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Tree Trunk Girdling Produces Earlier Northern Spy Apple Crop

Northern Spy apple trees don't usually bear fruit until they are 12 to 18 years old. However, in tests conducted by the Michigan State College Agricultural Experiment Station, trees were made to produce sizable crops when only 9 years old. The tree trunks were girdled by removing a strip of bark one-eighth-inch wide, 12 inches above ground level. The cut was made to the depth of the wood, completely encircling the trunk. The girdling wounds were then coated with grafting compound. Trees girdled in late May of their eighth year produced fruit the ninth year. While subsequent girdling did not produce as great yields, girdled trees were far ahead of ungirdled trees by the time the latter began to produce fruit. Full information about girdling to produce apple crops more efficiently can be obtained by calling or writing your County Agricultural Agent.



Power augers increase efficiency...

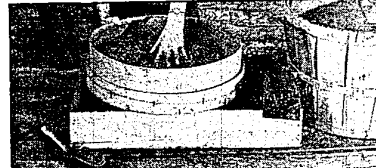
Digging a hole for a telephone pole used to take a long time. Today Michigan Bell does this job more quickly and more efficiently with power-driven augers which can dig a pole hole in a couple of minutes. This is another example of the way Michigan Bell provides more and better telephone service to farmers at a reasonable cost.



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FARM FEATURES

Anti-Biotic Sphagnum Guards Seed



Whenever seeds are sown early to grow in the home or hotbed, they should be protected from the danger of disease. This danger is increased by low temperatures, excessive dampness, absence of sunlight, and any departure from the normal conditions of warm soil and full sun.

Hardy seeds sown directly in the garden when the weather is still chilly, and they may lie for days before warmth sufficient to germinate them arrives, should be treated with a disinfectant. There are several of these available in powder form. A tiny amount shaken in the seed packet will protect the seed.

Walnuts For Veneer Planting Ready Now

Black walnuts to plant for growing valuable veneer timber are available from the forest nursery operated by Michigan State College, according to W. Ira Bull, nursery supervisor.

The walnuts are supplied to the college nursery by members of the American Walnut Manufacturers association and are sold at 50 cents a peck to pay the cost of hulling, stratifying and packing.

Orders for these walnuts can be placed on regular forest tree seedling order blanks, available from the county agricultural agents or from the Forestry Department, Michigan State College, East Lansing, Michigan.

But in seed boxes, protection can be given by using sphagnum moss, an inexpensive material used by florists and nurserymen to wrap around plant roots to keep them moist. This moss is believed to have anti-biotic qualities, since it destroys bacteria and fungi.

Most plant diseases are caused by fungi, which are themselves plants, which live as parasites on other plants or organic materials. The most common disease which threatens seed is known as "damping off".

This may attack seeds when they first sprout, and prevent the growth from breaking through the soil or it may wait until the seedling plant is growing well, and cause it to wilt overnight.

A thin layer of sphagnum moss—say half an inch—which has been passed through a sieve, may be spread over the soil in a seed box. Sow the seed in this, just as you would in soil. Then cover with moss which has been rubbed through a sieve, firm and water from above. There is no danger of over-watering when moss is used.

PIGS FROM BIG LITTERS MAKE GOOD RECORDS

Have you ever heard that pigs from a big litter never "do so well" as those from an average or small litter? It's another old belief that's been proven wrong according to Harry Moxley, Michigan State College extension swine specialist.

Moxley took the records of 2,295 litters of nearly 20,000 pigs entered in the MSC Sow Testing Project the last six years to prove his point. It shows that size of litter is of minor importance in achieving high litter weights at weaning time.

Pigs from litters of 11 or more averaged 32.8 pounds at 56 days. Those from litters of 7 pigs averaged 32.1 pounds each at weaning age. But the total litter weight for the big litter was nearly 375 pounds compared with only 223 pounds for the seven-pig litter.

The MSC swine specialist says big litters depend on many factors. Hereditary factors such as milk-feeding ability, number of teats, and breeding from a strain of big litter producing animals can be controlled only by selection. Feeding and management practices during the time the sow or gilt is pregnant have a great bearing on the number of live pigs in the litter and individual size.

"No one breed has a monopoly on high production," Moxley commented. J. F. Hackney, Durand, won the 1950 contest with a litter of 14 Yorkshires attaining a total weight of 612 pounds at 56 days.

Simple Steps Cut Spread of Mastitis

Dipping milking machine test cups in a chlorine solution before and after milking each cow is a good practice to help control spread of mastitis, advises D. L. Murray, extension dairymen at Michigan State College.

In this procedure, he recommends that test cups be rinsed in water to remove the milk film before dipping in a chlorine solution of not more than 200 p.p.m. (parts per million) strength. Follow directions for the correct strength.

The pre-water-rinse will help to avoid this. The chlorine solution will be difficult to wash off and will also aid in maintaining the strength of the chlorine solution. When milk is added to the chlorine solution, the chlorine solution will be used up more quickly and not do a job of killing bacteria.

Murray also suggests that the valve in the milker pail be open so that water and chlorine solution will contact the entire inner surface of the test cups.

Michigan State Gets Rare Chapel Stones

Two ancient stones from famous European cathedrals are among 20 such stones to be used in the construction of the narthex of the Michigan State College's Alumni Memorial chapel.

The pair of carved stones were salvaged from World War II bombings of Westminster Abbey and St. Paul's Cathedral, London, England.

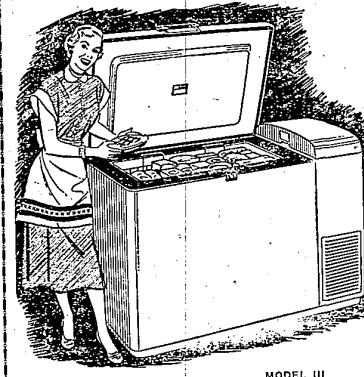
Time Is Here To Buy Baby Chicks

Baby chicks take at least three weeks to hatch, so you can't just go in and shop like you do at a supermarket, cautions H. C. Zindel, Michigan State College extension poultryman, in advising farmers to purchase chicks now.

Contrary to popular belief among some poultrymen, you can't buy "cheap" chicks and expect to make money, Zindel warns. Most "cheap" chicks are surplus, or diseased or poor quality, so that the end result is the same — no eggs or meat. Every year some people fall for "special offers" of 100 bargain chicks at ridiculously low prices.

"These chicks are no bargain," Zindel says. "Remember — cheap chicks don't cheap long." Know your hatchery and buy only from reliable sources, he advises.

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Wildlife Has Tough Time Crossing State Highways

Getting across the highway is hazardous business for wildlife having to compete with fast driving motorists.

Forty-eight pieces of road-killed game were observed along the 8.2 mile stretch of U. S. 12 from Paw Paw to Jackson by conservation

department field man Russell Peterson. Included were 34 muskrats, five rabbits, five skunks, two squirrels, one raccoon and one opossum.

Seasonal move of the yearlings to find mates and "stake out new territories" appears to be earlier this year.



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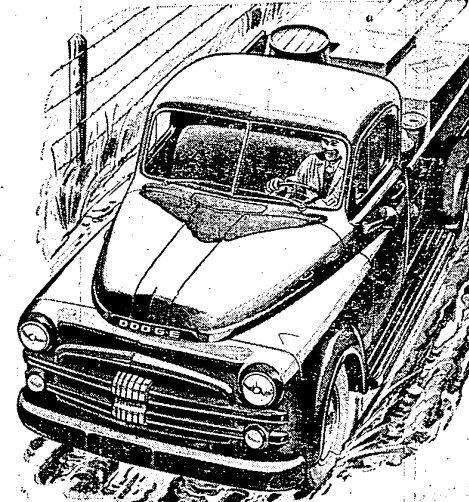
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