

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

BRINGING TEA INTO BEARING - TO PRUNE OR TO BEND ?

Without associating myself with either the merits or demerits of bringing tea into bearing by any particular method, I give below some figures, which may be of interest to readers, taken from an experimental plot, on the site of an old tennis court, planted up on 12th May, 1959.

T.R.I. Clones 777, 2024, and 2025 were planted in double rows at 4' x 2' with 42 plants per row. All plants were approximately the same size and age when planted, and have received equal dosages of manure. One row of each clone was brought into bearing by centering at 9 in., 12 in., and 15 in. whilst, for comparison, the other row was bent to four sides and finally cut across. The bushes came into bearing on 10th July 1961 (2 years and 2 months) and the following figures show the actual poundage of green leaf for each row for the first year. I have also included the calculated yields per acre on a practical stand of 4,500 bushes with an average made tea outturn of 22%.

Actual lbs green leaf per 42 bushes

<i>Clone</i>	<i>Pruned</i>	<i>Bent</i>	<i>Percentage increase Bent to Pruned</i>
TRI 777	48	65	35.4%
TRI 2024	48	103	114.5%
TRI 2025	70	101	44.2%

Calculated acreage yield

<i>Clone</i>	<i>Pruned</i>	<i>Bent</i>	<i>Percentage increase Bent to Pruned</i>
TRI 777	1131	1532	35.4%
TRI 2024	1131	2428	114.5%
TRI 2025	1650	2380	44.2%

It is, as yet, still too early to determine whether the marked increase in crop in the bent rows will continue, and further figures, when available, will be notified later.

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