

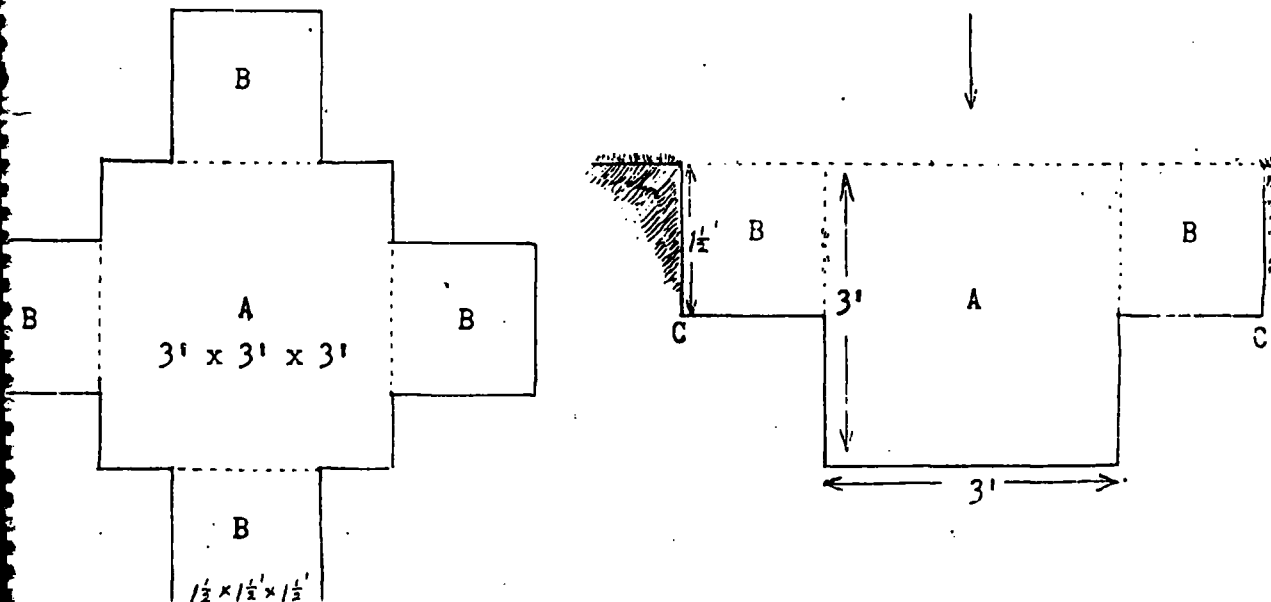
“CRUCIFORM” PLANTING HOLES FOR HARD GROUND

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AS the name implies, a “Cruciform” hole is one cut in the shape of a cross but the cross sections are generally of lesser dimensions than the main (central) hole.

In sandy and friable soils it is unnecessary to cut cruciform holes as these types of soil are very easily pierced by the roots of the young coconut plant, but in cabooky and other hard ground they help to accelerate the growth of the seedling.



The object of a cruciform hole is to provide more growing space and to enable the roots of the young plant in the early stages of their development to penetrate the soil and spread more easily than would be the case in an ordinary square hole where the rootlets suddenly encounter hard walls—at about 18 inches from the base of the plant in the case of a 3 feet square hole and about 24 inches in the case of a 4 feet square hole—and thereby their growth receives a temporary check.

Of course, the cross sections of the hole may be made as large as one likes but the cost of excavation and filling and the extra time involved would mean heavy expenditure beyond the means of the average coconut plantation owner.

It is, therefore, the usual practice to make the cross sections smaller than the main hole, usually about half the size, for example, for a 3 feet cube hole the cross sections would be each $1\frac{1}{2} \times 1\frac{1}{2} \times 1\frac{1}{2}$, and so on.

Filling a cruciform hole should be done in the same way as an ordinary hole, *i.e.*, two layers of coconut husks at the bottom of the main central pit and the entire cruciform hole filled to within 6 inches of the surface with good top-soil well-mixed with one or two kerosene tins full of ash. A layer of husks may also be placed at the bottoms of the cross-sections.

The illustrations above show the shape and dimensions of a 3 feet cube “cruciform” planting hole.