UPS AND DOWNS WITH AVOCADO TREES

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The saying that whatever goes up must come down applies to avocado growing. Avocado trees grow up. The fruit has to come down. With upright growing varieties such as the Bacon this means added expense in fruit harvesting.

The desirability of keeping upright growing varieties from growing too tall is something a cost conscious grower includes in his cultural operations. Cheaper picking offsets the added time and expense required for training the trees.

Row of young Bacons with crew cuts. Intersets have strong tendency for upright growth. Early training helps encourage spreading.

Training is very simple. The most satisfactory way is pinching back after each growth flush on young trees or new grafts the first summer and continuing for several seasons. The shaping should be continued for several years to obtain maximum spread. It should

be emphasized that this type of operation starts with very small trees or with new grafts. It is not possible to obtain good results by lopping back trees already growing upright. This lopping merely stimulates bud growth at the top and the tree continues to grow like a telephone pole.

If young trees or grafts have already grown so tall that they are unwieldy or top-heavy the best way to reshape them is by cutting down almost to the ground. Just like starting over again at topworking time. It's then a simple and convenient matter to pinch back new growth and shape the tree in the desired manner.

I've been nipped! Yes and with good reason. This young Bacon will get some heft, lose the beanpole shape.

Reaching for the sky! Sky high picking cost too. Untrained, this youngster will soon be out of sight.

Pinching back growth flushes caused this young Bacon graft to stay low and spread out. First year training of upright growing varieties is easy and effective. If started too late it's hard to get results without cutting tree back to a stump and beginning anew.