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RECOMMENDATIONS ON THINNING APPLES

(By Gordon G. Brown)

The apple grower should now proceed rapidly to thin his fruit. The so-called June drop has been over with for some time and there is practically nothing to gain in waiting longer.

If an apple is of such a character or is present in such abundance as to make thinning practical the quicker it is removed the better. During some seasons, of course, this rule would not apply. It has often been found practical to wait until apple scab control was assured, etc. This year, however, the grower has the situation fairly in hand. Apples from now on should increase in size very rapidly if they are to make four or four and one-half tier. Unless a tree is quite young and especially vigorous such growth will not be attained if it is overloaded, even with favorable growing conditions.

In looking at the subject of thinning, information seems to indicate that the point of view should be largely centered upon the crop of this season rather than that of subsequent seasons. In other words the aim should be to secure a maximum crop of best quality the number of apples upon the tree will afford rather than to unduly sacrifice fruit in thinning this season in order to insure a larger crop next year or subsequent years. Data collected by the West Virginia experiment station seems to indicate that excessive thinning to induce more regular annual bearing of trees has not in all cases accomplished its purpose. This is not to suggest that no influence is exerted on subsequent crops since such an inference would be manifestly unreasonable and contrary to general experience. If a tree is allowed to overbear it nearly always exhibits a tendency to short crops and weakened vitality, especially during the following year. On the other hand, the point which it is desired to bring out is that there is little to support the idea that more regular annual bearing can be established by removing more fruit than the tree is capable of growing to best quality.

As a rule it is doubtful if a tree can mature to best quality even one fruit to every spur. This would apply particularly to older trees and less so to young ones. However, in few cases is the tree called upon to carry such a heavy burden. In many cases a good crop is insured if one spur in three or four bears fruit.

Many growers are unduly alarmed over the heavy drop of fruit. In many cases there has been a heavy drop, but in the majority of orchards where a good bloom prevailed a fair to good crop is assured. Where Newtowns, for example, have thinned themselves excessively it is a good practice in many cases to leave two apples to a spur, but this should not apply where a number of spurs are close together. In this case thin one to a spur even though the crop is light. Fruit which is too closely crowded will not size up properly even though the total crop be light. As a rule Spitzenburgs should be thinned one to a spur. In the case of Blackas as a rule thin themselves in the June drop. With Jonathans thin one to a spur.

Remember that the market is persistently calling for larger sized fruit. Systematic and careful thinning pays and pays well, in that it increases size, assists in better color, saves picking and grading costs and puts a higher percentage of extra fancy fruit in the box.

STRAWBERRY NOTES

(By Gordon G. Brown)

The strawberry harvesting season will soon be over and the grower must turn his attention once more to problems of fertilization, cultivation, topping, irrigation, etc.

To those who desire more complete notes regarding the fertilizer problem for this crop in the Hood River valley, I would refer to my bulletin, "Fertilizer Tests for Strawberries," Bulletin No. 159, of the Oregon Agricultural College. This is a summary of results of experiments extending over three years on the redshot soils at Dec. This bulletin may be secured either through the Hood River Experiment Station or from the Agricultural College at Corvallis.

A good deal of data has already been collected regarding the use of commercial fertilizers for this crop as far as spring applications are concerned. Little well established data is yet available bearing upon the subject of applications after the strawberry harvest. However, the information thus far collected seems to support the idea that applications put on after the berry harvest give larger yields and firmer berries than applications in early spring or at blooming time. This applies especially to the use of nitrate of soda and sulphate of ammonia, both of which are high in their readily available nitrogen content.

The aim in this brief article is to help the grower judge this matter for himself. I would recommend where plants are somewhat lacking in vigor, a condition which may have been brought about by an insufficient amount of soil fertility, lack of irrigation, cultivation or by advanced age, that a small application of nitrate of soda be put on soon and thoroughly hoed in. One hundred and fifty to 200 pounds per acre would be sufficient if properly applied. In some cases 100 pounds per acre could be considered sufficient.

This may be followed by another application next spring of a similar amount. Whether or not a second application is necessary would depend largely upon the response secured from the first. The great problem that confronts the berry grower is to get a sufficiently large crop to insure financial success. This means many blossoms maturing into large fruit. On the other hand, unless great care is exercised in fertilization, especially with nitrate, there is a danger from soft berries of poor shipping quality. During a short season when extremely hot weather prevails, berries thus grown do not stand up well. However, there are few cases where at least one application of such fertilizer will not pay, and as already suggested, the information at hand appears to favor applications after berry harvest. The evidence supporting this is not final, however.

Another problem upon which the station is working is that regarding the best time of topping and irrigating. Some growers withhold topping from two weeks to a month after the end of the berry harvest. Others top the plants immediately and continue irrigation. Several growers claim to have checked up this matter pretty closely and prefer the latter plan. In no case allow the plants to dry out.

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Castellucci on Western Tour

Famous Band Director
Brings Concert Band to
Chautauqua on Fourth Day



Castellucci, master director of a master band, comes on the fourth day of Chautauqua with the big musical attraction of the week. Castellucci's Concert Band has been a headline attraction on Eastern Chautauquas for several years and this year make their first Western tour. Signor Castellucci, director, is one of the recognized band leaders of first rank in the country. He was educated at the famous International School in Rome, where the great composer, Mussorgi, was director. His standing in Italy is attested through his appearance by royal command before the King of Italy, Victor Emmanuel, at the Quirinale Palace.

Boss Getchari Morrison, one of the country's foremost dramatic readers, will appear both afternoon and evening with Castellucci's Concert Band. Her tour last summer over a middle western circuit with this same organization was one of the biggest Chautauqua successes of the year.

GROWERS WARNED AGAINST FIRE BLIGHT

(By Leroy Childs)

Fire blight has been found doing much damage to apples and pears just over the ridge in sections to the north and east of Hood River valley. As these sections are not more than 10 or 12 miles in a direct line away from the Hood River section it is important that all orchardists keep a close lookout for the disease.

Fire blight without exception is the most serious disease of pears and apples and thus far Hood River has escaped its ravages. This freedom from the disease can only be maintained by keeping a close watch for the disease and removing infections while they are few in numbers. Control can only be obtained by cutting out and destroying diseased parts of the plants. The numerous branches which have been killed by anthracnose make an inspection for blight very difficult. All dead anthracnose limbs should be removed at once in order that a close watch for blight may be maintained.

Never cut blight without using a disinfectant. For this use corrosive sublimate 1-1,000. Tools should be dipped before and after making each cut. Keep the solution in glass or stone jars, as its effectiveness is destroyed if placed in metal containers.

Auto Park a Municipal Need

(From the Oregonian)

While urging the need of airplane landing fields let us also remember that there are more than 50,000 automobiles in Oregon, that roads are being improved in every direction and that some good sized towns have not yet provided automobile camping parks.

The tent roll on the runnyside is more the rule than the exception today with the through traveler. If he finds a clean park in which to pitch his home for the night he goes on with a kindly feeling for the place. Generally, too, he leaves some dollars behind with the local merchant. In the absence of a camping park he stops elsewhere. It may be in the nearby town that has one or it may be along the road or in some farmer's field.

An automobile camping park should be more than one in name. A vacant lot full of rocks and bums designated as a camping spot does more harm to the community than good. It should be ample in space, attractive in appearance, water should be available and it should be kept clean and orderly.

Availability of such spots to the tourist promotes greater travel, which in turn promotes a more general acquaintance among the people, a better knowledge of the state and a spirit of cooperation in worthy activities that have nothing to do with automobiles or travel. Many Oregon towns have already made adequate provision. The others should fall in line.

Willard P. Andrus is Dead

News of the death Sunday, in Portland, his home for a number of years, of Willard P. Andrus, has touched with grief members of the Hood River Commandery of Knights Templar, which Mr. Andrus, a former local resident, was instrumental in organizing. The Commandery will adopt resolutions of respect, according to Commander Laraway. Mr. Andrus, who is survived by a daughter, Mrs. Clarence N. Swager, of Minneapolis, Minn., and two sons, Rev. J. C. Andrus, and Col. E. P. Andrus, of Syracuse, N. Y., was 69 years old.

Seeking relief from asthma, Mr. Andrus, formerly a druggist, came to the Coast from Minneapolis a number of years ago. About 11 years ago he came to Hood River, hoping to be benefited by the climate. While here he was associated for a short time with Jesse Nichol in the undertaking business.

Mr. Andrus was in Hood River about three years. Active as a Mason he was perhaps responsible to a greater extent than any other in securing the local Commandery. A change of climate again becoming advisable, Mr. Andrus returned to Portland. For the past several years his time was chiefly devoted to Masonic work. He was one of the principal organizers of Imperial Lodge, A. F. & A. M., becoming the lodge's secretary.

Wenatchee Crop Outlook

According to H. L. Geary, of Underwood, president of the Fruit Growers' Agency, who was in Yakima the first of the week for conference with Yakima members of the Wenatchee apple crop this season will total 10,000 carloads.

The output of the White Salmon district Mr. Geary estimated would be 250 cars, including all principal varieties, except Delicious, which dropped heavily.

The Spokane orchards have suffered some from unseasonable cold weather, but the district will have an output of 1050 to 1200 cars, Mr. Geary estimates.

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