

fruit may well be planted on good alluvial land where there is a local demand, also lemons where the soil is deep and well drained and the climate suitable. Such land is also suitable for walnuts. Sweet chestnuts of a good variety are becoming popular, and are suitably placed on hilly country. Filberts are also worth more consideration, and some plantations are returning very good crops. Good shelter-belts are beneficial in most localities, and in many they are indispensable.

Should the season be wet see that the water does not lie about the orchard; if it does so a good plough-furrow in the right place will often lead it off. On wet days overhaul motors, implements, and harness; a proper application of oil and paint will save depreciation and give smooth continuous working in the busy season.

The demand for fruit may now be expected to increase. Market the fruit from store in the right order of varieties, and pack to recognized standards. Waste fruit should not be allowed to lie around in buckets or other receptacles, but should be cleaned up daily and fed to stock or buried underground, and not tipped out to rot on adjacent land, as is so often done.

—W. C. Hyde, Orchard Instructor, Nelson.

CITRUS FRUITS.

Delayed red-oil spray at 1-40 may yet be applied if found necessary, care being taken not to make the application in any area in which early frosts have affected the trees in the slightest degree, thus weakening their vitality for the time being.

FIREBLIGHT.

The attention of orchardists and others who have common white blossoming hawthorn (*Crataegus oxycantha*) growing on their properties is directed to clauses 2 and 3 of the Fireblight Act, 1922, as follows: "In the case of those districts and parts of districts included in the Second Schedule, all hawthorn shall, between the 1st day of June, 1923, and the 31st day of July, 1923, be cut down so as to prevent any part thereof from flowering, and thereafter shall be similarly cut down in the month of June or July in each year and at such other times as may be necessary to prevent any part thereof from flowering. In the case of the district and parts of districts included in the Third Schedule, wherein fireblight is known to exist, all hawthorn growing therein shall be completely destroyed before the 30th day of June, 1923, and any plants which may appear subsequently shall forthwith be completely destroyed."

—J. W. Collard, Orchard Instructor, Auckland.

POULTRY-KEEPING.

MATING THE BREEDING-BIRDS.

THE busiest season of the year and the most important one—that for hatching and rearing young stock—is now near at hand. This implies the necessity of getting the breeding-birds mated up at the earliest possible moment; it is a mistake to delay putting the birds together until just before eggs are required for hatching purposes. Every opportunity should be given them to become well settled down and in a proper breeding-condition before the work of incubation commences. This will not only ensure a greater proportion of fertile eggs, but in addition will tend greatly towards their containing stronger germs. When pens are first mated up it frequently happens that the male bird will exhaust himself, and it may be weeks before he regains a condition to produce even a fair percentage of fertile eggs. This does not apply to the same extent where all the hens are not in a laying-condition.

Wise poultrymen, and those who have acted in accordance with advice given previously in the *Journal*, will have selected and specially marked the best breeding specimens during the late autumn, or at some time before the birds moulted. It is at that period of the year that certain signs manifest themselves in a striking manner whereby the good layer can be distinguished from the poor one.