

INTERESTING AGRICULTURAL FEATURES FOR OUR COUNTRY READERS

HORTICULTURE
INSECT PESTS

Their Nature and Work in Orchards

With Suggestions for Controlling.

The increasing importance of fruit culture and the growth of competition with those who adopt progressive measures, is rendering it essential for fruit-growers in the province to adopt the recognized means for the production of fruit of the best quality and the reduction of the preventable losses due to insect pests. It is useless to adopt measures having for their object an increase in production and quality if, at the same time, equal care is not taken to control those factors responsible for so great a reduction in total crop and the quality of the same. If, therefore, our orchards are to prosper and hold their own on the open market, it is necessary that the fruit-growers shall employ the most effective methods for the control of insect pests, and employ them with a full knowledge of their nature and work in orchards. The following has been written with a view to assisting fruit-growers in the selection of a spray which will be productive of the best results. No system is perfect, and the results of an operation are more dependent on external conditions, such as weather, than on the system of treatment. In spraying, therefore, no hard and fast rule can be made in reference to the quantity of the spray. On the other hand, the necessity of thorough spraying, of spraying at the right time, and with solutions made according to the correct formulae and suited to the objects in view, cannot be insisted upon too strongly.

For the two classes of insects attacking fruit and fruit trees, namely, sucking insects such as aphids and the scale insects, and the biting insects, as exemplified by the sawfly, the caterpillar, the fruit borer, and the larvae of the codling moth and the cherry worm, the methods of treatment are different. Caterpillars, and such biting insects, are destroyed by spraying with poisonous solutions, usually arsenical compounds, but it is useless to treat with such an insecticide; they must be killed either by an emulsion, such as kerosene emulsion of whale oil, which kills the insects by suffocation, and is applied when the tree is in leaf, or by a contact poison, such as tobacco decoction, or by a solution of Paris green, which is applied when the tree is in flower. The insecticide which is applied during the winter, and kills the insects, usually in the egg stage. The lime-sulphur wash is now regarded as the most effective winter spray for the control of sucking insects, and its value is enhanced by the fact that it is one of the best fungicides.

The applications, time of applying, solutions to be used, and the objects which this system of spraying here recommended has in view, are as follows:

Application No. 1.

Time.—To be applied during the spring when the trees are dormant and as late as possible, but immediately before the buds begin to swell.

Solution.—Lime-sulphur wash. The home-brewed lime-sulphur wash is preferable for its purpose, and may be used in the strength given by the formula and method of making which follows. If the commercial lime-sulphur wash is used, it should be used in the strength given by the formula and method of making which follows.

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