

The question is often asked, can I crop my orchard? This is an important question, but I would say, yes; such crops as the following have been found desirable for a young orchard, and then not too close to the trees. Corn is a good crop, as it does not attain much growth until most of the tree-growth is made. Potatoes are not so good, as the growth is at the same time as that of the trees. Also good crops of carrots can be raised, short-rooted sorts being preferred. A fall crop of flat turnips can be grown without harm. Strawberries, currants, gooseberries, rhubarb, can be grown without injury to the orchard. All this must be understood to be done under good cultivation and the free use of manures, stable manure being preferred, with an annual application of potash or wood ashes. My reason for suggesting the cropping of the young orchard with crops mentioned is this, that we are more liable to make free use of the cultivator than we would otherwise do if we had put it into grass or grain. But, as a rule, such crops will hardly pay after the trees are three years planted. The owner must then take his profit out in the increased value of his orchard, as I do not think it is wise to crop after that time. The cultivation of young orchards should cease each season about August 1st, as it is almost certain to prolong the growth, and the trees will be injured through the winter.

A few words about manuring. For young trees stable manure will always be found good, and the best time to apply it is in the fall, or very early in the spring. If put on through the summer it produces late growth, which is injurious to the trees. For orchards that have reached maturity, and are bearing heavily, manure can be used more freely, especially in the spring of the fruiting year, for a good many trees are weakened by their effort to produce a large crop of fruit, and especially if it be a dry season. Trees that are weak from fruiting or poverty of the soil are more subject and liable to disease. A good many fertilizers are now being manufactured which are profitable to use on the orchard, but I think bone and potash the best suited for producing fruit.

In conclusion, I would say the pruning must not be forgotten from the first year the trees are planted. They should have constant attention. Go and visit them every day if possible and see how they are doing. You will get to like them. What looks better on the farm than a well-pruned and well-kept orchard? Yes, and what pays better? Young trees should be allowed to grow with a close head. After forming the head, little is needed each year but to keep it balanced and regular in shape, pinching out the buds of those branches that are outgrowing the others. If it is found branches are crossing each other and are liable to come together, cut them out at once. Do not wait till they get large and then do it. This will injure the tree, weaken and shorten the life of it. And do not forget to let the sunshine and air into your trees.

I would say, lastly, to farmers and others, give your boys a start in growing fruits. They will learn early how to manage and care for them, and it will thus be a means of profit to both parties. Fruit appreciates good care and attention, therefore do not become disheartened. Become a member of the Fruit Growers' Association, read the *Horticulturist* and learn what it is and you will get your reward.

Mr. MORDEN: I do not know upon what grounds potatoes in orchards are objected to. I understand potatoes use a good deal of potash, and in a soil deficient in potash if we were to plant potatoes it might be necessary to restore the potash. If so, that would get over the difficulty. I have seen the practice of planting potatoes a year previous to the strawberry condemned because the potatoes are a potash crop. I would like to hear from gentlemen with more chemical knowledge than I have on this matter. Potatoes in many ways are very suitable. They are often dug quite early, you cultivate the ground quite frequently during the season, and also in digging the potatoes out.

Mr. HERSEE: The growth of potatoes is the same with that of the trees—that is, at the same time—and hence they are objectionable.

Mr. RACE: I made a point of planting strawberries in the fall after taking out a crop of early potatoes, and I have recommended that to the farmers.

Mr. GREINER (Niagara Falls, N. Y.): We have at various times planted potatoes amongst young trees in the orchards, and I do not think that the practice should be in any way objected to if the potatoes have the proper food and the trees have the proper