

Deciduous Fruit Trees – Fall & Winter Care

Janet Caprile, Farm Advisor



1. Pest Management
2. Pruning
3. Tree Selection & Planting

“Our Garden” Seminar – October 26, 2016

Pest Management

- weed control -

- Weeds:
 - MULCH before fall rains & weeds start
 - Other benefits of mulch:
 - To increase rainfall penetration in the soil
 - To add organic matter
 - To add nutrients
 - To reduce weed growth

Pest Management

- insects and diseases -

- Dormant sprays:
 - Peaches & Nectarines: Peach Leaf Curl
 - Copper & oil (or lime sulfur)
 - At leaf fall (Nov-Dec) & before budbreak (Feb-Mar)
 - Any tree: aphids, scale, mites
 - If you had any of these pests this season
 - Dormant oil suffocates eggs
- Prune out dead, dying, diseased wood
 - Brown rot (stone fruit)
 - fireblight (pome fruit)
 - powdery mildew (grapes)

Pruning: Why do it?

- **Training**: for young trees before bearing
 - Strong structure
 - Good light penetration
- **Pruning**: for mature trees
 - Remove unwanted branches (the 5 D's)
 - Dead, diseased, dying, damaged, deranged
 - Maintain light penetration
 - Control tree size
 - Renew fruitwood

Pruning Mature Fruit Trees:

4. Renewing Fruitwood

For fruit that is produced on:

- 1 year old shoots - Remove 30-50% of the growth
(Peach, nectarines, kiwi, grape, figs)
- Spurs - Remove 20% of growth
(almonds, apricots, cherries, plums, apples, pears)
- Current season's growth - Remove 0-20% of growth
(fig, citrus, persimmon, quince, pomegranate)

Pruning Cuts

1. Thinning Cut

- Remove the whole branch
- Redirects growth to leaders
- Open's up the canopy

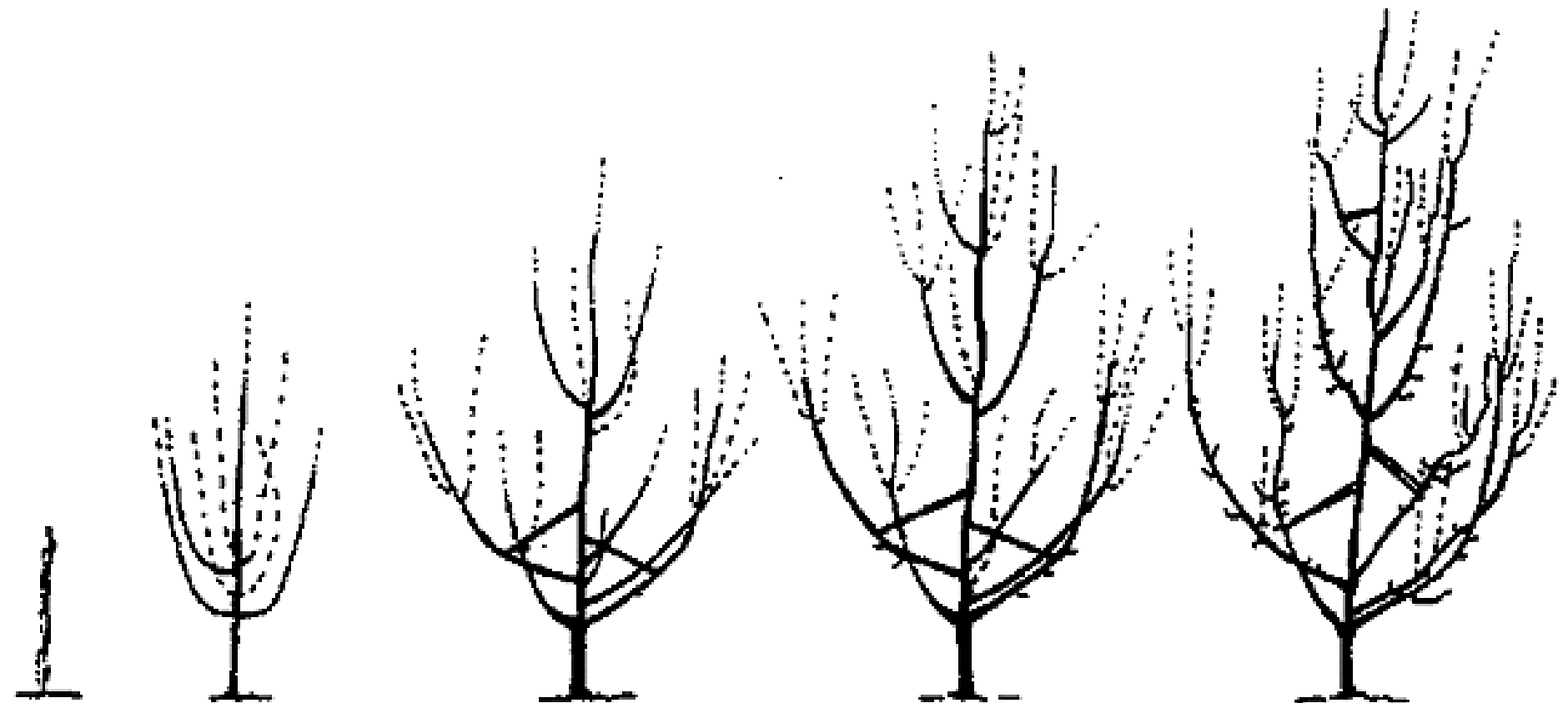
2. Heading cut

- Remove top of a branch
- Encourages branching
- For training or hedging



Training Systems

Central Leader



Training Systems

Open Vase



Pruning Resources

- **Free UC Publications:**

<http://anrcatalog.ucdavis.edu/FruitNutTreesintheHomeGarden>

- Training and Pruning Deciduous Trees
- Pruning Overgrown Deciduous Trees

- **Other Free Publications:**

- Dave Wilson's "Fruit Bush" Backyard System:

http://www.davewilson.com/homegrown/BOC_explained.html

- **Videos/DVD:** <http://anrcatalog.ucdavis.edu/>

- Pruning & Training Fruit & Nut Trees (DVD)
- Pruning Fruit Trees (VHS)
- Training Young Fruit & Nut Trees (VHS)

Selecting Fruit Trees

Before you buy consider:

1. Your site

- Light
- Soil
- Winter chill
- How much room do you have

2. The tree requirements

- Tree size
- Pollination
- Pest management

Selecting Your Fruit Trees

Site Considerations

- **Light**

- 6 hours per day during the growing season
 - Less light = less fruit, less flavor, spindly growth

- **Soil**

- Depth: 3-5'
- Texture –
 - Sand: coarse - well drained, low nutrients, low water
 - Loam: medium – good water, air, nutrient balance
 - Clay: fine – high in nutrients and water, low in air

Site Considerations

SAND	LOAM	CLAY
Almonds	All trees	Apples
Grapes	Walnuts	Pears
Nectarines	Cherries	Plums
Peaches	Apricot	Grapes
Pomegranates		Apricot (plum root)
Apricot (peach root)		Peach (plum root)
Plum (peach root)		Almond (plum root)
		<i>Add organic matter!</i>
<i>Add organic matter!</i>		<i>Plant on mounds!</i>

Site Considerations

Climate: Winter Chill

Number of hours accumulated below 45F from Nov 1-Feb 28

High	Moderate	Low
Zone 14: Hot Central & East	Zone 15 & 16: Warm Bayside, Hills	Zone 17: Cool Bay flats
800-1200 hours	500-800 hours	< 500 hours
Apples	(Apples – low chill cv.)	(Apples – low chill cv)
Apricot	Apricot	(Cherry – low chill cv.)
Cherries	(Cherry – low chill cv.)	(Pears- low chill cv.)
Pears	Plum	Persimmon
	Peach & Nectarine	Pomegranate
+ All the low & mod. chill fruits	(Pears- low chill cv.)	Fig
	+ All the low chill fruits	

Site Considerations

How much room do they need?

Type of Fruit	Standard Rootstock	Dwarfing Rootstock	
Walnuts	25 – 30'	NA	
Cherries	20-25'	10-15'	Giesla
Apples	18-20'	5-14'	EMLA#, MM#
Pears	18-20'	12-15'	Quince
Apricots, plums	15-18''	12-15'	Citation
Peaches, nectarines	12-15'	4-7'	(genetic dwarfs)
Figs	15-30'	NA	
Pomegranate	15-20'	NA	

Selection Considerations

Do they need cross-pollination?

NO	YES
Apricots*	Almonds*
Figs	Apples*
Peaches	Cherries*
Nectarines	Pears*
Pomegranates	Plums (Pluots & Apriums)*
*some varieties need X pollination	*some varieties are self fruitful
	Try a multiple graft!

Selection Considerations

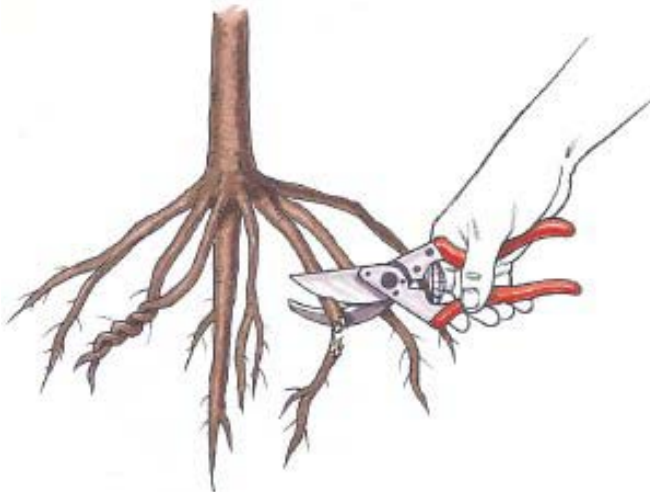
What pests do they get?

Tree	Pest	Control
Apples & Pears	Codling Moth	2-12 sprays: May-Aug - spinosad, granulosis, carbaryl
Apricot	Brown Rot	Spray @ bloom
Cherry	Spotted wing drosophila	2 pre-harvest sprays - spinosad
Grapes	Powdery Mildew	3+ sulfur sprays
Peach/Nectarine	Peach Leaf Curl	Dormant sprays – copper or lime sulfur
<i>Relatively pest free:</i> plums & pluots, figs, pomegranate, persimmon		

Planting the Orchard

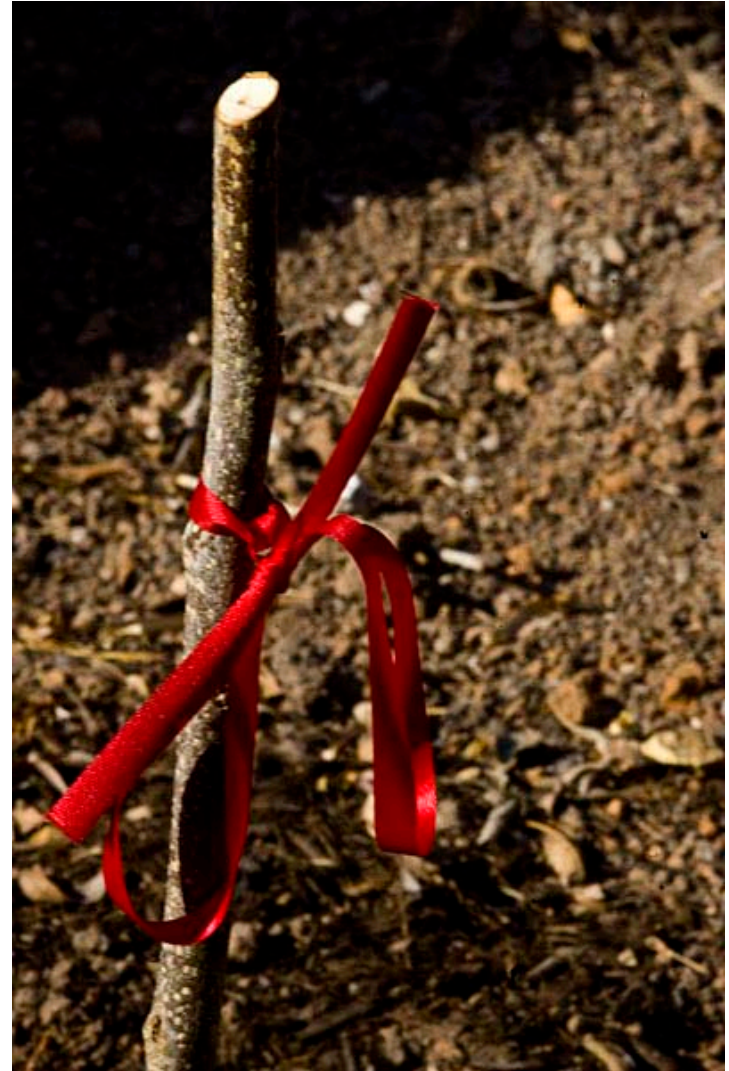


- Keep the roots cool & moist till planting
- Soil can be moist but **NOT WET**
- The hole: root depth & twice as wide
- Fertilizers or amendments?
- **Plant high**



Planting the Orchard

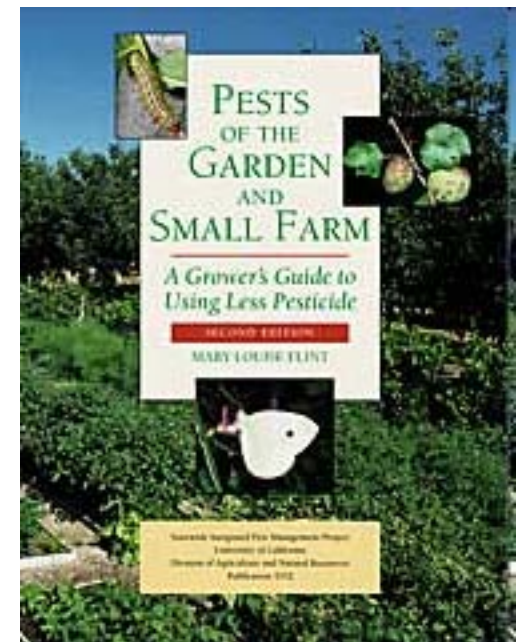
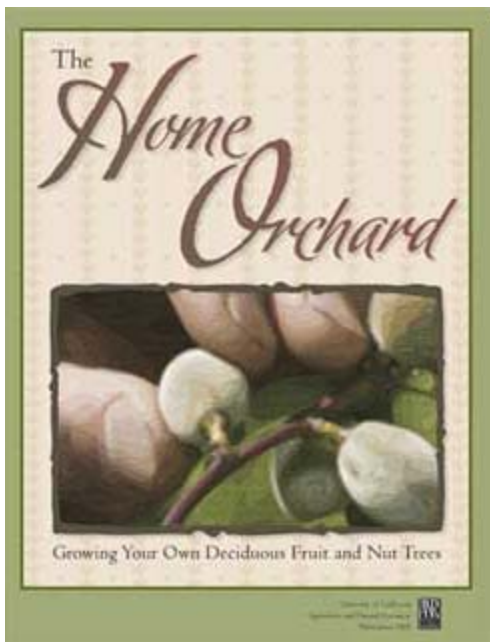
- Water at planting
 - not again till after leaf out
- Whitewash
- Head at 30"



More information

Publications:

- University of California Agricultural Publications:
<http://anrcatalog.ucdavis.edu>



More information

Websites:

- UC Fruit & Nut Research & Information Center:
<http://fruitsandnuts.ucdavis.edu>
 - Backyard orchard
 - Weather Services : Winter chill, rainfall
- UC IPM Program: <http://www.ipm.ucdavis.edu/>
 - Homes, gardens, landscape, and turf (including Pest Notes)
- California Rare Fruit Growers – Golden Gate Chapter <http://www.crfg.org/>

More information

Actual People:

Bring samples and questions to:

[UC Master Gardeners in Contra Costa County](#)

75 Santa Barbara Rd

Pleasant Hill, CA 94523

(925) 646-6586

<http://ccmg.ucdavis.edu/>

Office Hours: Monday through Thursday - 9 AM to noon