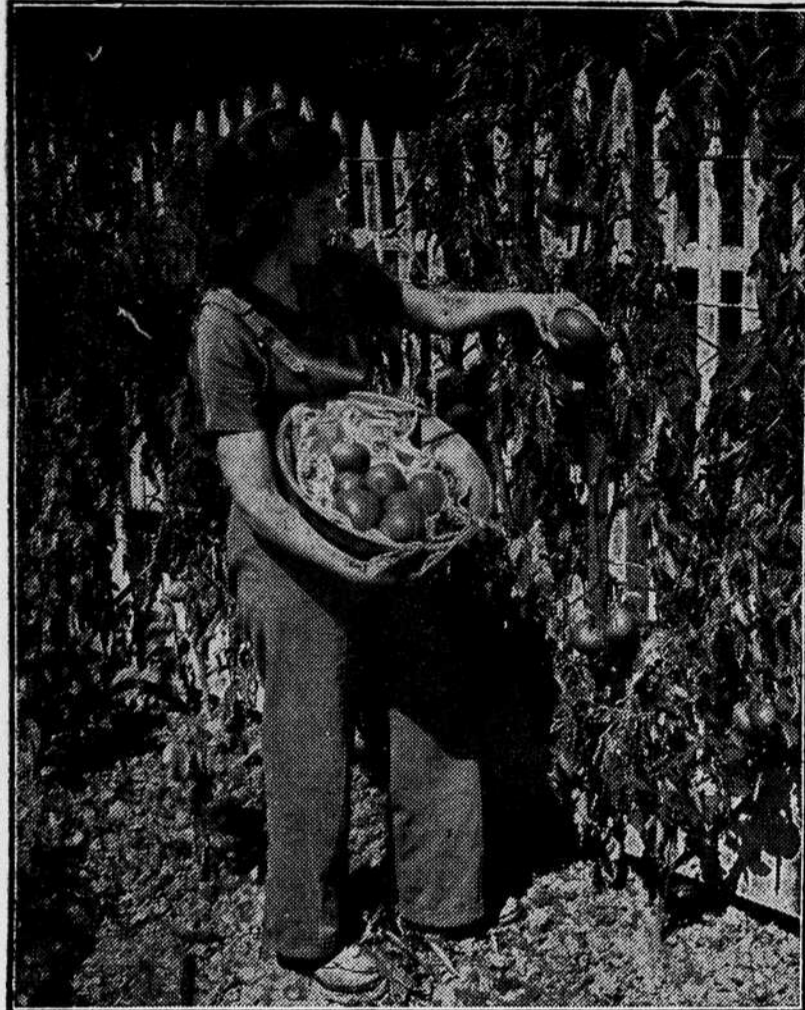


Stake and Prune Tomatoes For Big Yield, Small Space



A Heavier Yield for the Ground Space Occupied Is Given by Tomatoes Trained on a Fence, Arbor, or Stakes.

When tomatoes are grown to a single stem, tied to a stake or similar support, the maximum crop can be harvested for the space occupied, though the yield for each plant is less than that of plants allowed to spread naturally on the ground.

Staking and pruning plants to a single stem is therefore a good way to grow tomatoes in a small garden. Single stem plants can be spaced a foot apart, and double stem plants 21 inches apart, while plants that lie on the ground require four feet each way.

This applies to varieties of normal vine growth, which are the only kind that should be staked and pruned. So-called determinate varieties, of which the stems stop growing after they reach a certain length, while the plant devotes all its energies to ripening the fruit which has set, should never be pruned, and get no benefit from staking, but they may be planted as closely as 18 inches apart, and allowed to spread on the ground. They bear a good early crop, but over a shorter season than the older, later varieties.

Keeping tomato plants pruned and tied to stakes or a fence needs constant attention. At the joint where each leaf grows on the main stem, a branch will develop, and this must be cut or pinched off before it is four inches long, otherwise its removal may weaken the plant. If allowed to grow, sec-

ondary branches will develop from it, and soon all effort to keep the plant within bounds will have to be abandoned. A few days' neglect of pruning may spoil the plants.

To grow a two-stem plant, select one branch coming from the main stem 10 inches above the surface, and allow that to grow. Both main stem and branch will have to be pruned regularly. Single stem plants can be supported by a heavy cord stretched from a suitable tall support, and anchored to the ground near the plant. The stem as it grows can be twisted about the cord.

Two-stem plants may be tied with soft twine, strips of cloth, raffia or special ties made of wire imbedded in paper strips. Use a loose loop around the stem, to avoid constriction, or cutting.

Tomatoes require full sun and regular watering. When the soil is allowed to dry out, with fruit set, a black decay spot known as "blossom-end rot" may develop on the fruit. Watering during dry spells will prevent this. When fruit begins to mature, plant food worked into the soil around the plant, using a tablespoonful at a time, will help produce more and larger fruit.

Tomato roots spread out near the surface and should never be disturbed. Never cultivate deep enough to touch them; a heavy mulch of straw or lawn clippings about each plant is better than cultivation, and helps keep the soil moist.

Farm Prices Up In April Over March

Prices received by North Carolina farmers for all products except dairy, showed increases last month over March, the Statistics division of the State Agriculture Department reports.

The grain index advanced two points, going to 169; cotton and cottonseed 10 points, to 201; meat animals seven points, to 235; poultry products three points, to 173; and miscellaneous products two points to 245.

The dairy products index at 176 showed a decline of one point over the previous month, but was still higher than for any other April during the war years.

Prices received for both wheat and rye averaged \$1.90 per bushel and showed an increase of one cent per bushel over March. Corn averaged \$1.45 per bushel, an increase of three cents per bushel,

while oats and barley averaged \$1.02 and \$1.75 per bushel, respectively the same as a month earlier.

The Bureau of Agricultural Economics reported that major advances in meat animal, fruit and cotton prices carried the general level of prices received by farmers

throughout the nation up three points over March.

At 212, this was the highest index since July, 1920.

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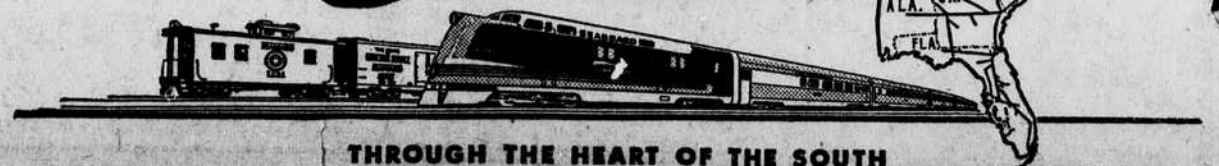
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