

Considerations when pruning

Pruning is a major management practice both in fruit trees and in forest trees but many farmers wonder what factors to put in consideration when choosing the branches to prune.

When choosing the branches to prune off, first assess the tree. This involves looking at the tree and making some judgments about the tree ie how healthy the tree is, the rate at which it has been growing, the setting in which the tree is growing, tree species which where our goal is to maximize the natural form which our species has.

Other factors

One important step when assessing the tree when moving around the tree from side to side, first find one central leader of the tree ie the branch growing through the centre of the tree trying to reach the sky.

Look out for bad branches from the tree and this involves those that are dead, damaged in some way or diseased. Focus on those ones first and remove them during pruning.

Also look out for competing branches. These involve branches that are competing with the central leader trying to prevent it from growing further taller. These should also be removed during the pruning.

Remove or reduce the competing branches to enable the natural leader to grow further.