



Prune To Improve Your Plants

There is no ideal time to prune all plants that's what makes pruning such a tricky chore, says Master Gardener-in-Training Connie Vermeulen of Woodside, Ont.

Master Gardeners are gardening enthusiasts who have received formal horticultural training through the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food's Master Gardener program.

Once trained, Master Gardeners are available to answer questions from the public.

Trees and shrubs, grown for their blooms in spring and early summer, should be pruned after they have bloomed.

On the other hand, late-flowering shrubs that flower on the current season's growth should be pruned in the spring, prior to active growth.

Fruit trees are pruned prior to leafing out in early spring.

Mature trees should be thinned out to prevent crowding, ensure free air circulation and penetration of light to help fruit ripen evenly.

Remove branches that grow inwards and those that are in contact rubbing and wearing each other.

This allows the tree to grow to the outside and upwards, where it will be exposed to the maximum amount of light.

On young fruit trees, cut lateral branches back to within 50 cm. to 60 cm. of the trunk to encourage branching.

The tip of the leader branch should be cut back only slightly.

"Leave no more than four well-placed branches when pruning a young fruit tree," she said.

Deciduous trees need to be pruned every three to five years.

Remove dead and/or diseased branches and prune to restore the

plant's natural form.

Evergreens usually require little or no pruning at all.

They may be pruned, if necessary, just prior to active growth in April and May.

Junipers and yews that have a tendency to spread, may be cut back just prior to active growth in June.

Hide the cut by pruning at an overlapping branch.

As with any gardening job, the right tools make the job a lot easier, she said.

A sharp pruning saw is required for the larger cuts and will do a better job for any size of cut than even the best pruning shears.

So, use a pruning saw wherever possible.

Good quality hand pruners may be used too, but avoid long-handled pruners because they tend to leave stubs.

The key to pruning is to make clean, flush cuts.

Find the branch "collar" the tissue tissue separating the branch from the main stem and place your saw in front of the ridge and cut downward and slightly outward.

This will allow you to remove the branch without damaging the main stem.

And by leaving the "collar", there is less chance of infection.

Pruning paint has been found to be of no benefit to the process of wound closure.

But if you wish, you may apply a thin coat of commercial material to wounds that are more than four cm in diameter.

Apply the wound paint only to the wound; painting the bark all around the trunk can kill the tree.

Step by step guide leads to perfect pastry

(NC)—Good pastry requires a light touch and as little handling or mixing as possible.

Here's a recipe for Standard Plain Pastry with step by step instructions.

Standard Double Crust Pastry
Makes 1 double-crust pie or 2 pie shells

2 cups (500 ml) ROBIN HOOD All purpose Flour

3/4 tsp. (4 ml) salt

1 cup (250 ml) CRISCO shortening

4 tbsp. (60 ml) ice water

*For ROBIN HOOD Cake and Pastry Flour use: 2-1/4 cups (550 ml) flour and 3/4 cup (175 ml) shortening.

1. Combine flour and salt in mixing bowl. Measure ingredients accurately. Cut room temperature shortening into flour with pastry blender or 2 knives until mixture is uniform and resembles large peas. OVERMIXING leads to tough pastry.

2. Sprinkle with ice water, one spoonful at a time, mixing lightly with a fork. Add just enough water to form dough into a firm ball with a minimum of handling. Chill 15-30 minutes for easier rolling.

3. Divide dough in half and shape each into a ball. On a floured surface, flatten ball into a circle by pressing with palm of hand across in both directions.

4. Roll dough to a uniform thickness in spoke fashion from centre to

edge with light even strokes. Reshape circle with your hands as you work. If dough sticks, dust lightly with flour. Overworking and too much flour will toughen pastry.

5. For easy transfer to pie plate, slide spatula under dough to loosen it, then lift one edge of pastry onto pin and loosely wrap it around pin. Loosely unwrap pastry into pie plate.

6. Ease pastry into pie plate. Do not stretch the dough or it will shrink during baking. To repair tears, moisten edges and press together.

7. Trim dough 1/2" (1 cm) beyond edge of pan. For single shell, fold under and flute edge. For double crust fold top crust under bottom crust, seal and flute edge. Prick top crust. Bake as directed.

Baking:
*For double crust: prick top crust. Bake at 425 F (220 C) for 40-50 minutes or as directed.

*For baked shell (custard, pumpkin, quiche): do not prick dough.

*Baked shell (lemon, cream): prick dough with fork. Bake at 425 F (220 C) for 12-15 minutes. Cool, then fill or use as directed.

*Unbaked shell (custard, pumpkin, quiche) do not prick dough. Fill and bake as 450 F (230 C) for 30-40 minutes or as directed.

Pastry variations:

Orange Pastry
(For Cream Pies, Lemon or Orange Meringue pie and Tart Shells)

Add 1/2 tsp. grated orange rind to

dry ingredients in recipe for Standard Pastry. Substitute orange juice for water.

Cheese Pastry

Use recipe for standard Pastry but stir 1/2 cup (125 ml) grated sharp cheese into shortening-flour mixture. Proceed as directed in recipe.

The New Farmer

by Marc Reppin

Farming, like most other occupations, is changing. The most recent Statistics Canada Census of Agriculture has identified several trends which have gained momentum in the early 1980's. Among the most interesting: the growing number of female farmers.

That more women are taking to farming is somewhat unexpected if we consider that Canada has eight per cent fewer farms today than in 1981. The number of female farm operators has nonetheless increased by 23 per cent over the past five years. However, the odds are still very good that most farmers bidding at an auction will be male. Despite their recent gains, women account for only five per cent of all farm operators.

Female farm operators remain a small minority, and farms operated by women tend to generate less income than those operated by men. In fact, the average gross sales of farms operated by women total \$39,000, little more than half the average sales of male operated farms. Yet, \$39,000 still represents a 70 per cent jump over 1981.

But, while they still earn less, female farm operators must still contend with the same difficult economic conditions that have beleaguered farmers for most of this decade. This added pressure of earning less perhaps explains why more are choosing to rent the land they farm, and why more women are spending more of their time working off the farm. Women are using these measures of coping at a rate far faster than men. For example, whereas female farmers worked 50 days off the farm in 1981, they now work 61 days, an increase which pulled them to within eight days of their male counterparts.

Clearly, the demographics of farming are changing. But farming is changing in other ways too. The uncertain economy, growing concern for the environment, and the rapid development of high technology are exerting increasing pressure on today's farmer. Statistics Canada's role is to collect information that would facilitate the study of how, and to what extent, these and other pressures will affect farming in the 1990's. Users of Census of Agriculture data are invited to attend a meeting to voice their opinion about what should be asked on the 1991 Census. Meet-

ings, hosted by a representative of Statistics Canada, will be held in each province in April or May 1988. Daily newspapers across Canada will publish the exact dates and locations of the meetings.

For more information, please contact Lyne Bélanger-Pareé (613-951-8292), Communications Division, Statistics Canada. Cet article de fond est aussi disponible en français.

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BILL BRAMAH'S ONTARIO



I guess I've been doing stories in and around the village of Oshweken for the past decade or so.

It's on the Six Nations Reserve south of Brantford and when we're travelling in the district we generally drop in to see what's going on.

We've seen a lot of changes - especially in the last five years. Oshweken has become a striking example of the blending of the old and the new.

For instance, have you ever seen a modern shopping plaza on a reserve? There's one at Oshweken. It's thought to be the only one in the country!

It has about 20 stores and businesses including a super-market, a beauty salon, a sports shop and so on, along with some offices.

But the plaza has a very distinctive native style. The store fronts are of wood and in the centre of the parking lot are two huge, heavy, wooden structures crossed to give a teepee effect. It's a plaza with the native touch.

Florence Hill showed us around. We'd met her before. Mrs. Hill is as close to a mover and a shaker as

you'll find on the reserve. She's active in all sorts of projects and activities. But she gets things done in a quiet way -- the easy-flowing way native people do things.

She's highly regarded in the community, and there's a school named after her husband, J.C. Hill, who was superintendent of schools in the district for many years. I asked Florence about other changes we'd noticed - especially new homes.

"A lot of it has to do with our young people," she said. "Many have become professionals, and some are entrepreneurs who have returned here to start various enterprises. We're moving into the computer age, but also keeping our fundamental traditions."

Later, we drove past the Long House. It's where the traditions of native spirituality are carried out in weddings, funerals, festivals, as well as meetings of the band's council.

It's an old log building we've seen many times in the past and it's still an integral part of life in the village. Somehow, the Six Nations seems to be bridging the gap between ancient and modern.

By the way, one of the most unusual things we saw at the new shopping plaza was a Chinese restaurant!

It's owned and operated by residents of Oshweken, but there's a Chinese cook. Needless to say, he's the only Chinese man in town.