

Fruit of the Loam

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Prune your trees today!



There is a late winter or early spring job you should be doing now at your house. That little but important chore is pruning trees.

The best time to prune fruit, shade or ornamental trees is now in my opinion. There are no leaves on the trees and you can see the form and structure and shape of the trees and can easily mold those trees with your pruning.

When we prune trees, especially a shade tree we want to stand under some day, we must cut off lower branches. A branch at three or four feet off the ground on a young tree might be the size of your finger. As the tree gets taller and bigger that branch that was finger size at three or four feet off the ground will still be there but get much, much larger around. You really don't want any branches below eight feet on a shade tree but you don't cut off all the lower branches one day in the spring. You cut off a couple each year for several years. You can prune too much in one year and take away energy producers needed for growth. Energy producers are the leaves!

On all trees the idea is to prune to open up the center of the tree to let in light. So any branch that is growing back into the center of the tree instead of away from the center needs removed. If you have branches on top of each other or crossing over each other remove them. Now remember, never remove more than 25% of the tree during your yearly pruning.

The best time to look for borers on your trees is while pruning. The time to apply borer controls is now. *Fertilome Borer Control* is a once a year application. You mix in a bucket and pour around the tree. Then start the water. It is as simple as that! We grow our own and that's the difference.

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