

production, while summer pruning lessens wood production and induces fruitage.

How to Prune: Pruning is an operation that should not be done carelessly or hurriedly. The pruner should study each tree as he prunes it and each branch as he removes it.

When heading back young trees or cutting off the tops of last year's growth out of older trees the cut should be made slanting away from and about one-sixteenth of an inch above the first end bud that is intended to grow. A longer stub than this will dry, crack and form an entrance for fungi, or bacteria. A shorter stub will usually result in the death of the first bud.

When pruning trees that have a dense upright habit of growth cut two outer buds in order to spread the naturally narrow compact top; but when pruning spreading or slender growing trees, cut the buds that point toward the center of the tree in order to throw the limbs inward and upward.

In the removal of lateral branches from either young or old trees cut parallel with and close to the main stem. Never leave stubs from one to four inches long in hopes that they will develop into fruit spurs, since less than five per cent ever become fruit spurs and the other ninety-five per cent die, dry up, and leave excellent gateways for the entrance of disease into the wood of the tree. Young lateral branches when shortened back, especially after the spring growth has taken place, very frequently develop fruit buds and spurs.

In the removal of large branches from old, or bearing, trees, always make the cut parallel with the branch, or main stem, from which the one is removed. This frequently means a larger wound than it would make if the cut is made at right angles to the limb that is to be removed, but such wounds will heal quicker and is less injurious to the tree than the much smaller ones that leave the collar of the branch to be covered with healing tissue. Do not hesitate to remove large, useless limbs from the tree, but always make smooth, clean cuts with a saw, and if necessary to prevent splitting the stem or peeling the bark, make two cuts, the first from six to twelve inches out from where the limb is to be finally cut off. Nothing can be applied to the wound to hasten the healing.

Wounds an inch or less in diameter need not be treated, while larger wounds may be advantageously treated with a thick coat of lead paint. Cheap mineral paint or tar should not be used upon fruit trees, as it kills the young, tender bark, while grafting waxes crack and peel off before the wound is healed. Any antiseptic that will keep the moisture out makes an excellent coating.

Pruning is a matter of common sense and should be practiced as such, and not according to any specific rules.