



Today's program will be recorded and posted on our website and our Facebook page.

[https://ucanr.edu/sites/Amador County MGs/](https://ucanr.edu/sites/Amador_County_MGs/)

Look under "Classes & Events" then "Handouts & Presentations" from our home page. Today's handouts will also be posted here.

<https://www.facebook.com/UCCEAmadorMG/>

Look for "Facebook Live" during the meeting or find the video link on our feed.

Late Summer Fruit Tree Pruning

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UCCE Master Gardener
Amador County, CA

This presentation is being recorded

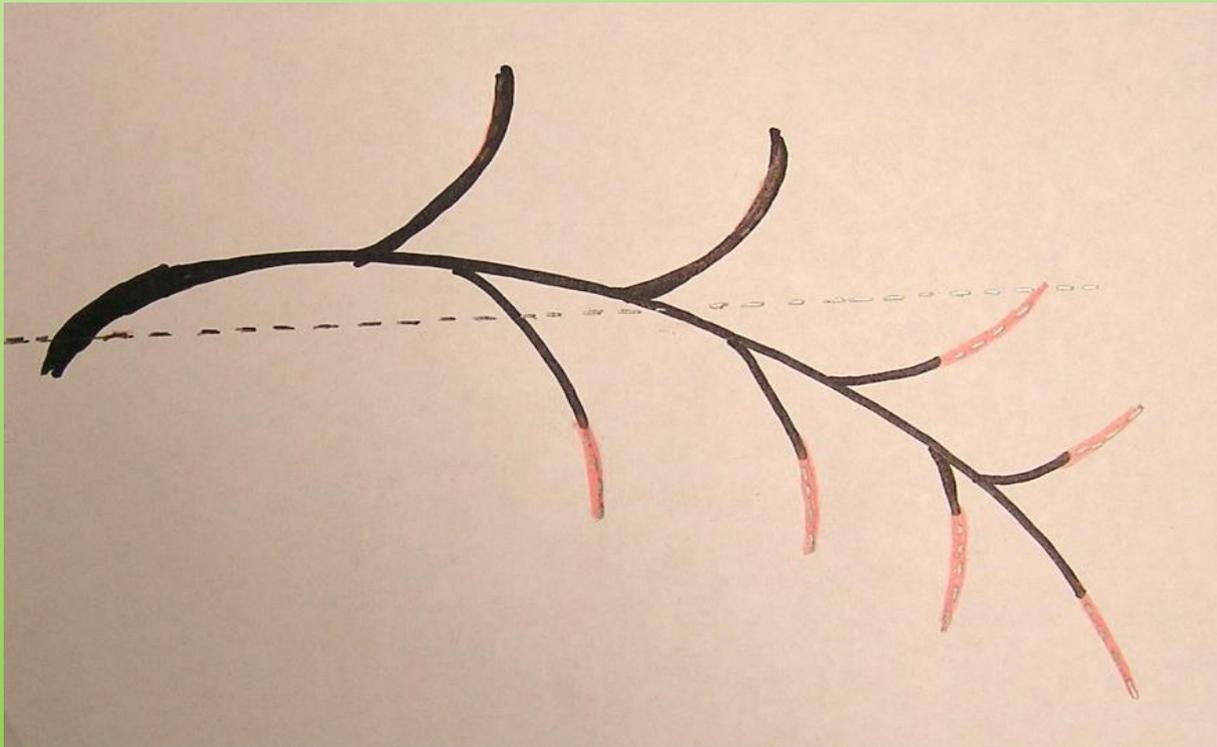
Types of Pruning cuts

Heading cuts.

- A terminal portion of the shoot or branch is removed and the basal portion remains attached to the tree.
- Avoid heading cuts in winter. Make heading cuts in late spring, after the growth spurt, or in Aug. / Sept.
- If you want or need growth then head cut in winter.

Exception

Shoots/buds growing horizontally, with the terminal end tipping lower than the limb, can be headed without forcing new growth.



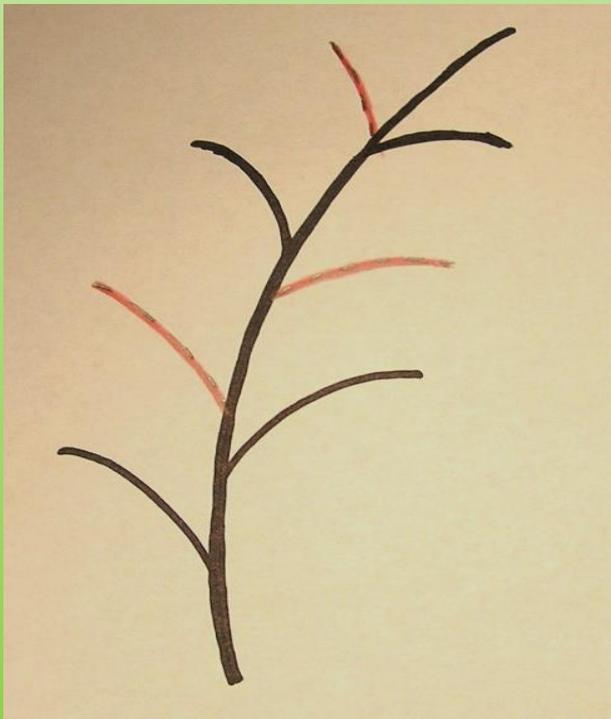
Thinning cuts.

- Entire shoot or branches are removed at the base.
- With thinning cuts, eliminate the big and keep the weak.

Thinning cuts produce fruit.

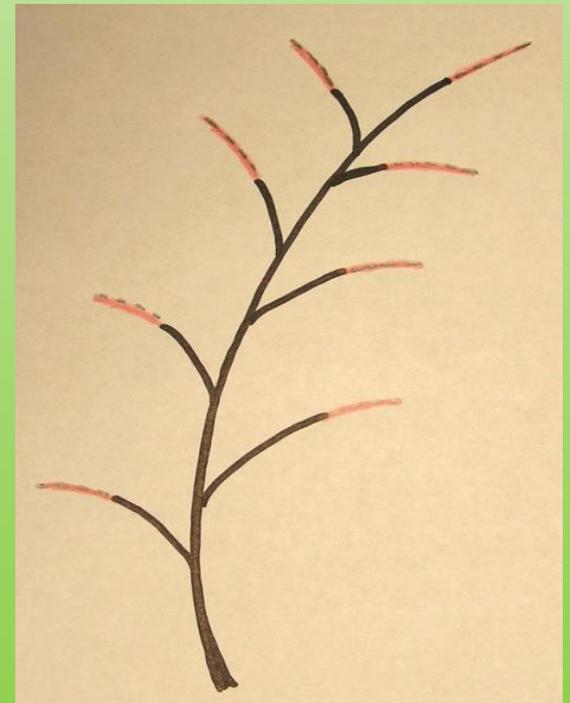
Relative effects of thinning vs. heading

	<u>Thinning</u>	<u>Heading</u>
Terminal bud removal-----	50%	100%
Invigoration effect -----	Small	Large
Spur formation next year-	More	Less



Thinning

Heading



Goals of the home orchard are to have trees that are:

- Structurally strong.
- Bear high quality fruit.
- Of a size, easy and safe to maintain.



Together, pruning and training permit us to:

- Control tree size.
- Develop structural strength.
- Distribute sunlight throughout the tree.
- Renew flowering or fruit wood.
- Correct problems.

Equipment Needed For Pruning

By pass shears (2 scissor like blades)



Keep all tools sharp

➤ Loppers



➤ Pruning Saw



18' lopper, poll saw

6' lopper



Power hedger

8' pole chain saw



Tree size:

- Standard-----25/30 ft.
- Semi-dwarf-----15/20 ft.
- Dwarf-----8/10 ft.

Optional pruning systems

Open center

Modified central leader



Central leader



Espalier



When to prune

- **Early spring**, prune stone fruits (peaches, nectarines, plums) after buds break.
- **Summer**, is the most important time to thin head or remove vigorous upright shoots to control tree height and develop branches

When to prune

- **Late summer**, (after fruit picking), control and shape new growth.
- **Winter** (dormant). Absence of leaves allows a clear view of the tree framework. Thin or head any branches that were not adequately pruned in the growing season.

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Exception:

Apricots should be pruned six weeks prior to the first rains, or early spring after the rain stops. The branch killing disease “eutypa die back” can be a major problem for apricots during wet conditions.

Upright growth patterns

- Cherry
- Plum
- Pear
- Apple



- Bend branches outward.
Stick – board - water bottle - rope

Bend branches outward

Rope



Water bottle



Spreading growth patterns

- Apricot
- Nectarine
- Peach
- Almond



Force outward and upward.

Why summer prune?



- Fruit needs light to ripen properly.
- Puts energy into fruit production.

Pruning Cuts

- Make a 45 degree angle cut across the branch
To prevent water from ponding on it.
- Make thinning cuts beyond the
Branch collar.
- Leave pruning cuts open (no emulsions).



Lambert cherry tree

Planted then head cut Feb. '07



Lambert cherry tree

Sept. '07



Pruning controls



- Tree size
- Tree shape
- Tree structure

Pruning young trees



- Makes a good foundation.
- Stronger branches
- Stronger root system.



- Leave 3 or 4 branches stair stepped, in a wagon wheel shape.

Lambert cherry tree

2 years later Dec. '09



Fuji Apple

Planted Feb. Pruned in Sept. 07



Creating the future

Good height



Good scaffold



Apple pruned Sept. 1, 2020

Before

After







Center needs opening up



Shorten interior branches

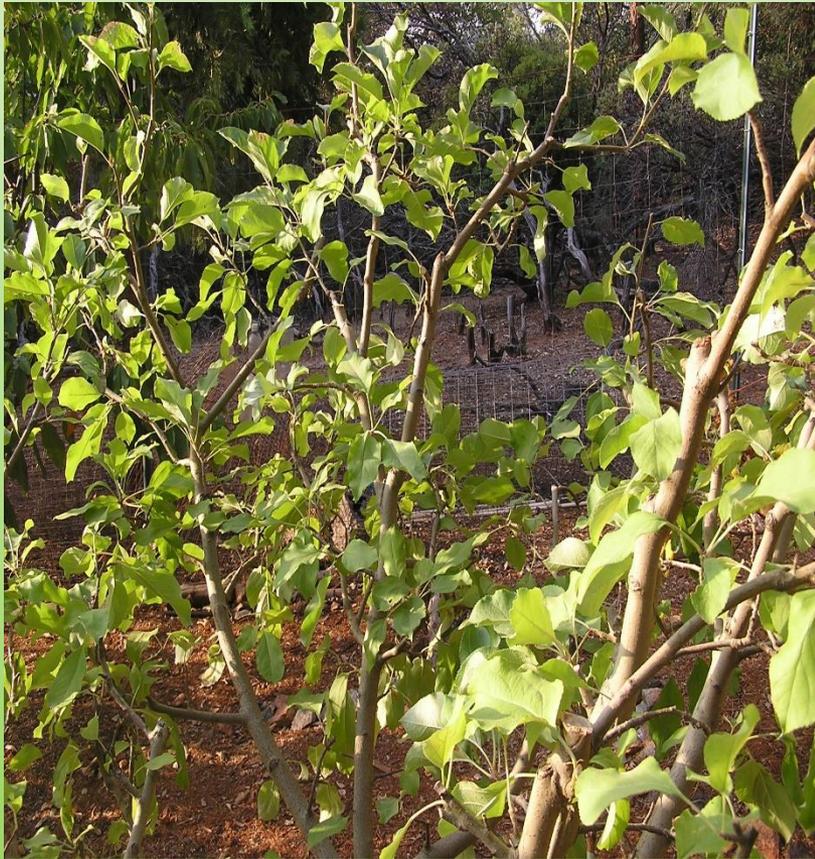


Protect from sun burning the branch

Leave 1 - 2 buds or leaves



Interior branches protected



Center of tree opened up



18' fruit tree ladder



Restoring a Derelict Orchard

- In Sept. remove up to 3 major limbs to provide better light distribution.
- Peel new shoots as necessary in April and May.
- It may be necessary to repeat this several years in a row to achieve the desired shape.

- Pruning wood older than two years old will cause water sprouts.
- Water sprouts will continue to grow through late summer.
- Remove water sprouts in April / May by peeling them off.

Removing 7' - 8' from apricot tree





Pear tree in late summer





Pear tree
following
summer

Pears picked

August 2020



Pluots



The key to pruning

- Major winter pruning will cause more vigorous growth.
- Understanding the timing and regulation of vegetative growth allows predictable response to certain types of pruning.
- Summer pruning retards growth.

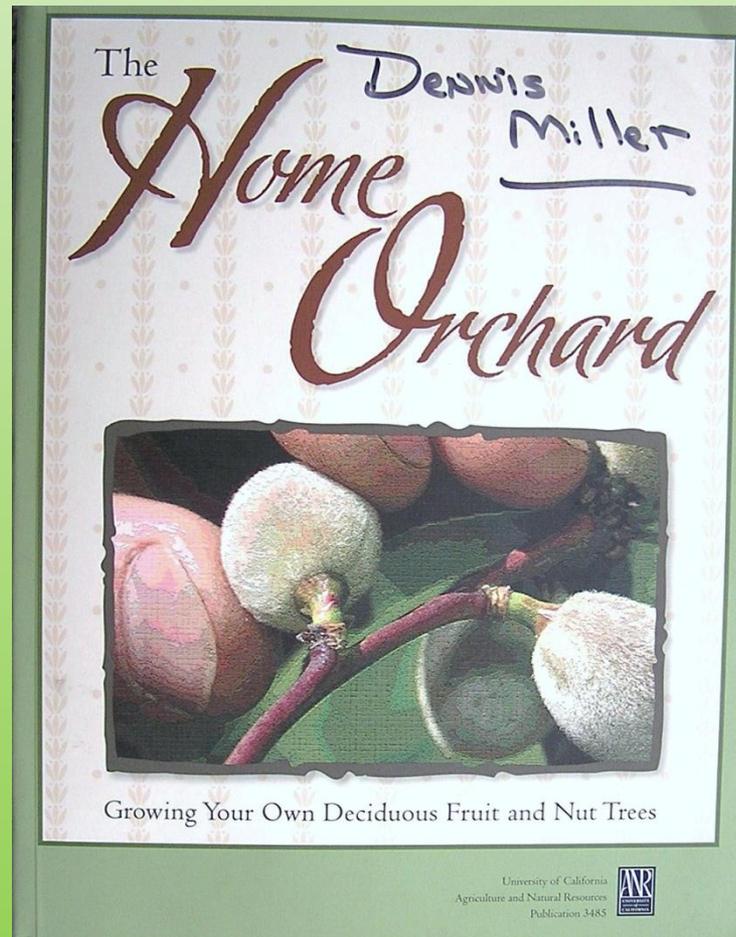
References:

Professor Ted DeJong, U. C. Davis Plant Science Dept.

Kevin Day, Farm Advisor, Tulare County, Ca.

“The Home Orchard”

Chuck Ingels, Pam Geisel and Maxwell Norton



Thanks for your attention



Any Questions on Fruit Tree Pruning?

UC Master Gardeners of Amador County are working by phone and email to answer your gardening questions!

Phone: 209-223-6838

Email: mgamador@ucanr.edu

Facebook: @UCCEAmadorMG

Not in Amador County? Find your local Master Gardener program by doing a web search for “UCCE Master Gardener” and your county name.

