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Are You Going To Plant An Orchard This Fall?

IT IS one of The Progressive Farmer's steadfast contentions that every farm ought to provide a goodly supply of both orchard and small fruits for the folks who live on it. "A farm without fruit does not deserve the name of home," to repeat an old saying once more. A supply of fruit adds so much to the enjoyment of life on the farm and so much to the profits to be derived from the farm, that it is passing strange that any farmer would go on for years and years without making any effort to start an orchard, or a vineyard, or even a strawberry bed. Yet, it is unfortunately true that a great many do.

This may be because it requires continued care and watchfulness to grow good fruit and to make an orchard profitable year after year. A great many of us are hunting for the things which we can "do once and be done with." An orchard is not that kind of a proposition. Few things are, for that matter; but in the orchard there are so many insects and diseases and seasonal contrarities to contend with, and they all require such prompt and thorough-going attention that it is no lazy man's or careless man's job to make a good orchard and keep it going.

This is not saying that it requires specially hard work or any unusual amount of it to have fruit on the farm, for it does not. It does require some work, however, and this work must be done at the proper time. With the proper attention, it is doubtful if any part of the farm will pay better for the time and money spent on it than will that devoted to the growing of orchard and small fruits.

For this reason we would again urge every reader who has not a good orchard, a vineyard, a strawberry bed, a few growing nut trees, to begin work right now so that he can have them. The season for orchard planting is only a few weeks off, strawberries may be set out any time now, the other small fruits may be planted next month in certain sections. It is, therefore, none too early to begin the preparation of the land for these crops, or to begin investigating the merits of different varieties and finding out where they can be obtained at a reasonable price.

Get varieties that have demonstrated their adaptability to Southern conditions. When commercial orchards are planted, select two or three of the best market varieties, but for home use select varieties of good quality that will furnish a succession of fruit during the season.

It will not pay to plant an orchard on land too poor to grow anything else, or on land half prepared. It certainly will not pay to set out fruit trees in a pasture or anywhere else the livestock can get to them. The orchard is a place in which to grow fruit and all other crops from it must be made secondary.

Select good land for the orchard—moderately fertile, well drained and on such slope as experience has demonstrated is best for fruit trees in your locality. The best location for apples is not necessarily the best for peaches and other fruits; and many farms lack ideal locations for any kind of fruit trees. The farms on which some kind of fruit cannot be successfully and profitably grown, however, are few indeed. There are so many Southern fruits that some of them are almost certain to do well on your land if given a chance.

Plant an orchard, then, it will pay you. We, as farmers, cannot justly feel that we have lived up to our opportunities until we have made the South a land rich with orchards and vineyards, and all manner of fruits. But when you go to planting the orchard remember that you are doing only the first of a continuous work, and that if you wish continued returns, you must give continued care.



A THRIFTY YOUNG APPLE TREE.

FEATURES OF THIS ISSUE.

BETTER LIVESTOCK—How to Get a Start	14
COTTON WILT—Fight This Disease With Resistant Varieties	20
FARM WORK FOR SEPTEMBER—Ten Things to Do	4
GASOLINE ENGINE DISEASES—Things Owners Should Remember	7
HOW TO HANDLE HAY—Curing in the Sun and in the Shade	6
MAKING ATTRACTIVE HOME GROUNDS—How to Select, Plant and Care for Trees	19
MOTHERS' PROBLEMS—How to Help the Child	10
POULTRY AND GARDEN ITEMS	16
PRACTICAL INFORMATION ABOUT OATS—II	3
THE POOR FARM—How to Make It Pay a Profit	8
TRUCK AND GARDEN NOTES—Prepare for Winter	4
TWO-MINUTE HEALTH TALKS—To Prevent Blindness	22
UNDER-DRAINAGE—Will Benefit Both Bottom and Hill Lands	5
USE THE RESOURCES YOU HAVE—Not Limited to Money	12
WHAT A "BOY WITH NO CHANCE" CAN DO	12
YOU CAN GO TO COLLEGE	9