

Farmers Department

SPROUTS ABOUT FRUIT TREES. It is recommended in a late number of the Rural to remove "sprouts about fruit trees" by cutting them "close to the surface."

1st. If this should ultimately result in getting rid of the sprouts, it would have a "host" of dead stumps attached to the body, or root, of the parent tree, which, in my opinion would sooner or later tend to its injury if not to its early decay.

2d. This practice would soon destroy them. The stumps would remain and be forever sending forth new sprouts. I would say, let the sprouts remain till sometime in June or July, (earlier or later) then dig away the soil from the root of the tree and cut off the sprouts close to the body, or root (to which they are attached), as a scientific process would cut off a branch, and then replace the soil. If the work be done as it ought to be, no more sprouts will be seen that year, and generally, very few the next.

THE CAPACITY OF CISTERNS. The simple rule by which farmers and others can determine the contents of a cistern, circular in form, and of equal size at top and bottom, is this: Find the depth and diameter in inches; square the diameter, and multiply the square by the decimal 0034, which will find the quantity of gallons—231 cubic inches being a gallon—for one inch in depth. Multiply this by the depth, and divide by 33.6, and the result will be the number of barrels the cistern will hold.

HOW TO DESTROY COCKROACHES, RATS, AND MICE.—Take a sixpenny loaf of bread, the staler the better, reduce it to a crumb, then in a pot of water put two spoonfuls of cayenne pepper, one spoonful of pulverized anise seed, half a dram of saltpetre, the same of white lead, and a wineglass of extract of hysop. Now throw in your crumbs of bread; digest for six hours in a moderate heat; strain through a cloth; add thereto thirty drops of the tincture of quassia, and let it stand till next day, and then bottle it. Some lumps of sugar saturated with this liquor will be a speedy cure for cockroaches. Some pieces of bread saturated with it will destroy all the rats and mice. The above is extensively manufactured and sold at a great profit.

WATER IN BARN-YARDS. Such is the solvent power of water, that if admitted in large quantities into barn-yards, it will dissolve into the earth, or into streams and ponds, a large share of fertilizing salts or manure. The manure of stalls should, if possible, be housed; it should be kept moist with the urine of animals, and sufficient litter should be used to absorb the whole of this, unless it be preserved in a tank, to be used as a liquid manure, the policy of which is thought to be doubtful in this country, where labor is high. The true proceeding for barn-yard manure is to keep it as far as possible moist, but not to suffer it to be drenched. If dry and hot, it gives its nutritious qualities to the winds; if drenched, it loses its most fertilizing salts; when either scorched or drenched it is decomposed faster, and does not retain in itself a due proportion of its enriching properties.—Selected.

WATER IN BARN-YARDS. A correspondent of the Prairie Farmer presents the following method of using water melons: "I endeavor, every year, to raise a good water-melon patch. They are a healthy and delightful fruit, I think. I cultivate the icing variety, plant early in May, and again toward the end of the month, so that they may come in succession. When they commence ripening, we commence cutting, and use them freely during the hot weather. When the weather becomes cool in September, we haul a quantity of them to the house, split them open, with a spoon scrape out the pulp in a caldron, and strain the water into vessels. We boil it in an iron vessel, then put in apples or peaches, like making apple-butter, and boil slowly until the fruit is well cooked, then spiced to taste, and you have something that most people will prefer to apple-butter or any kind of preserves. Or the syrup may be boiled without fruit, down to molasses, which will be found to be as fine as any sugar-house molasses. We have made in a fall as much as ten gallons of the apple-butter, if I may so call it, and molasses which has kept in fine condition till May."

CUT STRAW FOR MANURE.—Not only the economy of cut feed recommends the practice to the farmer, but, as materials designed merely as bedding for animals, the plan is valuable. Where this is done, the manure is much more readily rotted, while it can be spread upon the land with far greater facility and uniformity. This point is not generally considered sufficiently. Manure while rotting in the yard is constantly losing some part of its most valuable elements, and yet long straw cannot well be incorporated with the soil until it is thoroughly decomposed, and by cutting it short it can be well distributed, even without any previous rotting, and then the elements escaping during decomposition are retained in the soil for the use of growing plants.—Selected.

SEVEN HEADED WHEAT.—We have been shown by Mr. McCollough, of this place, a few sample heads of the seven headed wheat, which we think a little head of any of the cereals yet exhibited. They are from the farm of Mr. H. Hudson, on Santa Rosa creek, who has a four acre patch of this variety, which he confidently expects will yield him from seventy to eighty bushels per acre.—Paluma (California Journal).

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