

**AROUND THE FARM** BY DON COIN WALROD  
County Extension Agent

Beautification of the home was a subject that came up recently at a Toastmasters meeting at St. Helens. This topic is of interest to urban and rural home-owners alike. We feel that spring is a particularly appropriate time in which to consider landscaping and home beautification, as it is still early enough to make plantings of perennial trees, shrubs and flowers and the annuals can still be planted for some little time.

Often the home owner, whether rural or urban, does not have a great deal of time in which to maintain an elaborately developed yard, nor spend the time each year getting annuals planted. For those folks we would like to suggest that the main consideration be given to a good lawn and to plantings of perennial shrubs that do not require a great deal of care. In this way the home can have an attractive setting and still give the owner a maximum of freedom.

A bulletin that is particularly appropriate at this time and one that should be of value to anyone doing landscaping and development of a home is "Thirteen Considerations in Landscaping Your Home." This new bulletin is written especially for the three northwest states of Oregon, Washington, and Idaho.

This is the time of year that we get calls from home gardeners asking what they can do to the heavy clay soil in their flower beds and garden to make it more productive and easier to work.

Often in the rush of house building, the basement clay is spread around the house and later becomes the flower beds. Or sometimes the home is situated on a soil type that is naturally very heavy and difficult to manage.

Digging out the clay and replacing it with a good loam soil is one method of solving the problem, but it is usually quite expensive and it involves a lot of difficult, hard work. Adding large quantities of sawdust over a period of time can do a great deal toward improving and mellowing heavy clay soils.

Two precautions are suggested.

First don't try to do the whole job in one year. A top dressing of two or three inches of sawdust can be worked in every year much easier than 12 inches the first year. Second, it takes fertilizer, mainly nitrogen, to rot the sawdust. While the sawdust is rotting it will actually make the soil poorer, so it always pays to apply fertilizer with the sawdust.

Sawdust also has some other worthwhile uses. A sawdust mulch on gardens, and shrubbery can reduce the sprinkling requirements of these crops or plants one-half. Additional hard work in the form of weed control can be avoided with the sawdust at the same time.

When applying sawdust for this purpose, spread two or three inches over the area, but do not work it into the surface. Annual weeds are fairly well controlled, but such weeds as quackgrass and Canada thistle will grow through the mulch. The added advantages of soil improvement are accomplished when the sawdust is worked into the soil in the fall.

Sawdust can have some important applications for the farm fields, too. And apparently it makes little difference what kind of sawdust, as far as the kinds that are available in this area. The sawdust adds organic matter, improving the tilth of heavy soils and the water holding capacity of light soils. At the same time fertility would eventually be added after the sawdust had decayed.

A recent report on experimental work with sawdust at Oregon State college brings out some interesting information. "When incorporated at 10 tons per acre to a depth of 6 to 7 inches, sawdust of Douglas-fir, western hemlock, and western red cedar were found to increase significantly the yields of sunflower plants on Chehalis silty-clay loam soil without added available nitrogen. The same was true of alkali-extracted cedar chips and Springfield lignin. Without added nitrogen, Ponderosa pine sawdust and cedar top produced slight decreases in yield while rye straw was markedly depressive even with ammonium nitrate.

"As a general conclusion it may be stated that coniferous sawdust and other wood wastes incorporated in the soil and beneficial to microbial activity and plant growth. Moderate applications, not exceeding 10 tons per acre (dry basis) produce only minor and temporary depletion of available nitrogen. At heavier rates of sawdust application, additional nitrogen must be added.

"These conclusions apply similarly to sawdust and other wood wastes used as mulches. Although the organic matter is on the soil in this case, the water-soluble organic constituents will leach downward and require some nitrogen for decomposition."

The best information that we can secure indicates that a ton of sawdust weighs about 1 1/2 tons per unit. Thus two tons per acre would be just under three 2 1/2 unit loads of sawdust per acre.

**AROUND HOME...**

By Helen Sellie  
Home Extension Agent

Several of our Columbia county seamstresses in the Better Dress Workshops are finding that nylon must be "handled with care" to assure success.

Stitching of sheer nylon should be done with nylon thread. For the home seamstress there is only one size of nylon thread available. This is size A which compares to number 70 cotton but has greater strength.

Nylon thread comes in a variety of sixty colors. The average spool contains 100 yards.

In sewing with nylon thread, cut the thread from the spool and use a shorter length than when sewing with cotton thread. Always cut nylon thread, and don't break it. Similar to nylon material, thread unravels easily when broken.

When doing machine stitching with nylon thread it is important to use a sharp needle with no roughness. A number 11 needle for an all-nylon fabric and number 14 for medium weight fabrics.

The upper tension should be about half as tight as for sewing with cotton thread. Skipped stitches are sometimes caused by too tight tension.

Members of the Fern Hill home extension unit are also planning a re-holstery workshop later on this spring.

Some tips they might wish to consider are as follows:

Colorless nail polish applied very lightly will prevent the upholstery goods from raveling too far. Women in the dress workshops are finding this same trick is helpful when making button-holes and buckles. Be careful of using too much polish, however, or spilling a drop on the rest of the material.

To prevent rubberized upholstery fabrics from sticking to the sewing machine, sew through a strip of cambric placed on the wrong side of the fabric.

Rub the bottom of the presser or cording foot with paraffin when using the machine for sewing leather or leather substitutes. The paraffin lubricates the thread, helping form better stitches.

In farm homes, the center of family life is the kitchen, according to Margaret Tuller, Oregon State college extension rural housing specialist.

She suggests that rural families who are considering building or remodeling houses for modern living keep in mind the importance of the kitchen.

A survey in Pennsylvania showed the three most-used rooms in conventional farm homes are kitchen, living room and dining room, she said. The kitchen was by far the most used room of the house, not only in time spent there but in activities carried on.

Families used kitchens not only for preparing meals and preserving food, but also for eating, ironing, washing, child care, reading, sewing, keeping books, studying, visiting, listening to the radio, family recreation and resting.

The larger the kitchen, the more time the family spent there, Mrs. Tuller reported. An outside door in the kitchen also increased its use.

Unlike kitchens, which got most use in summer, living rooms were used more in the winter.

Many families get by without dining rooms, Mrs. Tuller noted. Of the families covered in the survey, a third had no dining room. For those who had one, dining was not the important use of the room. Mentioned most frequently were sewing—probably because the big table was very handy for cutting patterns—and play and recreation.

The rural housing specialist said the survey indicates the dining room is not an indispensable room, but that if it is omitted the kitchen needs are more careful planning to take care of the family meals and other activities.

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MOTOR FREIGHT

**Unit Lesson for March Studied**

Plain cakes were made fancy at the March meeting of the Mist-Nehalem extension unit. The meeting was held at the Birkenfeld gym Friday, March 12. Mrs. Buddie Larson was hostess. Mrs. Fred Udey demonstrated cake decorating with roses, forget-me-nots, sweet peas, bells and many other things. The results were taken home to the families.

The unit voted to contribute \$3.00 to help with the painting on the dorm, and later on hopes to contribute to the kitchen fund. A report was given on political parties, platforms, state, county and national conventions and committees. Home accidents were discussed and remedies and precautions mentioned. The Mist-Nehalem Unit will have charge of the salads and salad dressings at the Homemaker's Festival in May.

The next meeting will be at Mrs. Chas. Sundland's home and the lesson will be "Care of Rugs and Upholstered Furniture," on April 9. Mrs. L. O. Clossner and Mrs. Chas. Sundland will be the project leaders. Everyone is welcome.

A scriptural memorial was read by Mrs. Norman Hanson for Isabelle Berg.

**4-H Scholarship Talked by Unit**

Cake decorating was the subject of the Timber route extension unit meeting at the Vernonia grange hall March 9. Mrs. Ray Stanley reported on world citizenship and reminded members to bring articles and pictures on Mexico for the scrap book.

Mrs. Joe Johnson reported on program planning and distributed ballots for a choice of subjects for next year's unit meetings. The unit discussed the sponsorship of a scholarship for 4-H and planned a food sale for April 24.

Mrs. Joe Baker reported on legislation and led the discussion and Mrs. Emil Messing demonstrated the art of cake decorating. Mrs. Richard Jensen and Mrs. Joe Jensen were hostesses. The next meeting will be at the grange hall April 13.

**WEEKLY FOREST MARKET REPORT . . .**

Issued Weekly by Extension Department, OSC and USDA

Oregon State College — Peeler logs were up \$5 a thousand in the Eugene area last week. Other prices were generally unchanged. A look back over the past several years shows that log prices establish themselves during January and February generally hold till early summer. The seasonal decline has begun as early as May and as late as July. The drop has amounted to \$3 to \$7 a thousand and usually ends in late summer or early fall.

Weather has had a lot to do with the timing of these price declines, and probably will affect them again this year. If loggers can get into the woods pretty soon, the seasonal drop could come early. On the other hand, a wet spring may hold prices up for quite a while, since mills need enough logs to supply lumber during the main construction season.

SAWLOGS: No. 2 second-growth Douglas fir sawlogs at Willamette valley mills last week ranged from \$30 to \$42 a thousand, mostly \$36 to \$40. No. 3's were \$25 to \$30. Long camp-run second-growth was mostly \$35 to \$38. Short logs were \$2 to \$5 less. Eight-foot logs were \$14 to \$16.50 a cord, or \$30 to \$38 a thousand.

Old-growth sawlogs ranged from \$38 to \$50 a thousand for No. 2's and \$25 to \$40 for No. 3's. Peeler logs sold over a \$30 range in the northern Willamette valley. Top prices were \$85, \$95 and \$110 on water scale. Mills in the Eugene area paid \$70, \$85, and \$95 a thousand.

POLES AND PILING: Forty to 50-foot barkie poles and long piling were in good demand at a few Willamette valley pole yards. Forty-five foot barkies ranged from 14 to 20 cents a lineal foot, depending on diameters.

PULPWOOD: All pulp species were \$15 a cord at St. Helens. There was no open pulpwood market in the Willamette valley. OTHER FOREST PRODUCTS: Swordfern was 14 cents a bunch. Dry cascara bark was 12 cents a pound.

This report, based on information supplied by the State Board of Forestry and other sources, was

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prepared by F. H. Dahl, Extension Agricultural Economist.

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