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Plant A Tree

Just because you missed Arbor Day, don't think you've missed your chance to plant a tree this year. "There's still time to add a tree to your home landscape this spring," says Dr. Charles Dunham, extension horticulturist at the University of Delaware. But, he adds, you should do it fairly soon, before hot weather comes.

There are a number of things to consider in planting a tree. First is the location. Take into account the ornamental effects of the tree you choose, in relation to your house. A handsome tree can make a good frame or backdrop for the building.

Distance of the tree from the house is important to think about, though, if you use it this way. Although trees look well planted close to houses, there may be practical problems that develop as the tree grows. You may need to keep branches pruned to keep them from damaging the house. Large trees should usually be placed at a minimum of 15 to 20 feet away from a building. Also, be sure that the tree isn't planted where it will later interfere with electric or telephone lines. To prevent this, plant it at least 6 to 10 feet to one side of any utility lines.

Another important consideration in locating trees on home properties is shade. Shade can add greatly to your summer comfort and the enjoyment of outdoor areas in the yard. Shade is most welcome from early to late afternoon. So make sure that trees planted for shade are to the south and west of the area to be shaded.

Once the location is chosen, a decision must be made as to the kind of tree to plant. If the soil is average, almost any kind of tree will grow. However, in either very wet or dry areas trees must be selected that will tolerate these conditions. Some shade trees that will grow in wet areas include: sweet gum, red maple, willow oak and pin oak. Kinds for dry soils include: Chinese elm, honey locust, Japanese sophora and Ailanthus or Tree of Heaven.

Size is another important consideration in tree selection. Average city lots have room for only one or two large trees but can utilize several small or medium sized trees. Small trees are also easier to maintain. Also, in these size groups are many of the flowering trees that add an extra element of beauty to the landscape. Good small trees 20 to 25 feet in height would include Japanese maple, dogwood, crabapples, magnolias (except the evergreen magnolia), hornbeam, flowering cherries and the golden rain tree.

Watch for Tomato Pinworms

Vegetable farmers should keep a sharp watch for tomato pinworms, caution scientists in the Pennsylvania Agriculture Department's Bureau of Plant Industry.

These tiny insects are native to the warm agricultural areas of southern California, Hawaii, Texas and Mexico. According to state entomologists, they were reintroduced into Pennsylvania greenhouses last year.

Dr. A. G. Wheeler Jr. and James F. Stimmel, entomologists in the department's Bureau of Plant Industry, said the tiny moths lay eggs, which are just visible to the naked eye, on the undersides of leaves.

After hatching, the caterpillars tunnel between the upper and lower leaf surfaces, forming large blotched areas or mines. Older caterpillars may bore into the tomatoes, making them susceptible to decay.

An infestation of tomato pinworms was discoverd in several Pennsylvania greenhouses in 1931, causing damage to 50 percent of the plants. When the insects spread to a field, damage was so severe that only three baskets of marketable tomatoes could be obtained from an acre.

Wheeler and Stimmel advised that the "best defense against this pest is to prevent its entry into Pennsylvania."

In this respect, department inspectors check tomatoes shipped into Pennsylvania But, noted department officials, inspectors cannot examine every plant in a shipment containing several million plants.

Fortunately, tomato pinworms rarely become established as a pest in the field or greenhouse in Pennsylvania, according to Wheeler and Stimmel. But, they ask that any observed pinworms damage be reported to the department.

Agriquotes . . .

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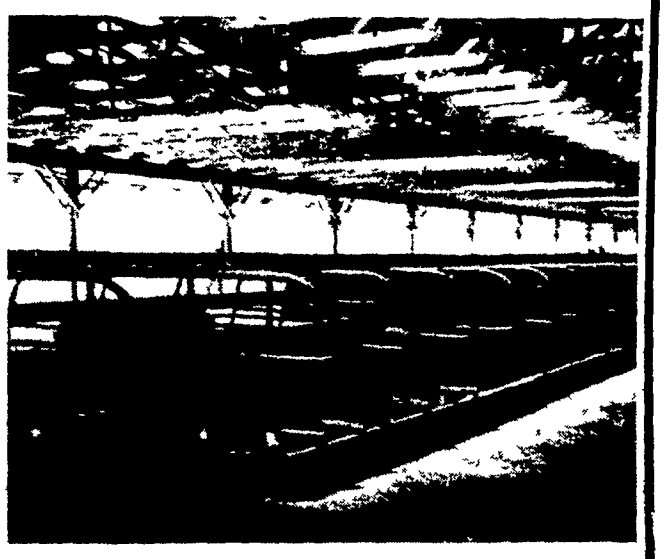

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