

# INVENTORY OF SEEDS AND PLANTS IMPORTED BY THE OFFICE OF FOREIGN SEED AND PLANT INTRO- DUCTION DURING THE PERIOD FROM JANUARY 1 TO MARCH 31, 1919 (NOS. 46951 TO 47348).

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## INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT.

The purpose of these introductory statements has been to emphasize certain introductions which, from the accumulated experience of those in contact with the stream of plant immigrants, appear to have unusual promise or interest. As the years have passed and that experience has widened, the proportion of new plants which appear interesting seems to have increased and the introductory statements have become correspondingly longer. This is quite the opposite of the predictions of my friends, who raised the question in the beginning as to what I proposed to do when all the plants which were worth while had been introduced. Instead of the widening prospect that actually lies before us and which embarrasses us with its wealth of opportunity, they saw in their imagination the stream of new plants becoming a tiny brook and finally stopping altogether. It is interesting to note that, whereas in the spring quarter of 1913 there were 407 introductions, six years later, 1919, there were practically as many (397), and this in the face of a world war which had demoralized shipping. The dearth is not in plant material of great potential possibilities but in experimenters who can adapt these plants to the wide uses of mankind. Ten thousand independent experimenters scattered over this country could spend their lives working on the material we have brought in and not exhaust its possibilities. It is hoped that these introductions will attract the attention of amateurs to important and interesting problems in a way which, perhaps, the descriptions themselves would not, and it is with this idea in mind that the following comments are made:

Beet tops as greens are so common a vegetable that those who are fond of them may like to have a perennial variety (No. 46951) sent by Dr. Trabut from North Africa, which yields large quantities of leaf.