelve, or more stalks frequently shoot up, but come to little or nothing.\* The Turkish beans which our people have introduced there grow wonderfully; they fill out remarkably well, and are much cultivated. Before the arrival of the Netherlanders, the Indians raised beans of various kinds and colours, but generally too coarse to be eaten green, or to be pickled, except the blue sort, which are abundant; they somewhat tend to cause flatulency, like those we raise in Holland, but in other respects they furnish an excellent food, of which the Indians are especially fond. They have a peculiar mode of planting them, which our people have learned to practice:—when the Turkish wheat (Indian corn) or, as it is called, *maize*, is half a foot above the ground, they plant the beans around it, and let them grow together. The coarse stalk serves as a bean-prop, and the beans run upon it. They increase together and thrive extremely well, and thus two crops are gathered at the same time.

#### OF THE MANNERS AND PECULIAR CUSTOMS OF THE NATIVES OF THE NEW NETHERLANDS

*First—Of Their Bodily Form and Appearance, and Why We Named Them (Wilden) Wild Men*

Having briefly remarked on the situation and advantages of the country, we deem it worth our attention to treat

\*Bridgeman makes a similar statement in regard to the "large Windsor bean," and other varieties of the English *Dwarf's*. He says, "the principal cause of these garden beans not succeeding well in this country, is the summer heat overtaking them before they are podded, causing the blossom to drop off prematurely; to obviate this difficulty they should be planted as early in the year as possible." p. 31.