

# Prune Roots of Fruit Trees Before Setting

*Root-pruning Is as Important as Branch-pruning*

By L. A. NIVEN

IF THE fruit tree gets through the first two years in good shape after it is set out it will have passed through the most critical stage of its life. In order for fruit trees to go through this critical period, it is essential that the very best attention possible be given to proper setting. Improper setting often means either a dead or a stunted tree.

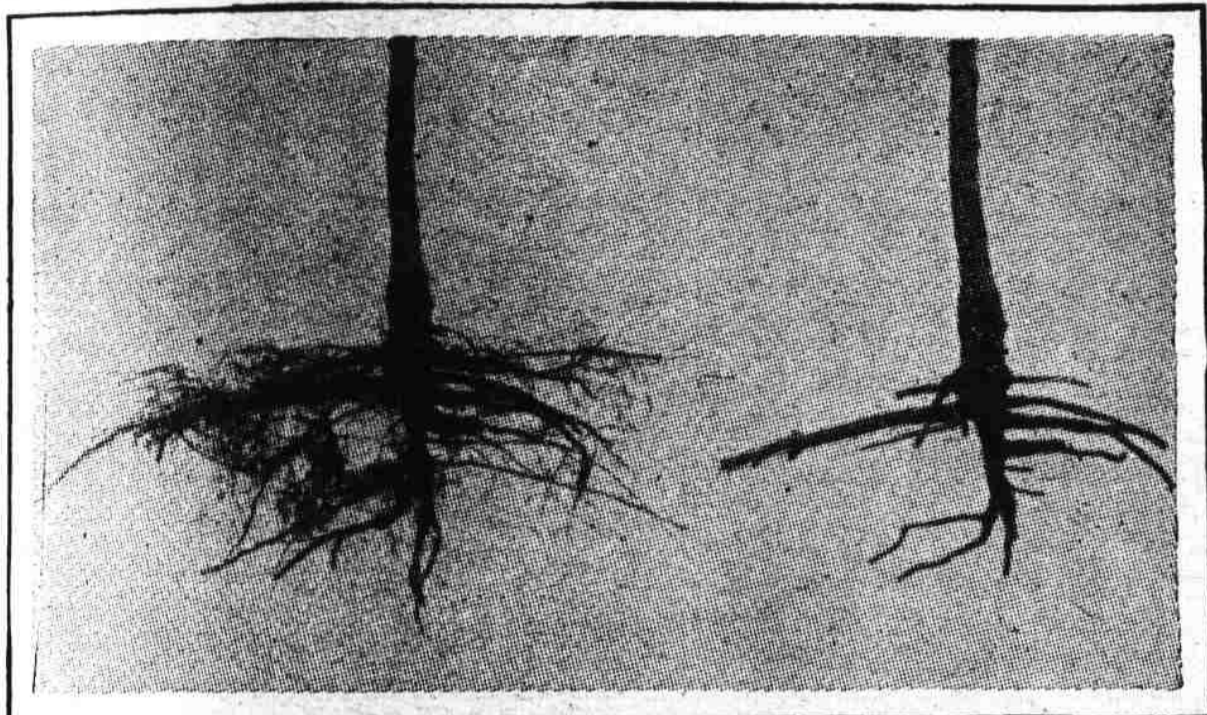
One of the most common mistakes made in setting fruit trees is in the matter of properly pruning the roots. It is generally understood that the tops of the trees must be cut back at planting time, but many seem to imagine that it is not necessary to prune the roots.

This is a mistaken idea, because it matters not how careful the nurseryman may be when digging the trees, a comparatively large number of the

are found on the roots are almost invariably dead. They are at least not going to live and do any good in the future. Therefore, these should be cut off. A good bit has been done toward starting the young tree toward successful growth if the roots are properly pruned.

Not only should the broken edges and dying roots be cut off, but those that are too long should be cut back so as to at least compare favorably in length, etc., with the others. In other words, the roots should be properly balanced on all sides, or at least approximately so.

The illustration on this page shows in a very definite way just how the roots of any fruit tree should be pruned before setting. The illustration to the left shows the root system of a fruit tree as it came from



ROOTS BEFORE AND AFTER PRUNING

roots are going to be broken and injured in other ways. Fruit trees should never be set with broken roots. Not only should the broken roots be cut off, but the ends of the larger roots where they were broken off in digging should be cut off with a sharp knife, so as to give a smooth cut, thus decreasing the danger of diseased roots.

Also, the tiny hair-like roots that

the nursery, and the one to the right is the same fruit tree after the roots have been pruned.

Think about this matter, and see to it that when you set fruit trees the roots are properly pruned, and you will have given the young tree a much better chance for living and growing in the proper manner during the first year than if you had overlooked this matter.

## Getting Tenants and Laborers to Use Modern Machinery

FARM laborers and tenants frequently condemn labor-saving farm implements and machinery merely because they are ignorant of the efficiency and labor-saving qualities of modern farm implements and machinery. Some years ago I knew a tenant who pronounced the hay-tedder a fake piece of farm machinery, admitting in the same breath he had never given the hay-tedder a trial.

Some unusually heavy clover hay forced him to turn it over by hand with a fork in order to cure it. This work proved tedious, and he borrowed a tedder, finding it such a useful labor-saving machine he immediately purchased one. Today he would not be without a hay tedder. This farmer was simply ignorant of the efficiency and labor-saving qualities of the modern hay-tedder till he tried one out in his own crop, saw it do better work than he could do by hand and more of it than half a dozen men could do, when he became convinced that he should own and use one.

It is human nature for us to feel skeptical towards new things that are put upon the market, and many farm laborers and tenants cling to this feeling of doubt in regard to the efficiency and labor-saving qualities of

modern farm implements and machinery to a degree of fogyism. Tenants and farm laborers should be encouraged to use modern, labor-saving farm implements and machinery wherever and whenever possible.

I find it a good plan to coach the farm laborer in the use of any implement or machine he is not thoroughly familiar with. It pays the owner of any farm implement or machine to have it operated with a feeling of appreciation for its efficiency and labor-saving qualities. Unless this appreciation exists, the implement or machine is almost sure to be abused. My experience is that once you get a man to fully understand the usefulness of a machine or implement the better work he will do with it and the better care he will give it.

In this section we have landlords who know the value and efficiency of modern farm implements and machinery to the extent of exacting the use of certain farm implements and machinery when leasing land to tenants. At first sight this may seem unfair, but it invariably works out for the betterment of both landlord and tenant. I find times during the season when quick work must be done in the growing crops or not done at all. Right here is where improved farm implements and machinery can be used to great advantage by laborer or tenant for the betterment of everyone concerned. C. C. CONGER, Jr.

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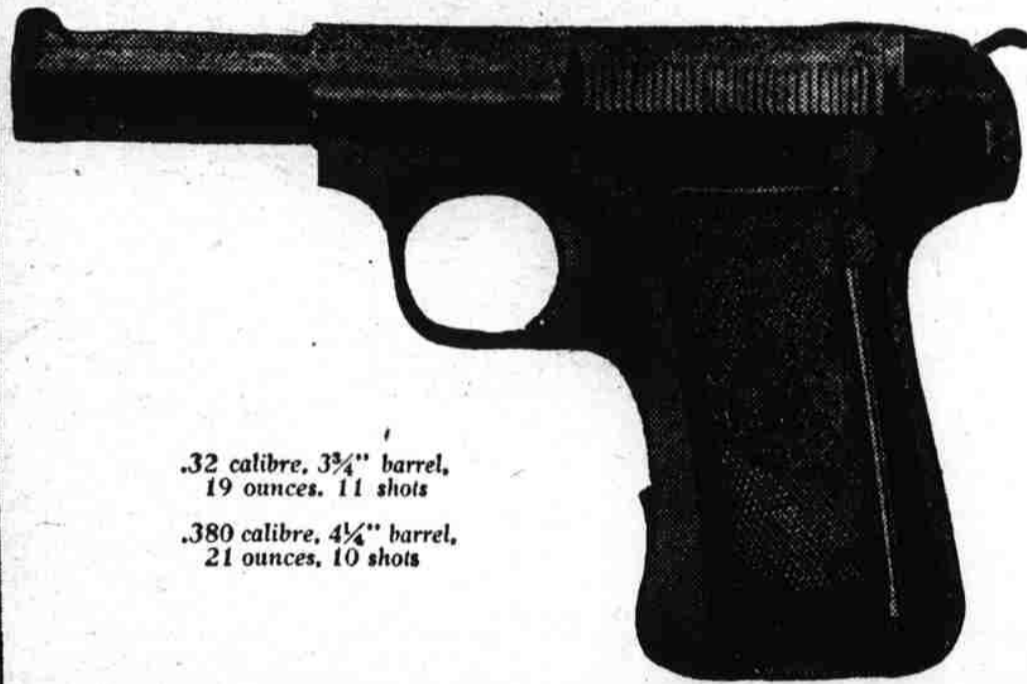
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