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**FRUIT OUTLOOK**  
GENERALLY GOOD  
Cherries Beginning to Come In; a Very Wide Market For Oregon Prunes  
The fruit outlook for the Salem district continues good, speaking generally. This week will all but end the strawberry season, for canning and shipping supplies. The dry season has shortened it in both time and quality. The cherry crop will not be up to normal in quantity. There will be as large a tonnage of loganberries as last year owing to the new yards, if the growers get some needed

rains--needed by practically all bush and fruit tree growers, including prune growers. There will be a larger pear crop than last year, and buyers are already in the field. There will be very few Anjou pears. They have suffered from lack of pollination. It has been found that this variety must be planted with other varieties. They are not self-fertile. Not Enough Strawberries It is impossible for the canners to get enough strawberries to fill their orders. It will be the same with Royal Ann cherries. The pack will be necessarily below what was promised or contracted. There are practically no Royal Ann cherries left in the hands of the growers. Nearly all are sold. Prune Outlook is Good With timely rains, there is every prospect of a big prune crop and there will be a much wider

distribution than ever before. The Oregon Growers Cooperative association has already sold prunes to 65 different car load points. This will be the widest distribution they have ever made. The managers are attempting to get a still wider distribution, owing to the new acreage coming on all over this field. They have sold over 1,000,000 pounds of Oregon prunes in France; almost 3,000,000 pounds in Great Britain, and nearly 2,000,000 in Canada--and they have sold cars of prunes all over Europe. Packers are out buying prunes in some districts now. Their effort seems to be to get orchards running to larger sizes. The trade has not taken hold of the California crop of petite prunes very well. This association will also dry 500 tons or more of loganberries, and these will also go in attractive Mistland cartons, containing eight cunes to the package. The same as to Black Republican cherries with the pits in. They will dry a lot of these in July. Both the dried loganberries and the cherries have been sold. Cherries Coming In Elton and Governor Woods cherries are already beginning to come in, to the Salem canneries. Other varieties will be coming along shortly. The Oregon Growers' cannery in Salem is running on strawberries and cherries. They have also barreled over two car loads of strawberries, and have shipped large quantities to the canneries. All the canners and packers here are reporting the end of the strawberry season in sight. It will run into next week, but the big rush will be over with this week. However, there will not be much of a hiatus, on account of the coming on of the cherry crop.

## PRACTICAL SOIL MANAGEMENT AND ORCHARD CULTIVATION DISCUSSED

With Especial Reference to the Red Hills Orchard Sections of the Willamette Valley--The Big Thing Is, "Incorporate Humus," Says a Man Who Is Both Scientific and Practical in the Methods Which He Employs.

(The following article by Robert E. Shinn, manager of the Skyline Orchards, Salem, Oregon, was written for the June number of the Oregon Grower, the magazine of the Oregon Growers Cooperative association. Mr. Shinn has carefully watched various methods of soil management in a scientific and practical way and outlines a successful plan of moisture conservation in this article.) In considering the question of soil management there are certain fundamental principles which apply in all non-irrigated orchard



Early Cultivation

sections. The problems involved in the best methods of cultivation vary somewhat with the type of soil and general exposure, but it is the belief of the writer that these problems become most acute in dealing with the Red Hill soils which make up a very large part of our Willamette valley upland orchards. It is with respect to this type of soil that the following article has to deal. At an early day much of the red uplands of the valley were covered with fir and oak timber and through nature's processes the soil, which was rich in the elements necessary to plant life, was further enriched with humus through decay of organic matter. The fact that the land was rolling and higher than the valley floor resulted in natural drainage. All the factors necessary to make up an ideal soil condition were present.

**Methods of Cultivation**  
The editor has asked me to give a discussion of our methods of cultivation on Skyline Orchards which is made up of two hundred twelve acres of grafted Franquette walnuts inter-planted with Oregon prunes. In doing so, bear in mind that our soil is typical Red Hill soil. On such an acreage we are unable to carry out all phases of our cultivation at the most ideal time, as such management would entail such a working force and such an amount of equipment as to make the operation unprofitable. With the exception of a short time in the spring our work is done with three horses and a Fordson tractor.

**Early Day Farming**  
Then came man with axe and hoe to reap the benefit of nature's rich blessing, and while these grand soils gave forth bountifully, the early farmer showed little appreciation, and in return gave back nothing. Grain was harvested and the straw; yes, even the stubble, was burned. No thought was ever given to applying the barnyard manure to the fields, and few leguminous crops were grown. As the humus became depleted the farmer found it more difficult to plow at a time when the soil would turn up in a friable condition. His plow would no longer scour and the soil would no longer hold its moisture as it had in the early days. Crops grew smaller until a time came when they were so small that the profits appeared on the red side of the ledger.

It was at this point in the history of the section's agriculture that it was discovered the climate was exceedingly well adapted to the production of fruit. Some new land was cleared and set to trees, but large acreages of land which had been farmed for years was set also. So the problem of soil management has been pas-

type of Leghorn hens for breeders, and careful selection of the proper feeds for development. Eighty-five hens were picked out to breed from. Only large, well proportioned hens were selected, and fertility averaged 90 per cent. Over 4000 eggs have been set from this flock of 85 hens.

plowed away by reversing the extension bar to the other side of the plow beam. The entire plowing operation on the two hundred twelve acres, including the one horse and two horse extension plowing, required a total of nine hundred eighty-two hours. Six hundred sixty-three hours of this work was done by our own horses at fifty-one cents per three horse hour and thirty cents per hour for driver. Three hundred ninety-two hours were hired done with two-horse teams at sixty cents per hour for team and driver. This figures out approximately three dollars and forty cents per acre.

**Results Compared**  
Some interesting points may be brought out regarding the effect of the plowing at different periods during the winter and on varying soils. When the disc and harrow had done their work, the results showed that the ground which had been plowed earliest in the winter had worked up in much better condition. After traveling over it once with the harrow and before it had been disked, not a clod was left. On the other hand, the ground which had been plowed later in the season and which had had no cover-crop last year turned up cloddy. However, ground which had produced a cover-crop a year ago mellowed down in good condition under the later spring plowing.

We conclude from this season's work, as other years have shown also, that unless the Red Hill soil is in good condition with regard to humus content that it can best be plowed in the late fall or early winter. Especially is this true in seasons where we have some freezing weather during the winter. In a large orchard where a cover-cropping system is followed the plowing may best be managed by planting only such prunes as may be plowed in the spring before the dry weather sets in, and the remaining acreage plowed in the early winter. By alternating the areas planted to covercrop each year a system of rotation may be developed which will result in a rapid building up of the soil. All manure with a humus content should be applied to the ground not in cover-crop in the fall and a stimulated growth results where some commercial fertilizer is added to the growing cover-crop during January and February.

**Suggestions on Cover-Crops**  
A word here regarding cover-crop management in western Oregon under non-irrigated conditions will not be out of place, as cover-cropping is surely one of our chief problems in soil management. A cover-crop should never be allowed to grow in the spring when its growth is roiling the soil of moisture which the trees should have later in the summer. I have seen many instances of crops being allowed to grow two feet or more before being turned under and the soil's so dried out that the trees received a serious setback the following summer. Many consider a cover-crop less than a foot tall a failure, but the average season will seldom see a cover-crop over twelve inches high at the proper time to turn it under. Please bear in mind that this statement applies to upland conditions on the average soil.

Our cover-crops should be planted earlier in the fall. In the average season August 15th should see the seeding started and if the proper kind and amount of spring and summer cultivation has been practiced there will be sufficient moisture to germinate the seed and keep it growing until the first fall rains come. However, if by scraping the soil away moisture is not in evidence within six inches of the top, it is dangerous to seed until later, as an early light rain may germinate the seed only to let it die out from lack of moisture before the next rain comes. It is all a matter of

intensive summer cultivation whether your next season's cover-crop will or will not be a success, which leads us to the next point in our discussion.

**Summer Cultivation**  
It is our belief, and the method we follow in summer cultivation bears it out, that the summer work in the orchard should be confined to an intensive and continuous stirring of the top four or five inches of soil. The spring plowing and disking in order that the organic matter may be turned under where the soil bacteria and warm humid atmosphere may do their work in breaking down the fibrous matter into available plant food, but to continue throughout the summer with implements which will turn this moist and decaying organic matter up to the sun to dry and burn out is surely an error. The aim during the summer should be to keep down the weeds and break up capillary action, which can be accomplished only by constantly moving over the soil with such implements as the Kimball weeder and spike-tooth harrow. We use two Kimball weeders ten feet long, one being drawn by a three-horse team and the other by a Fordson tractor.

Respecting the use of the tractor as an economic means of power in orchard cultivation in the hills we have come to definite conclusions. For early spring disking and later surface cultivation, it is indispensable. For this work a type of tractor which is geared to get over the ground rapidly is most desirable. On large acreages much valuable moisture is lost by late spring rains unless the crust formed can be broken up immediately after the shower, and if we had to rely on horse power alone, the ground could not be covered in time. We have done considerable experimenting with tractor plowing and observed the results of others' work, and it is our opinion that better work can be done more economically with horses in hill plowing. During last season's plowing there were not five days during the entire plowing season when a tractor could have handled a plow in the orchard. This statement will not hold when applied to level land of a lighter nature. The writer has operated tractors plowing such orchard land and found them very successful, but in the Red Hills our advice in plowing would be to employ horses.

Then last but not least to be considered is the hand cultivation about the trees. On the tree rows from which the dirt has been plowed away there are two open furrows, one on either side of the trees. These dry out very rapidly and through capillary action, moisture is drawn from some distance to be lost in evaporation. In hoeing, these furrows are filled in about the trees and weeds which the implements cannot reach are removed. This operation should not cost over one-half cent per tree where the implements can get fairly close to the trees.

**Four Vital Points**  
In summing up the important points in the consideration of cultivation to incorporate humus and maintain a maximum amount of moisture, we should say, first: Plow every year and as deep as the established rooting system will allow. On large tracts practice winter plowing on the area, not in cover-crop. Second: Plow your cover-crop under before it begins to draw out moisture, which will not be returned by later spring rains. Do this regardless of the height of the crop. Third: Be prepared to disc and harrow the orchard hurriedly during the first good weather after the middle of April. Fourth: Always keep up a constant stirring of the top four inches of soil throughout the summer until the middle of August--and, last, do not fail to put in cover-crop systematically every year. The first and last word in our soil management should be "Incorporate Humus." It will result in more and better fruit.

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**HENS LESS THAN 4 MONTHS LAYING**  
Phoenix, Arizona, Breeder Gets Eggs from Pullets 3 Months, 25 Days Old

G. W. Stephenson, who has a poultry farm inside the city limits of Phoenix, Ariz., avers he has produced laying hens in less than four months' time. His extra early layers are White Leghorns, and he has achieved this remarkable result by selection for early laying over a period of four years.

On January 26, this year, his first hatch was taken out of the incubator. The chicks showed remarkable development as the days passed, with no signs of sickness. The chicks were properly housed, given plenty of range, and the right feeds, and in exactly three months and 25 days, two of the pullets laid small, but perfect eggs.

The Stephenson poultry farm has been built up to a flock of 2500 selected pullets. The proper amount of range is always provided, and fresh running water is always available. The pens are so arranged that feeding takes up but little time and effort. The results this year are due, Mr. Stephenson says, to careful selection of a flock of the highest

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