

California Associated Farmer

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PRUNE THE TREES NOW.

Prune growers should not postpone the pruning of their trees a day after the fruit is all off. If the leaves have not yet dropped the pruning may be done to much better advantage than when the trees are bare, as every dying or sickly branch may be located more readily and the cutting back into the live healthy wood made sure and the general thinning of the trees—and most prune trees need thinning—made more effective by reason of the presence of the foliage.

The man who gets his pruning done and the brush and wood off the ground before the winter rains is fortunate. This will also permit of preparing the ground for the sowing of a corn crop and the sooner that is done the better in order to get as large a growth as possible during the winter months.

THE RECORDS OF LIFE.

Baby Books—Bride's Books—Wedding Books.

To keep a record of the doings and sayings of her children, together with photos at frequent intervals from babyhood to maturity, must be one of the most pleasing of a mother's home duties.

Notes of the various incidents in a baby's life such as his first tooth, when he began to creep and walk, his first word, his funny, or wise, sayings, and many other things that occur as the writing progresses, will prove to be interesting reading in later years, not only to the parents but to the grown-up child.

A Bride's Book.

A nicely decorated book for the bride in which pages are set apart for pictures of the newly-wedded pair, of the house in which they are married and of the house to which they go to make a home, lists of guests and wedding presents, notes of the wedding trip if one is had, etc. These books in nice editions may be had at some book stores, and some all hand-made with artistically decorated pages in water colors.

A Wedding Book.

We have before us another book which can not be found in stores or bought with money. It is called a wedding book.

The record begins with the engagement day and following are pages appropriately and artistically decorated to conform to the subject thereon inscribed.

Pictures of the bride and groom, the attendants, the house in which the ceremony was performed, names of guests, list of presents, the new home, and later other homes, the marriage certificate, groups at celebrations of wedding days, their signatures and newspaper reports; photos of the children at different ages, marriages of the children, and pictures of the grandchildren, and photos of the old folks at intervals as the years go by.

Such books are well worth making. They bind the entire family closely together and create a loyalty to the family name, all of which is elevating in character and entirely worth while.

Mr. Albert F. Eitor of Southern Humboldt, county, has tested 600 varieties of apples and pronounces the Northfield the best. He will show apples and berries at the Panama-Pacific Exposition and decorate his exhibit with his hybrid Columbine.

One hundred people are employed canning beans at Upper Lake, Lake county. The output is about 48,000 cans daily.

BEAUTIFYING CALIFORNIA HIGHWAYS.

Planting Trees and Flowers.

The dry season now passing has been ideal for the study of conditions relating to highway beautification. The behavior of the different varieties of trees and their value for shade and ornamental purposes have been put to a most severe test, and their adaptability for the various locations, where character of soil, proximity of orchard trees or lack of moisture may affect their growth.

It will pay anyone who contemplates planting trees by the roadside to do a little looking for themselves and also take the matter up with the county forestry board if there be one in his county. Counties like Tulare for instance, have a forestry board who have spent and are spending much time in studying the varieties of trees and shrubs to plant in various parts of that county. This board has absolute control of the matter and Tulare county must be congratulated on being far-sighted enough to go about the work of county beautification in the very best way.

Close Planting Not Desirable.

The error of close planting of roadside trees becomes more and more apparent as the years go by. Unless an arch of foliage that will produce perfect shade across a road is practicable and desirable the trees should be so far apart that each tree will be able to get its full growth and develop those individual characteristics that all trees have, when given an opportunity.

Some trees will lend themselves readily to either mode of planting. The sycamore for instance, is very desirable for either, but should be planted either quite close—ten or fifteen feet—or not less than 100 feet if the tree is to be allowed to develop its characteristic beauty.

The planting of palms at short intervals is also an error. Palms should not be used at all where a shady avenue is desired as the beauty of a palm tree depends on its individuality, location and, we may say, isolation.

The common California fan palm is being planted to some extent on roadsides—and while there are other palms much more desirable—it becomes ornamental when planted far enough apart so that the general view is not obstructed to any great extent. One hundred to 150 feet apart for palms is quite as important from a decorative standpoint as is the same distance for large trees which spread 75 or 100 feet when fully grown and are useful for shade.

Flowers Important as Trees.

The planting of flowers and ornamental shrubs along the highways is quite as important as the planting of trees, and all societies, clubs or individuals who are interested in the beautification of California may feel confident that the good work which has been done the past few years has not been wasted.

The beautification microbe has become established in the minds of the people of the State.

A traveller in almost any part of the State may see evidences of its work in the planting of trees and flowers by roadsides and about the homes, the cleaning up of walks and highways, the fixing up of fences or taking away entirely where practicable, the increasing sentiment against the marring of natural beauty with advertising signs, the dumping of junk and garbage by the roadsides, etc.

No better time than now to decide what planting to do this coming season. Petunias still hold their place as the most desirable flower for roadside planting. In the face of this dry year which has put them to a severe test they still hold up their heads and look cheerful.

The vexed question as to a good variety for shady places has not yet been solved but trials of several varieties may yet find the right one. The verbenas has been suggested as a desirable plant for dry, shady places, covering the ground with foliage and blooming as freely as may be.

The estimates of the apple crop by the Fruit Distributor of Portland is about half of last year's crop. California is way short the principal district, Watsonville, having only a quarter crop.

Ventura county's crop of beets, beans and walnuts is normal. The beets test high in sugar.

FALL IRRIGATION OF DECIDUOUS TREES.

That fall irrigation of fruit trees is sometimes injurious is evidenced by their behavior afterward.

Some fruit growers have held to the belief and practiced their irrigation of trees in the fall to—as they say—swell the fruit buds so that they will produce more vigorous blossoms the following spring, and consequently insure a better setting of fruit.

This course has been followed principally with cherries and prunes.

Up to the present year no serious injury has resulted, possibly because in the case of the prune the irrigation has been necessarily postponed until the fruit has all been gathered when of course the trees have become dormant.

Trees Blooming in August.

The present year, however, conditions have changed. Two dry years in succession have forced to the limit the power of many orchards in the drier upland districts to withstand drought and in many cases the leaves have dropped the latter part of August.

Thinking to reinforce the trees' vitality by irrigation the water has been put on with the rather surprising result of forcing the trees into bloom and also in some instances to start a new growth.

Unquestionably this practice has been very injurious to the trees and without doubt will have a weakening effect instead of a stimulating one, as was expected, on next year's growth and production of fruit.

Late Irrigation Questionable.

The irrigation of deciduous fruit trees when the tree and the fruit is in a growing condition is a practice that has in no wise been decided to be for the best results. That enough moisture should be supplied so that the roots of the tree may continue to discharge their functions until the crop has matured is easily understood, but that the application of more moisture immediately after the trees have borne a crop, completed their growth and become dormant root and branch, will be beneficial, is questionable.

This is a matter that all fruitgrowers should study carefully as it may mean the transferring of the balance to credit side of the ledger when in the case of very dry seasons it has been otherwise.

WE WANT TO KNOW.

We are very desirous of knowing if the California Farmer is a welcome and profitable visitor in the thousands of farm homes to which it is sent each week. Has it during the period that you have received it contained any items of news or other information that have contributed in any degree to the happiness of farm life?

Have you found in the Farmer any general information regarding farm methods, or any recitals of farm experience that have helped you to accomplish more with less effort, or do better work with the same effort?

Has your reading of the Farmer increased your interest in farm work or your love for growing things in field, orchard or garden?

Can you recall that the visits of the Farmer to your home has in any way created in you a better appreciation of the independence and healthfulness of farm life as compared with other callings?

Does your home, the house and its surroundings, the domestic arrangements, the enjoyment of your home as a home in its true sense, mean more to you since the Farmer has visited you?

Has the Farmer contributed to your financial betterment in even a small degree?

We ask these questions of our readers for a purpose. We wish to make all these conditions a fact in the lives of all who read the Farmer, and ask your help in setting us right if in any way we have failed to accomplish our purpose. We ask the hearty co-operation of all our readers to attain the results enumerated above. Write us freely. Advise. Criticise. Suggest. In helping us you will also help yourselves. Write to the editor, 24 West Santa Clara street, San Jose.

The prospect is good for a normal olive crop, also for a higher price. One Oroville grower has sold his crop at \$165 per ton.

MAKE A WINTER GARDEN.

Many Varieties of Vegetables May Be Grown Successfully During the Winter Months.

It seems a little queer to talk about winter in California, yet the term is used unthinkingly to designate the cool and rainy months of the year when deciduous trees are bare, and the shortened days remind one of real wintertime in the old home. But when we look out upon the green grass and growing gardens we awaken to a realization that winter in California is only a season of slower growth of vegetation and less sunshine. Also a little mud as an inconvenience instead of dust.

While a little earlier preparation for the winter garden would have enhanced its growth, still it is not too late, for to be successful requires experience and perseverance.

Plant Frequently.

A good plan is to plant several varieties of garden vegetables, but not too much of any one kind at a time, repeating the planting every few weeks. Such vegetables as carrots, beets, turnips, onions, cabbage, cauliflower, radishes, etc., will not be seriously retarded by a little frost. They will do better, however, if when large enough the spaces between the plants are thickly mulched with manure from the horse stables. It is also a good plan to always plant more than sufficient for the family needs for there are many ways of disposing of surplus vegetables and if within reach of a free market, the garden overflow may be made to bring in a nice little income and better yet, if there be boys and girls in the family the garden will furnish them a pleasant and educational occupation.

Cheese Cloth Protection.

Winter vegetables are all the more welcome on account of the lack of fresh fruits, such as peaches, plums, apricots, cherries, etc., that are so plentiful in summer. Of course apples are with us in a fresh state all the year, but we need vegetables, too, and should not spare the expense of preparing for them.

A cheese cloth covering such as is used for protecting the chrysanthemum beds will help along the growth of the vegetables, protecting them from light frosts and holding the sun heat long into the night. This covering will also protect the tender plants from cold winds and from birds who are very fond of young vegetables.

Direction of Rows.

If the vegetable plot is not covered it is always best to plant in rows running north and south. Planted thus the sun reaches both sides of the plants, morning and afternoon, and at noon being in line the plants shade each other somewhat in the rows and still get the light and warmth.

Whether to plant each variety in long rows or a larger number of short rows in a matter of taste or may be governed by the shape of the garden plot.

ALFALFA A BALANCE WHEEL.

Alfalfa growing seems to be a safe and profitable branch of farming in California.

It is estimated that an average yield is one and one-half tons per acre each cutting, thus with five cuttings 7 1/2 tons of alfalfa hay will be secured.

The cost is little more than the outlay for water and cutting and at an average price of \$10 per ton on the farm without baling it would seem to be a good crop to raise to sell or to feed to stock.

The acreage seeded to alfalfa in California has, increased to a point where its steady output by reason of irrigation has had a steadying effect on the hay market.

In Central California the crop of grain hay fell far short. This meant the importation of hay from other parts of the State to supply the large fruit-growing sections and prices went soaring.

In Santa Clara county \$25 per ton was asked and paid for best quality barley hay. The same quality in one month's time fell to \$15.

The substitution of alfalfa hay was unquestionably the cause of the drop in price.