

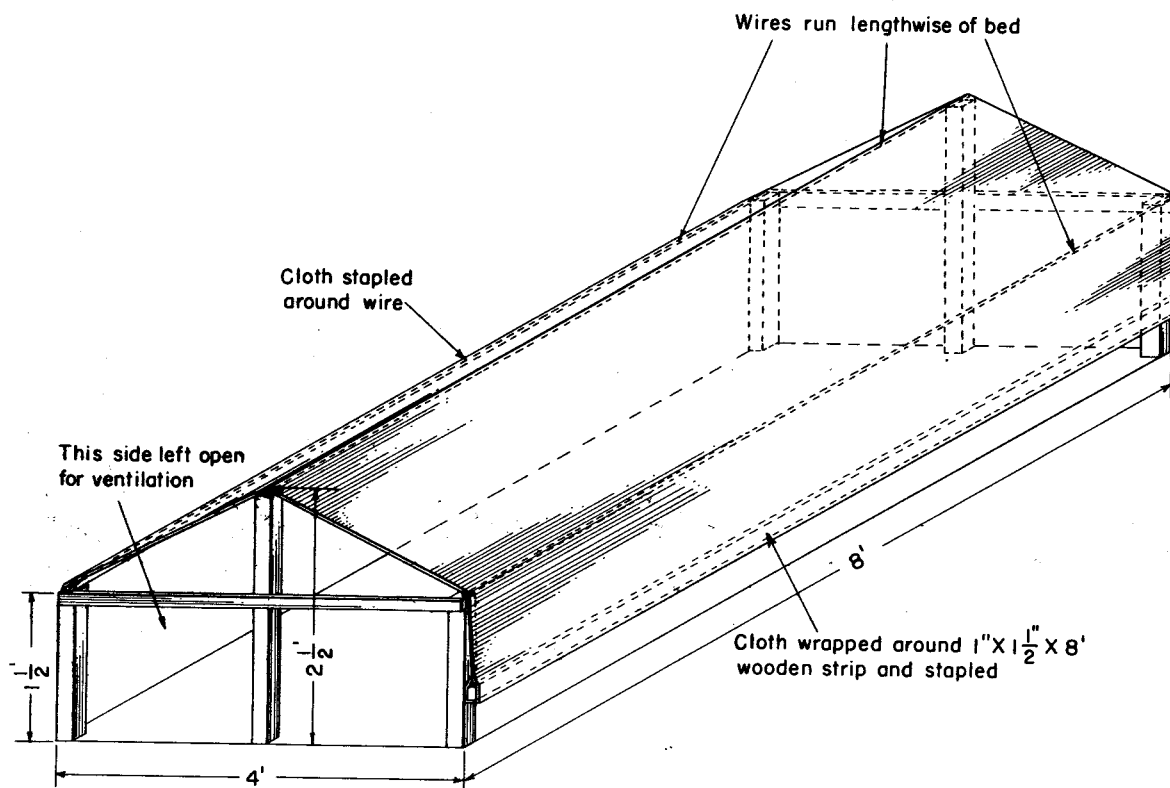
A SIMPLY MADE COVER FOR SEEDBEDS

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An easy and efficient method of shading seedbeds has been developed at the Tropical Forestry Project in Fort Myers, Fla. This method may prove useful at other nurseries where temporary shade is required. It consists of covering a simple wood and wire framework with muslin or tobacco cloth, which can be quickly removed when desired.

At the four corners of a bed 2" x 4" stakes are driven in until the tops are about 18" above ground. Two additional stakes, approximately 12" longer, are placed midway between the corner stakes at each end. The three stakes are then fastened together by nailing a 1" x 4" across the top of the corner ones (fig. 1).



**Figure 1. - This simple seedbed cover can be easily constructed, moved or stored.**

Next, "bailing wire" is run lengthwise between the two sets of stakes to support the cloth. The final step is to staple one edge of the muslin or tobacco cloth to the wire on the north or east side of the bed and the other edge to a 1" x 1 1/2" strip of wood, which is then simply dropped over the wire on the opposite side of the bed. The cloth is held in place by weight of the wood strip.

This device was originally developed as a matter of expediency because snow fence, which is commonly used for shading, is not readily available in south Florida. Other advantages were soon discovered:

1. The beds can be easily uncovered for watering, fertilizing, weeding, etc. , by merely tossing the shades across the beds into the opposite path.
2. Exposure to sun or rain can be easily controlled in the same manner.
3. Beds can be covered easily with plastic for fumigation.
4. Frames and covers can be readily removed for storage or for use in another part of the nursery.

No comparison of costs with other methods has been made, but with reasonable care, treated cloths should last several seasons. The savings in labor and the above advantages should offset the increase in depreciation which might be expected.