

With most of the longwooled breeds the following plan can be adopted with safety. When going among the ewes that are lambing carry a supply of binder-twine and a few dog-collars. Catch any ewe that has left her lamb and will not take to it, put a collar round her neck, and fasten her with a short length of twine to a stake or a post in the fence, leaving her there until she has taken to the lamb properly. This allows the lamb to draw the milk without being knocked about. The same can also be done with a ewe which has lost her lamb, and with which it is intended to put a foster-lamb. When the ewe has taken to the lamb they can be let go.

—J. G. Cook, *Live-stock Division.*

## THE ORCHARD.

### EARLY SPRING WORK.

THE stone-fruit trees will commence to make new growth early in August, and the pip-fruits at the beginning of September; the respective prunings, generally, should be completed before those dates. This operation affords an excellent opportunity for the close inspection of individual trees. Full advantage should be taken of this opportunity to mark trees specially infected with disease, to carefully pull any suckers growing from the roots, to treat any large branches that are broken or sprung, and to trim wounds made by implements and give them a dressing of tar.

Just before the buds of the stone-fruit trees start to swell an application of bordeaux, 8-6-40, should be made for the prevention of leaf-curl, brown-rot, and shot-hole fungus—all serious diseases to which these trees are prone. Trees of this kind suffering from scale or aphid parasites should be further sprayed with red oil, 1-20, before bud-movement. Further spraying of orchard-trees can then be deferred until September. There is only one way of mixing bordeaux spray effectively, and that is to dissolve and fully dilute each ingredient before mixing. It is a little troublesome to place diluting-tubs on hand in a suitable position, but once this is done the correct method is as quick as any other way.

Considering the amount of spraying to be done, growers accustomed to fill their spray-tanks through small taps or by bucketing water out of creeks or dams are strongly recommended, on the score of economy, to adopt better methods as soon as possible. Elevated water-tanks with a 2 in. faucet form the best method of supply, but where water has to be picked up from dams or creeks a good horizontal hand-pump should be used.

The orchard should be ploughed now as soon as it is sufficiently dry; make a clean neat job, turning the land over close up to the trees and carrying the ploughing as near the fences as it is possible to get.

An important factor in successful modern horticulture is the proper use of manures. Varieties of orchard-trees such as are grown in this country, selected for early maturing and heavy cropping, cannot maintain these characteristics without generous manuring. Neglect in this respect means a debilitated tree, susceptible to disease and easily burnt by sprays. A very satisfactory treatment has been to harrow in a dressing of superphosphate and sulphate of potash after the first ploughing, followed by a dressing of nitrate of soda or sulphate of ammonia as the trees come into blossom; but, of course, each orchard must be studied separately if successful manuring is to be accomplished. Locality, previous treatment, and kinds and varieties of trees are some of the points which have to be taken into consideration. Strong-growing Winter Cole pear-trees obviously do not want the forcing of nitrates as do rather stunted Sturmer apple-trees. If in doubt the local Orchard Instructor may be consulted in this matter. Trees that are well conditioned by proper feeding with manures are more resistant to disease, and will stand stronger sprays and bear fruit of superior quality.

Any planting contemplated is best finished during this month. Hares and rabbits are usually troublesome at this season of the year, especially among young trees; they do not confine themselves to these, however, in a hard season. Almost any spray applied to the butts and lower branches renders these distasteful, and is an effective deterrent.

Keep a close watch on fruit in store, and note developments. The last of the earlier varieties should be cleared during this month.

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