Among the Orchards of the Northwest

A Page of Interesting Advice and Information About Fruits, Large and Small.

To get best results from berry fields it is necessary to train the plants to some sort of trellis for the support of the canes. The kind of trellis to use and the method of training depend upon the kind of berries and their habit of growth. Red raspberries and high-bush blackberries whose habit of growth is upright are usually trained on a different sort of trellis from trailers such as Loganberries and Evergreen blackberries.

Mr. Stahl, the writer of this article, is horticulturist at the Washington State Experiment Station.

BY J. L. STAHL.

THERE are several methods or systems of training red raspberries, now in use, some of which are excellent while others are not so desirable.

System A. Many berry growers use a trellis made of two No. 14 wires strung horizontally on cross pieces made of 2x4's. The cross pieces are usually 12 to 16 inches in length and nailed to upright posts at a height of about four and a half feet. Seven-foot posts are used and set about two feet in the ground and thirty to forty feet apart. The canes are kept between the wires and out of the way during cultivation, but the old and new canes are not separated. With this system of training the new canes are often in the way during harvesting and are sometimes badly injured by the pickers.

System B. Another method of training uses a double trellis having two cross pieces and four wires. One pair of these wires are placed at a height of two feet, and the other pair at a height of four and half feet from the ground. With this system the old or bearing canes are bent over and held firm by weaving them to the wires on one side and the new shoots are allowed to grow upright between the pairs of wires and out of the way of the bearing canes. The posts and cross pieces of the trellis are very similar to those of the preceding system. Growers using this method of training are very much pleased with it and claim the fruit is easily picked and the new canes very seldom disturbed or injured at harvest time.

System C. Some growers instead of having either a single or double trellis of horizontal wires and cross pieces have but one wire from post to post on which the bearing canes are fastened. It is usually stretched between four and five feet in height. The canes are sometimes woven to the wire but quite often are bent over and tied. The new canes are allowed to grow erect and shortly before harvest time they are tied to a temporary wire.

Old French Method.

Any of the systems so far mentioned can be used in fields having rows set seven feet apart.

System D. A plan of training very much like the old French method has been tried by some growers and is being adopted in a number of newly set fields. The rows are set north and south, eight feet apart, and trellis placed about a foot to the east of each row. The trellis is made by using eight-foot posts ten inches to a foot in diameter. They are set three feet in the ground about fifty feet apart. Posts seven feet in length may be substituted but they must be set closer. A wire is sretched from post to post, three feet from the ground, and on the side of the posts nearest the plants. The bearing canes are drawn over to the wire and securely tied with string. On the opposite side of each post and ten or twelve inches higher another wire is stretched. The bearing canes hang over this wire but are not tied to it. As the fruit is developed the canes gradually droop until they rest on the upper wire. They are thus supported and can be easily pushed to one side without injury as the fruit is picked. All of the picking is done from the east side of the row and the new canes are not disturbed. The new or young canes grow erect and are held in place by stretching a temporary wire on the west side of them and a few inches below the lower wire of the trellis ti which the bearing canes are tied. Stretching of the temporary wire may be done any time after the young canes are three or four feet in height and before harvest. With this system of training the pickers are in the shade of the plants most of the day. Cultivating is made no harder than with other systems and the canes are given every opportunity for development.

System E Given.

System E. A few growers who do not care for early berries are adopting the following system. Posts are set and cross pieces attached as in system A, but at a height of five feet. The cross pieces are of one-inch boards six inches in width and about sixteen inches in length.

Instead of stapling the wires to the cross pieces, holes are bored about two inches from the ends and three inches from the top of each board. Through these holes the wires are drawn. About two inches above and an inch nearer each end of the board other holes are made for two more wires.

A notch is made to the top holes with a saw so that wires can be easily pushed into the holes from the top of the board. The top wires are strung loosely until the canes are in place. The fruiting canes of each hill are divided; half are placed outside of the lower wire on one side and half the same way on the other side. The upper wire is then drawn tight and the canes held securely in position with no tying.

There is a space of twelve inches between each lower wire in which the young canes are allowed to develop. In this way the young canes are not injured during harvesting and do not interfere with the fruiting canes. Picking is done from both sides of the row. This system makes harvesting easy and the foliage dries quickly after a rain. The fruiting canes are usually cut back to a height of six feet, making the fruiting season a little later than when some of the other systems of training are used.

High-Bush Blackberries.

The high-bush blackberry is sometimes set in hills six feet apart each way, but more often the plants are set in rows seven or eight feet apart and about three feet apart between individual plants. The method of training is very similar to System A described for training red raspberries. When the fruits are patrially developed, the fruiting shoots are drawn to the outside of the trellis, where they hang in easy reach of the pickers.

System F. Most of the trailer blackberries, such as Evergreen, are supported by a double trellis quite like that used in System B for red raspberries, but the posts are set closer and cross pieces of wood or wire connect each pair of wires. The posts are usually set sixteen to twenty-four feet apart and the cross strips on the wires are at intervals of twenty-four or thirty inches. The lower pair of wires supports the young canes as they are developed and the upper trellis holds the bearing canes. The cross strips or slats on each pair of wires are usually made of wood. They are held to the wires by notches in the wood or by stapling one end of the strip to one wire and driving a shingle nail in the other end in such a manner that it hooks over the other wire. The strips can thus easily be removed when the canes are cut out or raised. The canes are trained serpentin fashion above and below the cross strips and held firmly to thetrellis. After the bearing canes have produced a crop they are cut out and the young canes raised in their place.

Loganberries.

System G. A few growers train the young canes at a height of five feet six inches and the bearing canes below at a height of forty inches. They like this method better than the preceding one. With both systems the canes may all be trained in the same direction but usually half of the bearing canes in each hill and half of tne young canes are trained in opposite directions.

In general the systems for training Loganberries are the same as for Evergreens.

Some of the growers instead of training the canes on a double trellis have three wires, one above the other, and about eighteen or twenty inches apart. Th bearing canes are curled, snail fashion, over one wire and under the next instead of serpentine fashion above and below cross strips. The young canes are allowed to remain on the ground underneath the trellis until the bearing canes have been removed and then are trained to take their place.

With this plan the plants may be set closer in the rows than with other systems of training.

The first railroad in Prussia to use electric traction on a large scale obtained much of its equipment from the United States.