

CHESTNUTS.

CULTURE AND SOIL REQUIRED FOR THE GROWTH OF THE CHESTNUT—USES OF THE CHESTNUT.



In a bulletin recently published by the Pennsylvania Experiment Station (located at State College P. O., Centre Co.), Prof. William A. Buckhout gives some valuable information relative to the culture of the chestnut.

The chestnut cannot be grown successfully on heavy clays, wet soils or limestone land. It prefers loose, sandy soils, or such as has been derived from the decomposition of slates or shales. In Ohio it is found native on the sand ridges, which border on the lake shore, and on the shaly hillside of some of the hill counties in the southern portion of the State, but never on the limestones which cover the western and south western portions of the State, nor can it be cultivated in this region with any prospect of success.

The chestnut grows readily from the seed, but great care must be exercised not to permit the nuts to become dry. To accomplish this they must be planted as soon as gathered, or else must be kept in moist sand until ready to plant. If possible, the nuts should be planted where the tree is to stand, as the chestnut has a long tap-root which renders transplanting difficult.

Our native chestnut is practically of but one variety; but the European chestnut is not only much larger and finer than the American, but has produced, under cultivation, a number of varieties, some of which are highly esteemed for the superior quality of their fruit. The trees do not grow so large as the American and come into bearing more quickly; the latter does not usually fruit until ten or twelve years old.

Within the past few years species from Japan have been introduced into the United States. Unfortunately they do not appear to be entirely hardy, except in the South and some favored localities in the Middle States. They are quite dwarf in habit, produce nuts larger even than the European, and begin to fruit when they are but four or five years old.

These two characteristics, of small size and early fruitfulness, give them special value, and, if they can be worked upon stocks of the American species, we can secure trees which will bear earlier and produce larger nuts than our native species.

The supply of chestnuts never equals the demand in this country, and many districts in which the trees are abundant derive a very respectable income from the sale of the nuts; it is therefore obvious that this is an industry which can be made far more productive and profitable than it now is, since very little effort has been made towards cultivation.—*Ohio Experiment Station.*