

# Not Color But Texture Is Key to Good Garden Soil



Spading is essential to good soil conditioning.

Outdoor planting can begin in your garden as soon as the soil has thawed out and dried sufficiently to work. If your soil is stiff, hard to spade and cultivate, slow to allow water to drain through it, every spring something should be added to make it more porous.

Beginning gardeners are often persuaded that what is needed is a few inches of "black dirt." Even if your soil is clay, excavated for the foundation of a new home, that is the wrong solution. Forget the color of the soil and concentrate on its porosity, a quality without which any soil black, yellow or red, will give you trouble.

At the other extreme are soils in beach areas, of almost pure sand. These are altogether too porous, holding neither moisture nor plant food, but letting everything wash away.

Both types of soil need the same treatment which is the addition of decayed vegetable or animal material, such as sewage sludge, muck or peat dug from

old bogs, well decayed manure, commercial peat moss, leaf mould or compost from a compost pile.

It is seldom advisable to mix sand with clay or clay with sand. Both are excellent to have in soil, but together they often produce an extremely hard composition. Instead of sand, however, limestone can be mixed with clay, with excellent results. Limestone causes the fine clay particles to combine into sand-size aggregates which will retain moisture, while allowing air to enter freely and excess water to drain off.

Do not be afraid to use crushed limestone freely, since it will not make clay soil harmfully alkaline, no matter how much you use. The clay has a "buffer" capacity which prevents this, say the scientists.

All the materials used to improve your soil should be mixed with it thoroughly. Spade the organics into sandy soil also, they will hold moisture and store up plant food for the plants to use, instead of allowing it to wash away.

Spading alone is a fine soil conditioner, and if planned sensibly is not a difficult chore. Mark the area to be spaded as a whole and divide into sections, one for each day. Limit the day's work to an hour, until you become hardened to it.

Spread material to be spaded in evenly over the whole area. Begin by opening up a trench at one end of the day's section, throwing the soil removed in a pile nearby. Then dig an adjoining trench with spade at right angles to its length, throwing the soil and organic matter into the first trench. Continue this until the day's work is over, resting at frequent intervals. Fill the final trench with soil removed from the first. Drive the spade straight down each time, digging the full length of its blade; and turn the "spit" of soil as you drop it. It beats any kind of plowing for a small garden.

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# Questions Answered

By MARK M. TAYLOR

**Q**—I read your recent answer on pruning raspberries and blackberries. What I want to know in addition to this is should the new canes be pruned and if so to what extent?—A Reader.

**ANS**—Yes, the shoots are pinched off when they reach from 30 to 36 inches in order to promote lower branching and upright growth. If the new canes are one season old, they can be pruned back to 18 inches while dormant. Pruning to an eye or branch is desirable. When planting bushes cut back the stems close to the ground to encourage root growth.

**Q**—Are any bulbs available that should bloom now?—Mrs. H. L.

**ANS**—Yes. Daffodil February Gold is blooming now as are some other varieties. There are crocus and hyacinths in bloom now, too, in protected spots. Tulips are on their way up and will bloom very soon. From the present outlook it appears that this is to be an early Spring.

**Q**—When should I take cuttings of chrysanthemums?—Mrs. H. T.

**ANS**—Late in March until you can start them in a greenhouse or cold frame.

**Q**—What bulbs give Summer bloom?—Mrs. H. T.

**ANS**—Montbretia, Tigridia, tuberous begonias and glaxias.

**Q**—I have a filbert tree that appears sickly and does not bear. What is wrong?—F. R.

**ANS**—Chances are the soil where it is planted is too shallow. Most of the soil in Eastern Polk County and Western Marion County is too shallow. Filberts form a tap root that requires five or six feet of soil. Failure to have this depth may eventually kill the tree.

**Q**—Can you prune rhododendrons and, if so, when? We have a large one that has pink buds but when it blooms out it is white with pale pink fringe.—Mrs. V. B. K.

**ANS**—Pruning of rhododendrons is usually limited to removing any broken branches or to keep it within bounds. If space is not allowed for its ultimate growth, a plant may overgrow the space allotted, so that pruning is necessary. Don't hesitate to remove a crossing branch or improve the shape of the shrub. Cut as little as possible and prune back to a rosette of leaves where dormant buds exist. Much of this pruning may be done when the shrub is in bloom so that some of the flower trusses can be used indoors as cut flowers. The paling of blooms from pink to white may be due to too sunny an exposure. Part shade, resting at frequent intervals. Fill the final trench with soil removed from the first. Drive the spade straight down each time, digging the full length of its blade; and turn the "spit" of soil as you drop it. It beats any kind of plowing for a small garden.

**Q**—Can you give me some information on how to control the strawberry weevil?—Mrs. B. R.

**ANS**—Poisoned apple bait placed on the grounds at the base of plants to be protected in late May or June is recommended. Also spray plants with lead arsenate, one tablespoon to a quart of water. Protect rhododendrons, camellias, azaleas and heathers in this same manner.

**Q**—How late in Spring may roses be successfully planted?—Mrs. W. K.

**ANS**—Roses may be planted practically any time of the year. Most dealers now grow them in fiber pots so they can be planted without difficulty. Late planting tends to cause them to need more water during hot weather, however.

**Q**—When should roses be fertilized?—B. T.

**ANS**—Follow a balanced feeding program monthly from April until September. Well decomposed compost, manures, etc., can be worked into the soil to aid its natural fertility. If a tendency toward chlorosis (yellowing of leaves) becomes apparent, then supplement with a good nitrogen fertilizer such as liquid fish emulsion.

**Q**—What is the proper planting time for Camellias?—Mrs. G. M.

**ANS**—Usually camellias are most successfully planted from November to February, but plants grown in containers or balled and burlapped can be planted at any time.

**Q**—What is the right time to take and root cuttings of broad-leaved evergreens?—R. L.

**ANS**—Usually September and October, or occasionally through December. Rooting medium should have a temperature of about 60 degrees.

**Q**—What could be used as a good temporary space filler in a border planting?—Mrs. H. C.

**ANS**—Such annuals as zinnias, Alyssum, stock or gaillardias are fine. For low-growing plants use Portulaca or Balsam.

**Q**—What is the chemical composition of cottonseed meal that is so often recommended for fertilizer for broad-leaved evergreens?—W. B.

**ANS**—7% nitrogen, 2 1/2% phosphorous, 1 1/4% potash. It is safe and satisfactory for all acid-loving plants.

# Wall Covering Suggestions

By MARK M. TAYLOR

Any broad blank space is made more pleasing by at least partially covering it with a quiet, dignified growth that ties it to the ground or to foundation plantings. Brick, plaster or stone surfaces lend themselves to the use of one of the small leaved varieties or to the tiny-leaved Fig of the deep green English Ivy or Vine (Ficus pumila).

Boston Ivy is colorful in Autumn when the leaves turn red. Low stone or brick walls in the garden may be softened when at least partially covered with one of the ivies.

Wisteria is another vine which has become almost traditional in the Deep South, along with camellias and magnolias. Its vigorous growth makes it ideal for covering trellises, arbors, buildings, trees or posts. The great racemes of lilac-blue, white or pink pea-shaped flowers come early in the spring. Wisterias thrive in almost any fairly rich soil needing only support. Being a twining vine it is not advisable to train wisterias up a tree as they have been known to literally squeeze a tree to death!

I believe one of the most attractive uses of wisteria I have seen was at a home in Oakland, Calif. A two-story house on a hill side had the front entrance on the second floor. At the rear forming a gorgeous background for the garden, the whole side of the house was covered with the wisteria in full bloom.

For a rapid growing vine with brilliant red Autumn foliage Glory vine (Vitis Coignetiae) is one of the best, growing as much as four and a half feet in a single season.

In buying wisteria plants, select only grafted plants as seedlings seldom produce good blooms.

Firethorn, while not a vine, can be trained to give the appearance of a vine by giving it artificial support as it grows upward. Its good foliage and bright berries in Fall and Winter make it especially attractive against a white wall or white painted fireplace chimney.

# BLM Reports Tuesday Sale

A total of \$258,747.78 was offered by bidders on nine tracts offered by the Bureau of Land Management Tuesday. The price paid for the 12,650,000 board feet averaged 25 per cent above the appraised prices. All of the tracts were primarily salvage timber.

The largest offering was in Polk county, the Gooseneck tract of 7,560,000 board feet, for which Simonson Brothers Logging company of Astoria was high bidder at \$21.75 per thousand for the Douglas fir, \$10.85 for western hemlock, \$8.80 for white fir, and \$8.30 for western red cedar. The total bid was \$160,769.35.

In Yamhill county, three tracts were purchased by Hadley Chodrik, John W. Flansberg, and Mendenhall & Fendall on respective bids of \$3210, \$401.28 and \$24,099.20.

In Washington county, Ott & Zagelow, and Mallico & Hayden respectively made high bids of \$1174.05 and \$3352.60.

In Clackamas county, Lee Balcom was high bidder at \$15,426.85.

Lulay Brothers Lumber company made the high bid of \$17,546.25 for a Linn county tract.

L. P. Miller Lumber company was the high bidder for a tract in Benton county appraised at \$32,768.20.

Competition was evident for all the other tracts except a re-logging show on the southern boundary of Benton county for which no bids were received. The latter tract will remain available for sale until June 4 unless purchased prior to that time.

# Teachers Elected

HUBBARD—Mrs. C. K. McNary, an instructor at Hubbard grade school, was recently elected vice president of the Marion County Teachers' association, division of the Oregon Education association. Mrs. McNary also is serving as a Marion county delegate to the OEA for two years.

Mrs. Fern Foster, also an instructor at Hubbard, was elected as a member of the advisory committee of the OEA.

# Classes Give Nurses Training in Polio

The Salem Memorial hospital medical and nursing staffs are sponsoring a poliomyelitis training program for practical nurses.

Those desiring to take the work must have a certificate from the adult vocational education department, and be a licensed practical nurse, or present evidence of similar preparation at time of registration. Registration should be completed at the hospital by March 10. The registration fee is \$2.

Classes will be held on Tuesday and Thursday from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m., or day hours for those who find it more convenient. Classes begin Tuesday, March 16.

# President Retained By Dairy Co-Op

PORTLAND — Arthur P. Ireland of Forest Grove, Ore., will continue as president of the Dairy Co-operative Assn.

Others re-elected at the organization's convention here Tuesday were Henry Hagg, Reedville, vice president; Dolly Rathke, secretary; and Marvin Davidson, treasurer.

Charlie Ferguson, Woodland, Wash., and Walter Wendt, Orchards, Wash., were named to the board of directors.

Arizona produced 394,279 tons of copper valued at 227 million dollars in 1953.

# Conifers Suitable for Place In Pacific Northwest Gardens

By MARK M. TAYLOR

The pineapple, years ago, was the symbol of hospitality in the Deep South, but pine cones, actually, were responsible for the tradition! In Winter a basket of pine cones was kept by the fireside. When a guest came a handful was put on the fire to add greater warmth and comfort. Thus, the pine cone was a symbol of hospitality. Then developed the custom of hanging a branch of pine cones over a doorway arch. In time the symbol of hospitality was carved on the archway, eventually the shape being changed so that it resembled a pineapple rather than a pine cone.

In the Pacific Northwest, as in the South, the coniferous evergreens abound and definitely assume a place in the home garden. Of the many coniferous evergreens suitable for home garden attention, here are a few of the better ones:

China Fir or Monkey Tree—good for specimen planting, screening or border planting. Does well either in sun or part shade.

Cypress—Rapid growing, stands full sun. Becomes quite tall. Used for height accents in landscape plantings.

Red Cedar (Juniper)—Foliage of young plants almost entirely different from mature plants. Varieties obtainable afford choice of spreading varieties, tall or columnar sorts, bluish foliage and others. The spreading type, Pfitzer's Juniper, is used for low foundations, rock gardens, terraces and walk intersections.

Incense Cedar—A tall, large evergreen of bright, rich green color.

Spruce—A giant of the forests for which Oregon's coastal area is quite famed. Koster's Blue Spruce is a handsome lawn specimen.

Yew—The Yew is an ancient tree cultivated in Europe, the Yew bows being a popular weapon in Old England. Yews are a popular evergreen for landscape planting, for accent points, for screens, hedges and so on. The deep green foliage and symmetrical growth are its commanding features. Yews thrive in rich, moist soil and do well in partial shade, hence their use in foundation plantings close to buildings. Contrary to a popular belief, Yews do stand

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