2-1929

Beautifying the Home Grounds

A. L. Ford

Follow this and additional works at: http://openprairie.sdstate.edu/extension_circ

Recommended Citation
http://openprairie.sdstate.edu/extension_circ/279

This Circular is brought to you for free and open access by the SDSU Extension at Open PRAIRIE: Open Public Research Access Institutional Repository and Information Exchange. It has been accepted for inclusion in Extension Circulars by an authorized administrator of Open PRAIRIE: Open Public Research Access Institutional Repository and Information Exchange. For more information, please contact michael.biondo@sdstate.edu.
Beautifying
the
Home Grounds

Extension Service
South Dakota State College of Agriculture
and Mechanic Arts
Brookings, South Dakota
Trees for South Dakota

Large Deciduous Trees
- American Elm - Ulmus americana
- Hackberry - Celtis occidentalis
- Green Ash - Fraxinus lanceolata
- Chinese Elm - Ulmus pumila
- White Birch - Betula alba
- Niobe Willow - Salix alba vitellina pendula nov

Small Deciduous Trees
- Russian-olive - Elaeagnus angustifolia
- Siberian Pea-tree - Caragana arborescens
- American Mountain-ash - Sorbus americana
- Hawthorn (any native species of S. Dak.) - Crataegus sp.
- Hopa Red-flower Crab - Prunus pennsylvanica
- Mayday Tree - Prunus sp.
- Dolgo Crab - Prunus padus commutata

Temporary or Pioneer Deciduous Trees
- Boxelder - Acer negundo
- Northern Cottonwood - Populus monilifera
- Southwest Poplar - Populus sp.
- Soft Maple or Silver Maple - Populus sp.

Coniferous Trees (Evergreens)
- Black Hills Spruce (of S. Dakota) - Picea canadensis
- Blue Colorado Spruce - Picea pungens glauca
- Black Hills Pine (of S. Dakota) - Pinus ponderosa scopulorum

Ornamental Shrubs and Vines for South Dakota

Tall Growing Shrubs
- Ultimate height over 7 feet
  - Nannyberry - Viburnum lentago
  - Pembina or American Cranberrybush - Viburnum americanum
  - American Elder - Sambucus canadensis
  - Tatarian Honeysuckle - Lonicera tatarica
  - Persian Lilac - Syringa vulgaris
  - Smooth Sumac - Rhus glabra
  - Siberian Pea-tree - Caragana arborescens
  - Russian Olive - Elaeagnus angustifolia
  - Saskatoon or Juneberry - Amelanchier alnifolia
  - Buffaloberry - Shepherdia argentea

Medium Growing Shrubs
- Ultimate height 4 to 7 feet
  - Peking Cotoneaster - Cotoneaster acutifolia
  - Coral Dogwood - Cornus sibirica
  - Morrow Honeysuckle - Lonicera morrowi
  - Vanhoutte Spirea - Spiraea vanhouttei
  - Persian Lilac - Syringa persica
  - Ribes odoratum - Ribes nigrum
  - Sandcherry (native of S. Dakota) - Prunus besseyi
  - Red-osier Dogwood (native of S. Dakota) - Cornus stolonifera

Low Growing Shrubs
- Ultimate height under 4 feet
  - Mountain Currant - Ribes alpinum
  - Japanese Barberry - Berberis thunbergii
  - Common Snowberry - Symphoricarpos racemus
  - Coralberry - Symphoricarpos vulgaris
  - Fragrant Sumac - Rhus canadensis
  - Wild Roses (of South Dakota) - Rosa sp.
  - Siberian Almond - Amygdalus nana
  - Dwarf Spireas - Amelanchier alnifolia

Hedge Plants
- Peking Cotoneaster - Cotoneaster acutifolia
- Mountain Currant - Ribes alpinum
- Vanhoutte Spirea - Spiraea vanhouttei
- Tatarian honeysuckle - Lonicera tatarica
- Lilac - Syringa sp.
- Siberian Pea-tree - Caragana arborescens
- Ural Willow - Salix uralensis

Vines for South Dakota
- Virginia Creeper - Ampelopsis quinquefolia
- Chinese Matrimony-vine - Lycium chinense
- Bittersweet - Celastrus scandens
- Wild Grape (of South Dakota) - Vitis vulpina (riparia)
- Beta Grape
- Clematis (any species native of S. Dakota) - Clematis sp.
- Engelman Creeper - Ampelopsis engelmannii
Beautifying the Home Grounds

A. L. FORD
Extension Specialist in Horticulture

Every unlandscaped home in South Dakota, whether in town or in the country, whether an humble cottage or a pretentious mansion, can be made attractive by the proper planting of trees, shrubs, vines, flowers and lawns. South Dakota has lagged behind in the beautifying of its home grounds, especially farm homes, as has been the case in practically all the more recently developed agricultural states. There are thousands upon thousands of our rural homes without a sign of a tree, shrub, vine or flower about the house.

This condition does not exist because ornamentals cannot be grown, for there is ample proof that they can be successfully grown in all parts of the state. The fact that there is such a high percentage of renters on our farms accounts for part of the neglect in home ground beautification but the reason for by far the greater part of this neglect is simply that our people "haven't gotten around to it yet."

Beautification a Growing Need

This state is just coming out of the pioneer stage. During the pioneering period, all of the energies and thoughts of the farmer have been along the lines of making a living for himself and his family. That period is now a matter of history. People are paying more attention to the better and finer things connected with rural life. The demand for home-ground beautification or landscape gardening is increasing rapidly in South Dakota.

Planting the home grounds is not an expensive proposition. A few dollars worth of the correct nursery stock planted in the proper place will accomplish wonders. Landscaping the place should not be looked upon as an expense but as an investment. Any money or labor put into such improvements will not only bring ample returns in increasing the actual money value of the place but will repay one handsomely in terms of satisfaction, pleasure and comfort.

Every home, whether in town or in the country, presents some sort of a picture to the passerby. This picture may be pleasing, attractive and inviting, or it may be bleak, barren and even ugly. One's first impression of a person is gained by the appearance of the place in which he lives. Pick out a neat, attractive and inviting home and nine times out of ten you have picked a family of good wholesome folks who are a distinct asset to the community in which they live. The point is that the landscaping of the home grounds casts favorable reflections in many ways upon the owner.

The greatest of all benefits derived from beautifying the home grounds is the fact that it makes for a better home. Homes are the very foundation of the nation. Anything that will make for better homes is almost bound to make for better citizenship. Inspiration to better liv-
ing is born in the home. Therefore, the home should not only care for the physical needs of the family but it should be attractive as well.

**Landscaping Requires Detailed Plan**

Without a detailed plan to follow, showing the exact location of the various varieties of trees and shrubs, any landscaping that is attempted is pretty apt to result in failure. Few persons are in a position to completely plant the home grounds in one season. The landscaping,

![Diagram](image)

(1) Plan showing planting arrangement of yard areas.

as a rule, is developed over a period of years. Without a complete plan to follow, the result usually is a “hodge-podge” of planting with no unity whatever.

When one goes to the expense and effort of beautifying the yard, it is far better to give a little thought to it beforehand so that the proper thing will be put in the proper place. These plans need not be elaborate, just so they are correct as to measurement and scale.

Figure 1 shows a simple and conservative planting plan. In making a plan, first mark in the boundaries of the plot to be landscaped. Next locate accurately the buildings, walks and drives, if the site already has buildings. Next locate the planting that is already growing on the place. Now you are ready to work out definitely your planting scheme. Sometimes it is necessary to remove some of the present planting. When this must be done, it is well to leave it until it is interfering with the new planting as one will then get the benefit of the old planting until the new is large enough to take its place.

In making a plan correctly many things must be taken into consideration, therefore, it requires considerable thought and study. One must
use only the most hardy shrubs for this state. Non-hardy plants will winter-kill here. One must know the height that various varieties of shrubs will reach when mature, before he can properly locate them in the planting. One must know the period of bloom of the various shrubs so he can select his varieties so that something will be in bloom during the greater part of the growing season. One must know the foliage and bark coloration of the various shrubs to allow for the necessary variety in planting. One must know something about the foliage texture of shrubs or he is sure to get things in the wrong place.

There are many such points that must be taken into consideration. This circular attempts to make these various points clear in plain common sense language. We are going to take up the various phases of home-grounds landscaping one point at a time with definite necessary information about the varieties that can be successfully used under South Dakota conditions. Only the planting of trees and shrubs will be taken up in this circular.

**Location of the House**

This subject applies only to the site that is to be built upon. Where the buildings already exist, it is obviously necessary to do the best you possibly can with the layout you have.

In choosing the location of the house, it should be remembered at all times that the house is to be the main feature of the picture. All planting should be done with the house as the center attraction. In the first place, the house should be far enough back from the road to allow room for a lawn in front. There should also be room at the sides and back of the building for the private and service areas (See Fig. 1). Without yard room on all sides of the building, but more especially in front, it is impossible to give the house the proper setting.

The size of the home grounds is dependent on the size and style of the house and of the farm and farmstead as a whole. The more pretentious the buildings, the more ground is required to give the proper setting. Cramped grounds dwarf the effect. On the other hand, too much ground is undesirable because of the labor necessary for the upkeep. No farm house should be closer than 100 feet from the highway and 200 feet is better. Furthermore, no front yard should be less than 100 feet in width and here again 200 feet is much better. The minimum amount of space allotted to the home grounds would seem to be about 20 times as much ground as is covered by the house. About two-thirds of the ground should be in front and one-third back of the center of the house.

Prominent fences detract from the appearance of the yard unless they are well screened with shrubs, vines or flowers. It is preferable to confine the chickens and livestock to their own respective yards by fences rather than to fence the ground around the house. If, however, a fence is absolutely necessary around the yard, by all means make that fence as inconspicuous as possible. Where it is desired to give poultry the run of the place, it is imperative that the yard be well fenced.

**Entrance from the Highway**

The entrance from the highway should be located so as to facilitate direct access to both house and barn and make the approach seem natural and easy. It should never be located directly in front of the house,
but to one side near the corner of the front lawn. It should enter at that side of the lawn which marks the direction toward which most of the travel is done to and from the place. Where the home grounds are large and where there is considerable travel from both directions, a double entrance is feasible, one near each corner. A double entrance, however, is less desirable because it gives the appearance of formality. Where the farmstead is situated on a corner, it is often possible to locate a service entrance from the least traveled of the two crossing highways with the front yard entrance coming in from the main traveled highway.

The front entrance to the farmstead requires some special treatment that will set it apart from the rest of the boundary. The entrance markings should correspond as closely as possible to the treatment of the rest of the home grounds. Massive pillars of masonry at each side of the entrance (See A, Fig. 2) are out of place on South Dakota farms. They might be used with appropriateness at the entrances of parks and cemeteries but hardly on the farm. We have all seen large boulders set at each side of the entrance, these being whitewashed occasionally. This is very poor, as it actually chills the passerby. It is far better to mark the entrance by some sort of distinctive planting (See B, Fig. 2).

A group of shrubs at each side of the entrance or a group of trees is fitting. An evergreen at each side of the entrance is distinctive, yet has a pleasing effect. The entrance planting need not be elaborate, just so it shows that it is different from the rest of the border planting.

Walks and Drives

Walks and drives detract from the natural beauty of a place but they are an absolute necessity, in other words, they are a necessary evil. Because of this, walks and drives should be made as inconspicuous as possible by proper planting of shrubs, trees, flowers, etc.

The approach to the farmstead should be direct but if possible not straight toward any of the buildings. Where the buildings are close to the highway, the drive should be straight (See A, Fig. 3), but if of considerable length, the effect is made more pleasing if it is gently curved. When an attempt is made to curve a short drive (See D, Fig. 3), stiffness and awkwardness are almost sure to result. An ideal arrangement for the average farmstead is to have a single drive enter the grounds at one side, then to divide, one branch going directly to the barns and the other past the side of the house, passing near the main entrance door, thence near the kitchen entrance and rejoining the drive to the barns farther back (See A, Fig. 3). This arrangement of a branched drive permits
traffic to reach the barns without passing close to the house. It also allows for a turn-around for visitors who wish to go to the house. The driveway should be at least 8 feet wide but 10 feet is better.

Under no consideration should the drive pass up the middle of the front yard. (See B, Fig. 3.) It should be located off to one side. The front lawn should be left open.

Provide walks only where they are actually needed. If there is some doubt about the need of a walk in a certain place, it is better to leave it out for a year at least until you know definitely whether it is needed or not. When walks are established in the most convenient places, they should be used instead of cutting across the yard. By the proper placing of shrubs people can easily be forced to use the walks. A little study will show where walks are needed. Put in as few as possible and avoid cutting up the lawn areas with them. Most farms can get along nicely with three short walks, one from the front door to the drive at the side, one from the rear door to the drive and one from the rear door straight back toward the barns (See Fig. 1). On the farm, a walk from the front door out to the highway is not necessary.

Where travel is fairly light, stepping-stone walks can be used. They are much cheaper than cement walks and are far more attractive from the landscape point of view. These should be made flush with the surface of the lawn so they will not interfere with mowing.

**Lawn Areas**

In speaking of the lawn, we refer to the area about the house. The lawn is the most important and attractive part of the landscape of the farmstead. It is really the foundation of the entire picture. The lawn should be divided into three distinct areas, the public area, the private area and the service area (See Fig. 1). The public area is the front lawn. It is planted and arranged primarily for the public or, in other words, the passerby. This front lawn should be open. It should not be cut up by walks or drives and the trees and shrubs should be confined to the borders and corners. There is nothing that sets off a place like an open front lawn.

The private area should be at one side of the house. It also may extend around to the rear. It should be primarily for the use of the family
and their friends. It has been fittingly called the outdoor living room. It should be separated by plantings from the public area and should be at least partially hidden from the highway. This private area should be made a place of real beauty. This is where the housewife should have her flower beds and outdoor furniture if she desires to go in for this sort of thing. This is where the more elaborate features of landscaping should be placed, such as bird baths, sundials, lily pools and pergolas.

The service area should be at the rear and may extend around to one side. If at one side, it should be well screened from the highway. This service area is what we might term the work area where all the odd jobs necessary about every home should be performed. Obviously, this area, therefore, will usually be far from a beauty spot and because of this, it should be hidden by shrubs or hedges. The wood shed or coal shed, garage and milk house, should open on to this area. Clothes lines should be placed here. A well screened place should be provided here for the dumping of ashes and other rubbish and it should be seen to that they are dumped in no other place. These, of course, should be hauled away at least once each year. If the house is heated by a furnace, arrangements should be made so that one can drive with a team or truck up to the house through the service area for the purpose of putting in fuel. Where the home grounds are small, the service and private areas may be combined for the sake of convenience but it is far better to have them distinctly separated.

Where and How to Plant Trees

In planting trees about the yard, remember that the informal or natural method gives the best appearance. Avoid, under all conditions, the planting of trees in rows about the yard. (See A, Fig. 4). The only places where it is permissible to plant trees in rows, is along the drive and in the windbreak. Confine the planting of trees to the borders and corners of the front yard. Leave the center part of the lawn entirely open. Place the trees in groups (See B, Fig. 4). Where the grounds are spacious, these groups may consist of as high as from 10 to a dozen trees per group. Where the grounds are limited, the trees may be planted singly or in groups of two or three. Don't forget variety. There are relatively few species that can be grown under our conditions successfully but there are enough kinds to allow for ample variety. A place

![Diagram A](image1)

![Diagram B](image2)

(4) Trees should be planted in groups, not in rows.
planted entirely to one kind becomes monotonous. Mix them up. Put an evergreen here and there. They add wonderfully to the picture through the long winter months when they are the only things in sight that are green.

A group of two or three trees of a variety that is tall and spreading, such as the White Elm, can be placed fairly close to the house just off the southwest corner (See B, Fig. 4). Such trees will be appreciated on hot summer afternoons as they will shade the house and adjacent lawn. When a group of such trees is planted close to the house, it is necessary to plant a somewhat corresponding group on the other side to balance up the picture (See B, Fig. 4). The trees should act as a frame for the house. In this case, the trees to the southwest are the shade trees and those on the other side are the framing trees, placed there not for shade but purely for looks.

One of the discouraging things about planting trees is that one has to wait so long for them to reach a size where they will give shade. This long wait can be greatly reduced by planting a few fast-growing temporary trees here and there in the various groups. Such trees as poplar, cottonwood, soft maple and boxelders are very rapid growers and will give quick shade and protection, but they are very short lived. They should be scattered among the permanent trees such as white elm, hackberry, green ash, Chinese elm, etc. When the permanent trees are large enough to make a good showing, the temporary ones can be removed. These temporary trees are especially valuable on places that are being planted for the first time.

In the back of this circular are listed the trees (both deciduous and coniferous) that are hardy under our conditions. There are other varieties that might be grown successfully in certain parts of the state but we believe it best to play safe and use only the ones listed, as these are known to be absolutely hardy.

Place and Arrangement of Shrubs

After the location of the trees has been decided upon, the next step is planning and locating the groups of shrubs. No house or building, no matter how fine its architecture, is really beautiful until it is properly planted. Shrubs, suitably placed, tie the house and the grounds together.

Shrubs, to give the best results, must be carefully selected for hardiness, for suitability to a particular locality, for their height, and incidentally for their flowering, fruiting and foliage characteristics. We should use a shrub in some particular place, not because we like it nor because our neighbor has it, but because its size and character fits it for the particular place. In other words, we should pick out a shrub to fit the job.

Border Plantings

Screen Planting.—Every farm necessarily must have objectionable views. There are the hog houses and hog lots, the poultry yard, outbuildings and other things on every farm that detract from the picture. They are necessary evils that must be considered in landscaping a place. These objectionable views should be planted out of the picture by screen plantings. For this purpose, use the taller growing shrubs such as lilacs, bush honeysuckle or cranberry bush. The caranaga and Russian Olive can also be used in screen planting, although they are sometimes classed
as trees. In these screen plantings, avoid straight rows if possible. Also avoid a straight top line by slipping in a low-growing tree in the planting here and there. Arrange the planting so that it appears as though nature had put it there. Place the taller-growing varieties in the screen farthest from the house, then plant the lower-growing sorts in front. This is known as facing. This gives an interesting bank effect when viewed from the house side.

Corner Planting.—The borders of the home grounds should be marked by some sort of distinctive planting. This is especially true of the corners, back corners in particular. This corner planting serves to designate the limits of the yard and to break the hard angle where the back and sides of the lawn meet. Corner planting should be made to be viewed from the house side. This means the taller shrubs should be on the outside and faced with the lower ones in front (See Fig. 5). The size of the corner planting should be in proportion to the size of the grounds. Corner plantings in many instances can be extended either one or both ways to serve as screens where unsightly objects are beyond.

Group Planting.—It should be remembered that the lawn areas previously described should be left as open, unplanted areas. It is a serious mistake to spot up these areas with groups of shrubs. There are places, however, where groups of shrubs will add to the picture and should be used. We have reference to angles formed where walks and drives meet, where walks or drives branch and form angles, where there is a long unbroken stretch of unplanted border. Group planting of shrubs can also be appropriately used to separate the lawn areas (See Fig. 6). In arranging group planting of shrubs, do not overlook the fact that everything in the public area should be arranged to be viewed from the highway while those plantings in the other areas are to be viewed from the house. In planting shrubs in groups along the border, the tall ones should be at the back faced by the lower sorts in front.

Shrubs for Corners of Walks and Drives.—Any angles formed where walks and drives meet or where walks and drives branch or turn abruptly, are extremely artificial. They are entirely out of keeping with the rest of the picture. Because of this, they should be planted out or hidden by groups of shrubs. Care should be used in selecting shrubs for this purpose. Where such angles are situated close to the house, low-growing shrubs should be used, while taller ones would
be appropriate farther away from the building. These angle plantings should be faced with low shrubs but the facing should always be on the right side, that is, toward the highway in the public area and toward the house in other areas (See Fig. 7). Varieties that are too spreading should not be planted close to the walk because when fully grown out they interfere by growing over the walk. Under no condition should shrubs be planted closer than two feet and, better, three feet from the walk.

In planting out angles adjacent to the main driveway, care should be taken not to make the groups of shrubs too large on the north or west side of the drive. Such plantings are apt to be troublesome in the winter because of driving snow into the drive.

Hedges.—Hedges should not have too conspicuous a place in the natural landscape of a home because they are extremely artificial. Nature never planted shrubs close together in a row as is done with hedges. Hedges do, however, have their place in the planting plan. They may be used to divide lawn areas to advantage. Tall hedges can be used as screens to shut out objectionable views or to give privacy to the service or private area. Where it is necessary to fence out livestock from running over the home grounds, hedges may be used as they are less artificial than fences. Vine-covered fences also can be used for this purpose.

Foundation Planting

One of the most important features of any landscape plan is the
Foundation planting. This is the planting around the base of the house. A foundation is built for its use and not for its beauty. It therefore should be hidden by planting it out of the picture. Where shrubs are properly grouped at the corners and angles of the house, it makes the building appear as part of the grounds. It unites it with the rest of the landscape. The foundation should not be completely hidden. Glimpses of the foundation should be seen here and there or the house will have the appearance of sitting on a brush pile. It is a common practice to plant simply a hedge of shrubs around the base of the house for a foundation planting. This is extremely poor because the straightness of the foundation cannot be properly broken up by straight lines of shrubs.

The extensiveness of the foundation planting depends upon the size of the house and the size of the grounds. Where the home grounds are limited, the extent of foundation planting must obviously be limited. Where availability of ground is not a limiting factor, the shrub groups at the corners and angles of the house should be comparable in size to the size of the house. A two-story house should be planted fairly high at the corners (See B, Fig. 8) and angles while the bungalow type of house should have low-growing foundation shrubs (See A, Fig 8). Large houses or rambling houses which spread out over much ground can be planted at the corners and angles with large groups consisting of eight or ten specimens per group. In the case of a small house, these groups should be cut down to three or four specimens. In no case should shrubs in foundation planting be placed closer than three feet from the foundation.

Some shrubs thrive in shady locations better than others. This must be taken into account in choosing varieties for foundation planting as the north foundation of the house is in almost continuous shade.
Planting the Corners of the House.—The bare corner of the foundation of a house is probably the most homely part of the house. Groups of shrubs placed at the corners make a wonderful difference in the appearance of the building when viewed from the highway. These corner plantings should be in harmony with the house and grounds as described above. In arranging corner plantings, always place the taller shrubs nearest the foundation and face them with the lower growing sorts. This arrangement makes an interesting bank of shrubs. The outside border of such a corner group should be made to curve out around the corner, thus rounding off the sharp angle and making it more pleasing to the eye. Where a large, high corner planting is desirable (See B, Fig. 8), it is well to use three varieties which grow to varying heights such as bush honeysuckle, bridal wreath and Japanese barberry. Where a smaller planting is best, two varieties will suffice (See A, Fig. 8).

Planting Angles Formed by the Foundation.—Where a wing leaves the main part of the house, an ugly angle is formed. This angle should be planted out much in the same manner as a corner is handled, except that the border of the group should curve in instead of out. Again the taller-growing shrubs should be next to the foundation, being faced by those which grow to a lesser height (See Fig. 9).

Planting Around Jogs in Foundation.—Few houses are exactly square or rectangular. There are often jogs in the foundation. These jogs form unpleasing angles that should be taken care of by planting. In planting shrubs around such jogs, the grouping depends upon the size of the off-set. If small, it can be nicely covered by one shrub at the back and faced by two or three smaller ones. If a large jog, place one shrub opposite the outside angle and one opposite the inside angle and face the two with four or five shrubs of a lower-growing sort.

Planting at Sides of House.—The foundation along the sides of a house forms long hard lines that should be broken up by shrubs (See Fig. 10). In planting along the sides of the house, single specimens can be used where the house is small and of the bungalow type. For larger two-story houses, it is better to plant the shrubs in groups, using two sorts, the taller to the back with the lower as a facing. In planting here the basement windows must be taken into consideration. Also, plant nothing under the first floor windows that will grow to such a height that it will cover the lower part of the window.

Planting Around Front Porch.—Of all the foundation planting that part around the front porch is perhaps most important because it is here that we want things to look best. It really should be the show window of the entire place. Where the walk enters the front porch from the front and in the middle, the planting should balance on both sides (See
The porch foundation is handled the same as corners, angles and jogs as described above because, after all, the porch forms nothing more than a jog in the foundation. Do not use many tall-growing shrubs around the porch as is done at the corners of the house. Two sorts are sufficient, one medium in height faced by a low-grower. It is also well to place one good shrub specimen at each side of the walk just in front of the porch steps.

The Use of Vines

There are few houses without some bad architectural features. A large shrub or small tree may be used to hide these but they are usually not as satisfactory as an appropriate vine. A house that is otherwise unattractive may be made surprisingly interesting by a liberal use of vines. Most of our homes can well stand at least several vines.

Another use of vines is to secure privacy. Vines growing on trellises over porches will not only make them more interesting but will give them a distinct privacy. Where houses are not shaded by trees from the southwest sun, vines climbing on trellises over the west and south windows act as a natural shade or curtain.

There are multitudes of small sheds, buildings and garages clustered around many of our farm homes. These can be screened by the planting of shrubs but where space is insufficient for shrub planting, vines can be made to ramble over these objectionable objects and thereby hide them.

Fences often are a necessary evil around the farm home but they may be changed into attractive backgrounds if vines are trained to run over them. Vines can easily be made to cover such objectionable objects as dead tree stumps and immovable rocks. Ground that is too shaded to grow grass or too steep to mow, may be covered with vines. Where only a temporary covering is desired, there are a number of annual vines such as wild cucumber and climbing morning glories.

Use of Wild Material in Landscaping

There are many wild shrubs that grow in South Dakota that can be used in landscaping. Many are found along draws and streams. There are the wild currants, buffaloberry, snowberry, dogwood, nannyberry, elders, Juneberry, bittersweet, wild grape and many others. These, of course, are absolutely hardy and can be used to advantage in the landscaping of any home. Even the common buckbrush will help make the home more attractive when used properly.

Many desirable trees grow wild in certain parts of South Dakota. The white elm and green ash may be found along many of our streams. The cottonwood and poplars also grow wild. These trees may be transplanted in the spring of the year and will develop into desirable shade trees if given proper care.

Planting and Care of Trees and Shrubs

It is strongly recommended that only northern-grown nursery stock be used in South Dakota. One should get satisfactory planting stock from any reliable South Dakota nursery or from nurseries in our adjacent states. Some nurseries sell planting stock for fall delivery to be heeded in during the winter and planted in the spring. This is poor practice. The nurseries are better equipped to winter the nursery stock than you are. Spring planting is recommended over fall planting for our conditions.
Order your nursery stock early. Late orders often have to be filled with the “left-overs” which means a poorer class of stock. When nursery stock arrives, do not let it lie around the express office for several days. If the roots seem dry when unpacked, soak them in water for 15 or 20 minutes. Should it be impossible to plant them immediately upon arrival, they should be heeled in until they can be planted. To heel in, simply dig a trench in a shaded location. Unpack the planting stock and lay it out with the roots in this trench. Then bury the roots, leaving only the tops above ground. Planting stock may be kept without injury for long periods of time by this method.

In planting trees and shrubs, holes should be dug large enough to accommodate the roots without crowding. It is well, under our conditions, to plant trees 2 or 3 inches deeper than they were in the nursery row. Prune off all broken and bruised roots. First place the top soil, removed from the hole, in the bottom, over the roots and tramp well. Do not allow pieces of sod or manure to come in contact with the roots under any consideration. As the hole is filled, tramp well but leave the top soil loose. The tops of the broad leaved trees should be heavily pruned at planting time. About one-half the top should be removed. In the case of evergreens, however, never prune the top. Shrubs should be pruned at planting time by simply thinning out the branches or canes.

Shrubs, after they reach their full size, should be pruned annually. Those shrubs which bloom in the spring, such as spirea, lilac or highbush cranberry, should be pruned immediately after the blooming period. Those that bloom in the summer, however, should be pruned during the dormant season (either fall or early spring).

When shrubs are planted in groups, whether around the foundation of the house or out along the borders of the lawn, the entire area occupied by the group should be kept free from grass and weeds by repeated hoeing. Where only a small piece of sod is removed for each shrub, success will be doubtful. If well-rotted barnyard manure is worked into the soil around shrubs, hedges, vines, etc., the result will be greater growth, a thing which is desired in this case.

Propagation of Ornamentals at Home

Because of the elaborate equipment which the nursery has for propagating plants, better planting stock in the ornamental line can usually be obtained from these concerns. On the other hand, many of our common ornamental shrubs can be quite easily propagated at home, that is if one has a few healthy shrubs to start with. During times of agricultural depressions, this home propagation is important because it is often the case of making your own or going without.

Most of our common shrubs can be readily propagated by layering. Layerage simply means the rooting of stems while still attached to the parent plant. The parent plant supplies food to the layer until it is capable of caring for itself. In outdoor practice the operation is best performed in early spring.

Simple layers are made by bending branches of the shrub down to the ground and covering with soil. A shallow, short trench is made in the earth and the branch is weighted or pegged down in it and then covered with soil to a depth of two or three inches. Rooting of the layers
can be hastened if the bark is broken at the point to be covered. This can be done by cutting through the bark with a knife on the lower side of the branch, below the buds. As soon as the layer has “struck root” and produced a top, it can be cut from the parent plant and is then capable of shifting for itself. It is best to leave the layers connected with the parent plant until the following spring, however, before the separation is made. So many species and varieties of shrubs may be propagated by this method, that some authorities are of the opinion that any woody plant capable of being bent to the earth can be thus propagated.

There are other methods of layering plants but these are simply modifications of the method described above. Continuous layering works well with most of our common vines. This simply consists of burying the entire cane, except the tip. Mound layering is very simple and works well with many of our shrubs that stool out from the surface of the ground. It consists of burying the base of the shrub deeply with earth, thus forcing the separate branches or canes to strike root. The following spring the shrub can be divided, each well-rooted stem making a separate plant.

(12) Methods of layering ornamental shrubs.