

SUCCESSFUL CHERRY CULTURE.

Soil for Cherries.



It is generally accepted that the cherry tree requires a porous, well underdrained soil. As my farm is nearly all a slaty gravel, and the surface hilly, I have cherry trees growing on nearly all parts of it. I incline to the opinion that the Morellos and Dukes, or sour cherries, require somewhat different soil and treatment from those suitable for the Hearts and Bigarreaus. For an experiment, I set a few of each on low heavy ground, where water could be found three feet from the surface. The sweet cherry trees are healthy and vigorous and bear heavily, but the fruit is inclined to rot more than on higher ground. The sour kinds soon died out.

About Culture.—The sour cherry trees should receive continuous clean culture. They then mature heavy crops, even when young. My sweet cherry trees I have set along fences and at the ends of the rows in my vineyard. For the first four or five years, the earth is kept mellow around them, and they are mulched with strawy manure each spring, until they have obtained a diameter of six or eight inches, the trunk of each near the ground is wrapped with tar paper every fall to protect it from mice. A few days' neglect of this after the first snow-fall caused the loss of several trees. After four or five years, the sod is allowed to form around them; but the fall wrapping is continued till the bark becomes thick and rough. When forced by high culture, the sweet cherries are prone to crack the bark and prematurely decay.

Shall we Manure?—So long as the sweet cherry trees appear thrifty, I apply no manure. If the tree seems to fail for want of nourishment, stable manure, wood ashes or potash salts are applied. The sour cherry trees are treated precisely like peach trees, with light dressings of stable manure and kainit or muriate of potash every year.

Pruning to Shape.—The shape of the sweet cherry should be left almost entirely to nature. Necessary pruning should be done while the tree is young, during the first two or three years after setting. Unless made necessary by injury, no large limbs should be cut, as doing so is apt to produce a rotten spot. Most varieties of the Morello class require annual thinning as much as peach trees.

What Varieties?—I know of no locality where any variety of the sweet cherry can be relied on as a sure cropper. Perhaps Downer's Late Red comes the nearest to it, as it seldom rots on the tree, and is of good quality. White Ox-heart or Yellow Spanish, Napoleon Bigarreau, Black Tartarian, and Elkhorn or Tradescant's Black Heart are good market varieties. The Windsor is highly