

HINTS TO FARMERS

FRUITS

Selection of sites and soils for fruit-growing.

1. A soil that is at least 6 feet deep, is uniformly textured up to that depth, possesses perfect drainage, and has a water table about 6 feet below the surface in any period of the year, is considered ideal for fruit-growing.

2. Variation in soil texture within the first 6 feet of soil will lead to ununiform root distribution and development or may lead to unnecessary loss of moisture and plant foods. Drainage may also be imperfect on such soils.

3. A soil of the moderately open texture as a loam is preferable to open sandy soils or to stiff clayey soils.

4. Mere judging of soils by observing the surface is definitely misleading and most risky. In most cases a good surface soil may have a few inches below sheets of rock or impenetrable layers of kunker, stone or boulders, which will not permit roots to grow.

5. Soils varying in texture up to six feet depth within small distances are common, and these are not ideal for fruit growing.

6. All soils suspected of alkalinity or salinity or have to be irrigated with water which is not sweet, should be chosen only after the advice and opinion of a competent chemist are obtained.

7. Water table, which rises even on rare occasions, such as on an exceptionally heavy rainy period, to within 6 feet from the surface, will render the site risky for fruit culture.

Irrigation in Orchards.

1. Irrespective of the soil and the fruit, irrigation is dependent on the rainfall and its distribution. Irrigation has to necessarily therefore be based on a careful consideration of the soil moisture as influenced by the rains; that is to say water should be applied only when soil moisture is deficient and trees show first signs of distress.

2. Under a given set of conditions, a light, open or sandy soil requires more frequent watering than other soils. Even so, shallow soils require more frequent applications of smaller amounts of water than deep soils.

3. When intercrops are grown, the tree requirements should be considered as supreme. It is therefore necessary to select intercrops, that would not conflict in water needs with the fruit.

4. The differential needs should be known. For instance, a crop like banana can stand and even welcome more frequent and larger applications of water than citrus trees.

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