

# Dwarf trellis trees can double apple yields

BIGLERVILLE — Dwarf apple trees grown on a trellis, making a wall of fruit, can double the yield of standard-sized trees, as shown by several years of experiments at Penn State University

At eight to 12 years of age, such fruit walls can produce average yields of 1,000 bushels per acre, twice that of standard trees of similar age.

Developer of these high-yielding

apple trees is Loren D. Tukey, scientist in fruit culture with the College of Agriculture at Penn State. He calls the tree form a low-trellis hedgerow and says such hedgerows increase the volume of the tree devoted to bearing fruit while using fewer limbs for support.

Over the past 20 years, Tukey has experimented with several orchards using dwarf apple trees grown on M9 and M26 rootstocks

Such rootstocks help to increase maximum plant density for fruiting areas. The trees also produce large crops sooner than standard trees. Such apple tree systems are called intensive plantings

"In intensive plantings, the major cost factor in establishment is the greater number of trees being used rather than the cost of the support system required,"

Tukey affirmed

Since the trellis-trained dwarf trees are only six to eight feet tall, smaller sized equipment can be used than for standard trees. Energy per unit of production is lower than on standard trees, Tukey noted, since yields are earlier and higher.

The low-trellis hedgerow consists of a series of posts and four wires, each 18 inches apart, with the top wire at six feet. The trees are trained on these wires.

The most common tree training system is one Tukey calls the "oblique palmette." This tree form inclines limbs at a 30 to 45 degree angle from the horizontal and extends branches into adjacent trees. This makes a wall for bearing fruit.

Obviously, the low-trellis hedgerow requires a major management change from han-

dling individual trees. First, the outer fruiting mantle or fruit-bearing area is developed. After this, training and pruning is almost totally devoted to caring for the fruiting mantle and regulating growth of trees.

Another tree form, the slender spindle, resembles a small Christmas tree in shape. A pole at each tree support the central trunk. Unlike the oblique palmette, a row consists of a group of individual trees.

"Yields of intensively grown apple trees should reach 900 to 1200 bushels per acre annually," he stated.

"In our research orchard at Rock Springs in Centre County, apples have generally measured 2 3/4 inches in diameter or larger for 65 percent of the crop. Fruit size has been an important factor in achieving high yields," he added.

## School to offer wood tech class

WILLIAMSPORT — Applications are now being accepted for the first Wood Products Technology class at The Williamsport Area Community College, Williamsport. The first classes for the new two-year associate degree program start this August.

According to Earth Science Division Director, Joseph Sick, Wood Products Technology focuses on the procurement, manufacture and buying and selling of various wood products.

Graduates will be prepared for positions as lumber salespeople, lumber buyers, log buyers, sawmill managers, sawyers, dry kiln operator, yard foreman, lumber graders, equipment salesmen, production management personnel, forest research technicians, production managers and quality controllers.

The purpose of the new program

is to provide students with a general education in business management positions in the wood industry.

Wood products technology combines classroom instruction with hands on learning experiences

Wood Products courses will be taught at the Earth Science Campus, near Allenwood. Among the resources available to students at the campus are sawmill, dry kiln, and drying yard. The program also includes a 200-hours internship in the wood products



industry, this providing students with the opportunity of learning on-the-job.

For more information, contact Admissions, The Williamsport Area Community College, 1005 West Third Street, Williamsport, Pa. 17701. Phone 717/322-0149.

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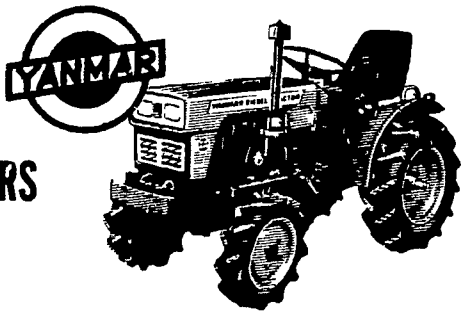
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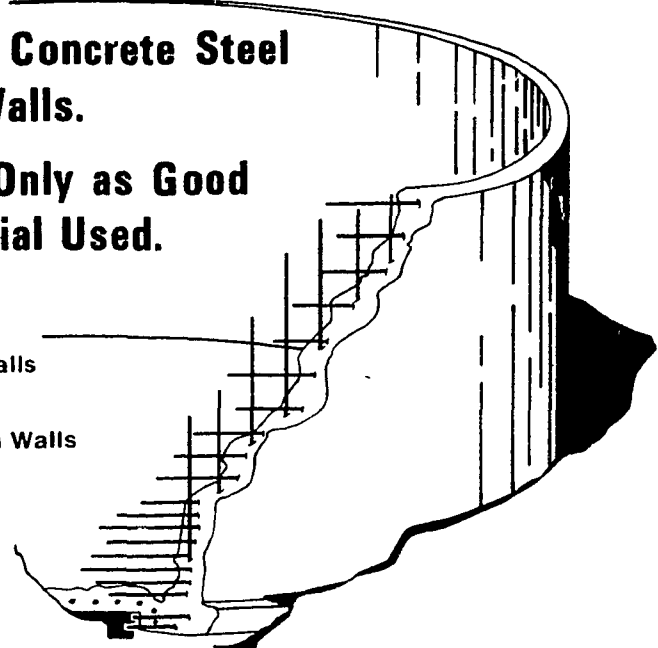
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