

Transplanting Trees

THE transplanting of a tree, whether it be small or large, usually checks its growth, and while this check is not always detrimental, yet it usually reduces the total growth for the succeeding two or three years. This general check is caused by the loss of roots which takes place in digging the trees.

It matters little how carefully a tree may be dug, it will suffer a severe loss of roots and in many cases from one-half to three-fourths of its entire root system, and practically all of its feeding roots will be lost. It is impossible to exercise too much care in the digging and transplanting of trees and especially in dry or severe climates.

The time or season of the year for transplanting deciduous trees is governed by the development of the tree, the condition of the soil and the weather that is apt to follow transplanting. Many trees may be successfully transplanted at any time during their dormant or leafless period, while others require that transplanting be done at certain seasons of the year. If the trees are fully matured, the soil moist, not wet, and the winters not too severe, one may feel safe in fall planting. If the soil is wet and poorly prepared and the trees are not well ripened off, it is safer to plant in early spring.

Deciduous trees should be planted from one to two inches deeper than they grew in the nursery.

Thoroughly pulverized, moist earth should be worked in among the roots until the hole is about half full, and then this earth should be tamped until it is solid. The tamping of earth around the roots of the trees is one of the most important features of transplanting trees.

Water may be applied to the hole either the day before the trees are planted or after the hole is half full of earth, but if the soil is moist it is usually best not to use any water. The upper half of the soil that is filled with the hole may be left loose or lightly tamped, and the surface left loose and finely pulverized. This will serve as a mulch as well as take up any water that may fall on the surface.

Evergreen trees are more difficult to transplant successfully than deciduous trees, but if the proper time be selected, the trees properly handled while they are out of the ground, the manner of planting be not too faulty, and the care they receive after transplanting be reasonable, one may usually expect success.

With the proper care, an evergreen tree may be transplanted any month during the year. Probably the most favorable time for transplanting evergreens is in the spring. Trees transplanted just after they have started into growth, start at once to grow and in many cases do not receive a perceptible shock. Fall planting has been successfully used in many localities, and where all conditions are favorable it is a safe venture.

Large deep holes with plenty of moist earth in the bottom should be provided for any tree. During transplanting the roots must never become dried either by the wind or from the sun.

Another very important phase in tree transplanting is to make the soil very, very firm around its roots. If the soil is well prepared and in proper condition, it is impossible to make it too firm. More newly transplanted evergreens die on account of the planter failing to make the soil firm about the roots than from any other single cause. This is the only safe way to exclude the air from the roots, and unless this is done failure is sure to follow.

Thinning Grapes

MANY otherwise suitable grapes do not ship well on account of the excessive compactness of the bunch. A compact bunch is difficult to pack without injury and cannot be freed from imperfect berries without spoiling good berries.

This excessive compactness can be prevented before the berries are one-third grown. Thinning, moreover, increases the size of the berries, hastens ripening, promotes coloring and lessens some forms of sunburn. The practice is regularly followed with success by many growers of Tokay, Black Morocco and other grapes, where bunches are usually too compact. While apparently costly, the expense is often more than

counterbalanced by the saving in trimming of the ripe grapes. The increase of quality thus becomes a net gain.

The bunches are thinned at any time after the berries have set and before they have reached one-third their mature size.

No bunches are removed, but only a certain proportion of the berries of each bunch. The number of berries to be removed will depend upon how compact the unthinned bunches usually become. In general, it will vary from one-third to one-half of the total number.

The thinning is effected by cutting out several of the side branchlets of the bunch. The branchlets should be removed principally from the part of the bunch which has most tendency to compactness, usually the upper part. The work can be done very rapidly, as no great care is necessary in preserving the shape of the bunch. However irregular or one-sided the bunch looks immediately after thinning, it will round out and become regular before ripening.

A long, narrow-bladed knife or a pair of grape-trimming scissors can be used conveniently for this work.

TO DESTROY WEEDS IN WALKS.

ROCK SALT or blue vitriol is a cheap and effective agent for destroying weeds in walks, garden paths, etc. The best method of procedure is to boil the salt or blue vitriol in water, one pound to the gallon, and apply the solu-

tion boiling hot, with a watering pot that has a spreading nozzle. This will keep the weeds and worms away for two or three years. Put one pound to the square yard at first and afterwards a weaker solution may be applied when required. Gas liquor is another cheap medium, but has an offensive odor and may injure the roots of trees if carelessly used.

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