

HIBERNAL BEST UNDERSTOCK FOR TOPWORKING

By J. D. Winter, Mound, Minn.
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There is much evidence that Hiberna makes the best and most dependable understock in this region for topworking. It appears to be compatible with practically all the varieties in Minnesota for which topworking is desirable and the trunk is very resistant to injury from sunscald. The branches form very wide-angled crotches in which splitting is practically unknown.

Hiberna is fairly resistant to the fire blight disease which sometimes is troublesome in topworking operations. Some 15 years ago the late Henry Hansen told me that Hiberna was the best understock for all varieties in his orchard except Jonathan which was better on Virginia Crab.

Virginia Crab as Understock

Virginia Crab has been used extensively for topworking, but it gives rather peculiar reactions in certain instances. It causes complete dwarfing of Mammoth Black Twig and half dwarfs Turley, Willow Twig, and Winesap. Henry Hansen reported poor results when Virginia Crab was used as an understock for Delicious, King, and Wealthy.

W. J. Welday, an Ohio fruit grower, says "We found Virginia Crab not as well adapted to various varieties as Hiber-



Trunk injury of this type can be avoided by the use of hardy understocks.

na. We do not like Rome or Delicious on it, and of course never Stayman. For one thing it grows too fast, outgrowing the introduced variety, especially Wealthy . . . We do not like the habit of lateral branches growing sharply at right angles, then abruptly vertical . . . Forget Virginia Crab. They develop some fine Grimes, Golden Delicious, Jonathan, McIntosh, etc., but so will Hibernals without running into some of the difficulties of the former."

Topworking Essential to Success

Robert M. Clark, a prominent Iowa grower, said in a report to the Iowa Fruit Growers' Association "I strongly favor Hiberna as the leading hardy stock for apples. Topworking is essential if apples are to be raised successfully in Iowa."

—W.P.J.