

INFORMATION FOR FRUIT-GROWERS.

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LOCALITY.

For a commercial orchard it goes without saying that, for all reasons, localities near lines of transportation should be selected. Economy in shipping and the saving in handling of the fruit must necessarily immediately suggest themselves to intending orchardists.

This is more especially applicable to early and delicate fruits, which require to be handled as little as possible and placed on the market in as short a time as possible after picking. Therefore, if a person is seeking a site for a general orchard, it is of prime importance that locality should be a first consideration.

SELECTION OF SITE.

The success of an orchard largely depends upon its situation, and great care, especially in this country, should be exercised in its selection. I make use of the expression "especially in this country," advisedly, for the reason that the periods of activity and dormancy in plant life are by no means as clearly defined as in many countries, and this applies more particularly to that part of the country bordering on the sea coast, where many plants often remain in bloom through the winter. Fruit trees, owing to climatic causes, do not mature their wood sufficiently early, and the sap often begins rising at a period which endangers the life of a tree from the liability of late frosts. This can be controlled, in a great measure, by the selection of a proper site. Experience has shown that eastern and southern exposures are not well adapted for orchards, such exposures tending to promote early growth, and in case of late frosts the influence of the early morning sun acting injuriously on the trees. A north-western exposure, other conditions being favourable, is, I believe, the ideal site for an orchard in British Columbia. On such an exposure the undue early growth is retarded, the influence of the early morning sun is minimised, and the full effect of the afternoon sun, at the season when it is of the greatest utility, is secured.

An excellent plan to retard the growth of trees, in those parts where the ground gets sufficiently frozen in winter, is to mulch the trees whilst the ground is frozen. Straw, fern, chips or sawdust are all good for the purpose. This serves to keep the ground frozen and, consequently, cold about the roots, and prevents the sap rising too soon. When it is desirable the mulch can be removed, and the ground cultivated and the mulch replaced, or it may be dug in. In the case of pine or fir saw-dust and chips, however, they had better be removed, on account of the acrid principle they contain.