

Start Pruning Fruit Trees Early, Or Face Woes Later

BELTSVILLE, Md. — "Pruning fruit trees is like raising kids; start caring early or you're in trouble later," says pomologist Dr. Miklos Faust of the Agriculture Research Center at Beltsville, Maryland.

Dr. Faust, who heads up the Department of Agriculture's research program on fruit at the Beltsville Center, knows whereof he speaks. Several thousand trees under his supervision — peaches, pears, apples, cherries, plums, persimmons — are used in studies in plant genetics, physiology and disease resistance.

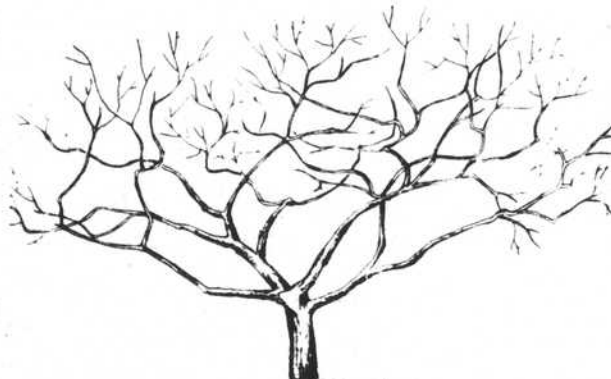
Last year, Dr. Faust astonished visitors to the Center with apple trees a mere two feet tall bearing large, full-size Golden Delicious fruit. (They are still in experimental state.)

According to Dr. Faust, each kind of fruit tree demands a distinct pruning technique, but the key, for all trees, is to begin early — at planting or in the first spring.

Here are Dr. Faust's suggestions for the two most popular fruit trees grown by home gardeners: apples and peaches.

For apple trees (starting with a 4-foot sapling):

1. Select lower scaffold branches. These should be located 1½ to 2 feet from the ground. Prune out all but about five of these branches, spaced evenly around the trunk. This will form the first



PEACH: Basket-Shape Pruning — For peach trees, cut out the central leader in the first year to encourage a basket shape.

- scaffold level.
2. Leave three more branches about 1½ feet above the lower scaffold. Clip all other branches back to the trunk.
 3. Prune the central branch (leader) to form a cone with the two levels of scaffolds. This cut releases growth hormones for the scaffold branches.
 4. Second year pruning: Prune each scaffold branch as a separate tree, that is, into a cone with each original branch as the leader.

All pruning up to this point

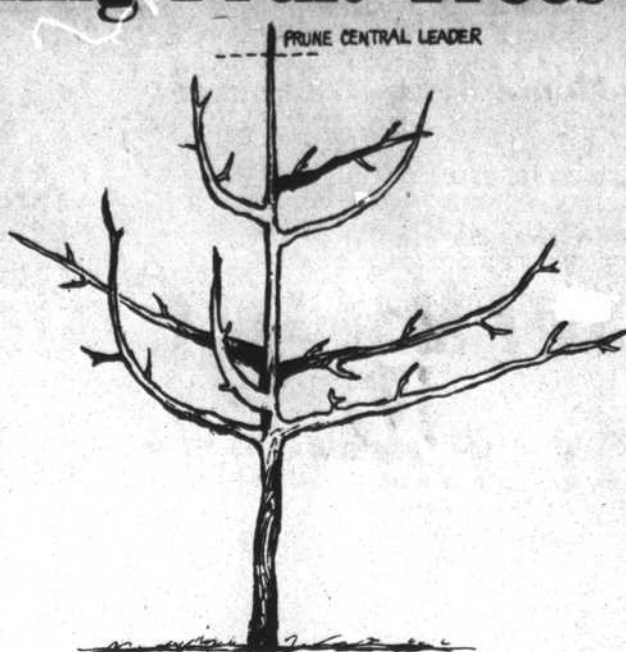
Mrs. Czeski Dies At 80

Mrs. Czeslawa Czeski, 80, of 217 Woodlawn Terrace died Monday morning in Transylvania Community Hospital after a long illness. Mrs. Czeski was a member of the Holy Cross Catholic Church of Hamtramck, Michigan.

Surviving is one daughter Mrs. Jane Snyder of Brevard; three brothers, Zigmand, Thadus, and Chester Czeski, all of Detroit, Michigan, seven grandchildren, and four great grandchildren.

Funeral arrangements are incomplete at this time and will be announced later by the Waski Funeral Home in Detroit, Michigan.

Frank Moody Funeral Home, Inc., is in charge of local arrangements.



APPLE: Cone-Shape Pruning — Two-year apple tree pruned to form a cone with branches at two levels. The top cut made to release growth hormones for scaffold branches.

outlines the scaffold framework for the rest of the tree's life. All subsequent pruning is corrective in nature. "These cuts are the most difficult to decide," cautions Dr. Faust.

5. Prune all branches which oppose your scheme of scaffolding; those which grow too low, grow straight up, or cross over scaffold branches.

6. Thin branches that may block light from fruit limbs because apples form on the inside of the tree. (Peach trees fruit more toward the outside.)

7. The 4 to 6-year-old tree: place braces between the trunk and any branches that form at angles less than 45 degrees with the trunk. The braces will help form an open framework saving injury to, and providing light for, developing fruit. (Make braces from 1 X 1's. Drive a nail half way into each end. Cut off the nail heads. These points can then be sunk into the tree to hold the braces firmly in place.)

8. Place braces before spring pruning but not when wood is frozen. Longer braces can replace outgrown ones as your tree responds to spreading. Two years is usually sufficient for proper

years. Very little is necessary later to stimulate good fruit development," says Dr. Faust who prescribes just the opposite for peaches.

For peach trees:

1. The first year: Select scaffold branches to form wide angles with the trunk. This will help develop a strong, winter-hardy tree.

2. Prune down the central leader considerably in the first year and thereafter eliminate it. This will allow to develop a basket shape.

3. Encourage fruiting by pruning the tree regularly. Look for branches bearing mostly non-fruiting, single leaf buds. Fruiting buds are the outer pair of bud triplets.

4. Each year, bevel, or clean up, the middle of the tree so that light can enter. After the second growing season, only light thinning is necessary to keep the center open and scaffold branches well spaced.

5. Watch to see that fruit-laden branches don't reach the breaking point. Each year fruiting wood tends to grow farther out on the branch ends. The basket shape can thus become too wide causing branch splitting. Keep the

branches trimmed back yearly.

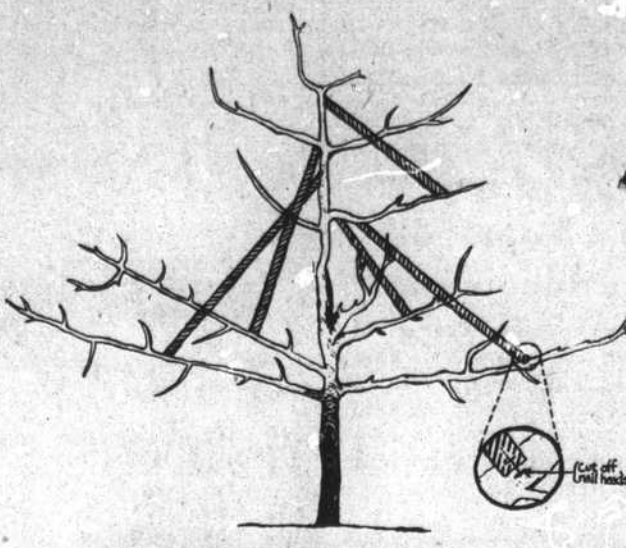
Sierrans Plan Second Attempt To Reach Site

On Saturday, March 5, a second attempt will be made by the Western North Carolina Group of the Sierra Club to reach the Green River Narrows by an alternate route.

The previous try was thwarted by impenetrable tickets of laurel. The hike should take five to six hours, mostly strenuous and probably with some bush-wacking in order to reach the Cascades. Bring lunch. Non-members desiring to participate please contact the leader.

First group will leave the Shell Station at Rt. 64E near I-26 at 9:10 a.m. to meet those at the Saluda exit for I-26 at 9:30 a.m. Leader: Bruce E. Byers, Box 350, Forest City, 28043. Phone 245-4744.

When you think of prescriptions, think of VARNER'S, adv.



BRACING: Spreading braces for apple trees help form an open framework which saves injury to and provides light for developing fruit. Any branch-trunk angle of less than 45 degrees should be braced.

training.

"Braces are absolutely necessary for spur-type apple trees, because these are more upright than nonspur-type," says Dr. Faust. Spurs, short interior shoots, bear large, gray fruiting buds (unlike smaller, brown leaf buds on longer shoots). Pruning the wrong buds will set fruiting back a year since buds begin to form in the June or July prior to spring blossoming.

"Apple trees are pruned heaviest in early, formative

Dunn's Rock Scouts, Cubs Organized

Boy Scout Troop 714 and Cub Scout Pack 714 have been reorganized under the sponsorship of the Dunn's Rock Community Club.

Boys in that general area who are interested in joining either Scout group should be at the Community Center to register any time during the day of Saturday, March 15th.

The place is the old Dunn's Rock School house. Information on these Scout groups can be had by calling Hoppy Guinn at 885-2160.

Garland Sledge Taken By Death

Garland Sledge, 65, of Sylva died in a Sylva hospital Saturday after a short illness.

A native of Greensboro, Ala., he had lived in Brevard for most of his life. He was formerly employed by Clemson-Co-Ed Theatres.

Surviving are three nephews.

Graveside services will be held at 2 p.m. Monday in Gillespie - Evergreen Cemetery. Father Phillip Thomas will officiate.

Moore Funeral Home, Brevard, is in charge of arrangements.

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