

PRUNING AND TREE MANAGEMENT

Walnut Staking: G. S. Sibbett, G. C. Martin

Stakes used to support growth of newly planted Serr and Ashley walnut trees were investigated in relation to their influence on tree growth and tree breakage. Growth, caliper, and taper of trees having either 2" x 2" x 8' or 3/4" x 3/4" x 6' stakes, were compared with those having no stake.

Serr: In 1970 no significant difference occurred in height, caliper at 2.5' or 4', taper, or breakage of Serr walnut although in the no-stake treatment trees had greater taper. In 1971, staking had significant, detrimental effect on both taper and trunk caliper at 2.5' and 4'.

Ashley: In 1971 no significant difference between 2" x 2" x 8' stake or 3/4" x 3/4" x 6' stake compared with no-stake occurred in tree height or caliper at 4'. No breakage in any treatment occurred and all treatments made substantial tree height for adequate trunks.

Minimum Pruning of Walnuts: T. Aldrich

Minimum pruning of the Ashley walnut variety outyields Ashley trees receiving the modified central-leader pruning method. Minimum pruning starts with the dormant pruning after the second year's growth in the orchard. At this time the leader and primary scaffold branches are cut back the desired length. But other branches which compete with the leader and the primary branches are left in the tree intact. For subsequent dormant prunings only those limbs which are desired to develop into framework are headed back.

Through the eighth leaf minimum pruned trees yielded a total of 257 lbs per tree as compared with a yield of 184 lbs from trees receiving the modified central-leader primary method.

Trunk circumference did not vary between the 2 treatments. In 1971 (eighth leaf) the nut weight declined slightly in the minimum pruned trees, however, crackout percent was not affected.