

## The Roseburg

## News-Review



## Douglas County Fruit Industry

By E. C. ARMSTRONG, Fruit Inspector

"The fruit industry of Douglas County," has been written so often in all its different phases by so many individuals that it seems almost impossible to write anything new.

The fruit industry as it appears to a Fruit Inspector might make a different story than the fruit industry as it appears to a promoter, a real estate agent, or even to a grower. Therefore, you will bear with me if I present some thoughts somewhat different from the article usually appearing in the press.

The fruit growing industry of Douglas County is easily the leading industry of the county. The cash income is far in excess of that of any other single industry. Beside the cash income, there is an immense amount of health giving fruit of all the different varieties consumed in the rural districts as well as in the towns. According to the census of 1920 there are 22,281 acres of fruit and nuts in Douglas County. The fruits, of course, lead with an acreage of 21,556, small fruits 141 acres, grapes 70, walnuts 514.

There has been at least 475,000 trees or about 5,000 acres planted since the census was taken, making a total now of about 27,281 acres of all kinds of fruit. This may seem like a large acreage of fruit for one county, but it is only the beginning of what should be planted in the next few years.

Of the 3,194,240 acres of land in Douglas County, 566,305 acres are classed as land in farms. Of this amount 136,553 acres are improved or cultivated land, the balance is pasture or timber land not yet cleared for cultivation. The figures show that so far as acreage is concerned Douglas County has scarcely commenced to utilize the acreage available for fruit growing.

Douglas County, being a mountainous county, must necessarily have a great deal of land that is practically worthless from an agricultural standpoint. The land ranges in value all the way from this worthless mountain land to the very best river bottom land.

Many thousand acres of the rolling hill land is adapted to growing fruit of different varieties and will produce the owner more money per acre and more returns for his efforts than anything else it can be used for. Planting the land to orchards will also increase the selling value of the land in proportion as it increases its producing capacity. The value of the fruit crop of the county is now near the \$2,000,000.00 mark and it can and should be doubled in the next few years.

To double the value of the fruit crop need not necessarily mean to double the acreage, as many of the orchards can be made to increase their production almost double by improved cultural methods that are now being stressed by the County Agent and others interested in that line of work. These improved cultural methods consisting of the use of cover crops and fertilizers, better cultivation, improved pruning system, irrigation and better spraying are being adopted by nearly all the leading growers of the

county, and as a result the increased yield and quality of the fruit will soon be very noticeable.

Many growers who started into the fruit growing game several years ago did so without much opportunity for instruction as to the character of soil, drainage, varieties to plant, selection of trees, how to plant, prune and cultivate, but the beginner now can secure this information free by applying to the proper source.

Mistakes have been made in the past in planting orchards on land not suitable for orchard purposes. These mistakes were somewhat excusable because it was difficult to get definite reliable information as to the adaptability of certain soils to growing orchards, but the same mistakes are being made now in some instances because the planters do not avail themselves of the opportunity to get reliable information in regard to some of the fundamental requirements of successful fruit growing.

We are living in a different age from what we were only a few years ago. Business of all kinds is conducted in a different manner than it was formerly. We are living faster. The orchardist must keep up with the procession or be left behind. In order to grow fruit successfully and profitably

one must get the maximum yield with the least possible expense consistent with good orchard practices. Formerly the custom was to grow the fruit and harvest it each year without returning anything to the soil. This practice has impoverished the soil and devitalized the trees until in some instances a respectable sized prune can scarcely be grown on what was supposed to be the best soil. The modern successful grower who makes the largest profit, will keep up to the bearing capacity of the tree up to the limit and not economize by robbing the soil or dwarfing the tree by severe pruning. One of the disheartening features of fruit growing that the Inspector sees as he goes his rounds, is the careless, almost almost criminal, neglect of many good orchards. It seems to be the tendency of the times in orchard work, as well as many other lines, to undertake to do more than one can do well. We see living illustrations every day where persons would grow more fruit of better quality, have better and larger trees, and realize more profit if they would spend the same energy and expense on half the number of trees. It is much more satisfactory and profitable to grow 100 trees that will yield 1000 bushels of fine fruit than to grow 200 trees that yield 1000 bushels of inferior fruit. The growers of this county would be much better off in every respect if they would double the yield of the county with the present acreage instead of having to double the

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## Umpqua Valley Turkey Raising

By C. E. BANNING Roseburg

No paper on the resources and industries of Douglas County would be complete without mentioning the traditional Thanksgiving turkey. If the Pilgrim Fathers had shot their first turkey in Douglas County, they would have had at least two Thanksgiving days every year for they never would have been satisfied with only eating turkey once a year.

The abundant natural feed and range found in this section gives the big bronze beauties a finish and flavor that cannot be equalled in any other part of the country, especially at Thanksgiving, when the birds from less favored regions are apt to be somewhat unfinished.

Carlots have been shipped from Douglas County at Thanksgiving grading over 95 per cent prime birds. This quality makes the Douglas County turkey very desirable in the eyes of the men who supply the traditional bird to city pleasures, and leads to spirited competition when the supply seems to be limited.

Turkey raising, like most other branches of farming, looks easy, but is a business requiring knowledge and careful attention from the time the laying season begins until the

finished product goes over the scales on "Turkey Day."

The next time you look out from the observation car on the Shasta Limited and see a boy or girl crouching behind a bush on some sunny hillside don't be too sure he or she is hiding to keep from washing the dishes or filling the woodbox. They are more apt to be making sure that the supply of Thanksgiving birds does not fall below normal.

The half wild nature of a turkey leads her to seek seclusion for her nest, and the nest must be located and moved or safeguarded against skunks, weasels, coyotes, stray dogs and the thousand and one things that keep farming from being too much of a Country Gentleman existence.

After the poulters are hatched the greatest enemy is wet weather. The tiny, half wild things will not thrive in as close confinement as chicks, and a thorough wetting may wipe out an entire hatch in a single day. After they reach the size of quails they are very hardy, and travel over a lot of territory seeking their natural food.

This trait calls for a lot of traveling on the part of the turkey grower, and a lot of forbearance on the part of his neighbors, for, like the aristocrat that he is, the royal bird likes the best to be had, whether it belong to his owner or not. A crowd of healthy turkeys in a broccoli patch can ruin a lifelong friendship quicker than secret diplomacy.

This truly American if-you-don't-see-what-you-want-go-hunt-for-it spirit is largely responsible for the disappearance of the turkey from many farms in the Umpqua valley.

The turkey is a truly American bird, linked with our most cherished traditions, and the crown and center of our greatest home festivals but when he takes to sampling expensive stuff, like Umpqua broccoli, and in our neighbors' fields at that, human nature won't stand the strain, that's all.

But the real culmination of the whole troublesome job is "Turkey Day." This is a real day, usually two of them, and full days too, often too crowded with action for sleeping and eating on the part of the buyers and their helpers. The warehouse of a popular buyer is a busy place on "Turkey Day." Wagons, trucks, cars, drivers, all loaded with plump, corn-fed dressed turkeys. Arguing over "calling" price; sorting, weighing, hanging up weighed birds, packing, stenciling crates. It is a hectic day.

In the early days of the industry the birds were driven in alive and slaughtered by gangs of pickers, but now the farmers dress the birds at home, finding that they can turn out a better product in this way.

The money brought into the county by the turkey industry is responsible for many of the improvements that go to make life in this pleasant region still more pleasant. When checks of four figures are not uncommon for turkey growers to receive, the industry deserves to take its rightful place with the other businesses of the country.

## HOME OF THE BIG RED APPLE

By Mrs. Hazel S. Marsh, Looking Glass

In a westerly direction, about nine miles from the city, lies the little Acadian valley named by the earlier settlers, Looking Glass valley. Emerging from the narrow canyon pass, the first view is that of a comparatively level, rounded area surrounded by ranges of unevenly topped hills. In earlier days prior to the planting of orchards, a large portion of the valley was covered with a growth of wild grass, which waving in the sunshine cast varied reflections, giving rise to the name Looking Glass.

At the present time some fifty families live in the valley and foothills. The school buildings on a slightly eminence nestling in a maple grove, a little church nearby, a grange hall, and the village store and postoffice constitute the community center. Primary, intermediate and high school rooms with maximum enrollment form the standardized schools. A community church and Sunday school with various branches under the present direction of a resident Methodist pastor fosters the religious life and activities and is supported by a representative number of the residents of the valley.

Some thirty years ago the first commercial orchard was set out and since that time approximately twenty per cent of the valley has been turned to orchard land. While practically nearly every kind of fruit



DOUGLAS COUNTY SPITZENBERG APPLE

tree thrives, the commercial orchards are composed of prune, apple, pear, peach, cherry and walnut trees, about three-quarters of a million pounds of prunes, from ten to twenty-five cars of apples, and considerably smaller quantities of pears, peaches, and cherries are shipped from the valley annually. While the walnut industry, altho practically in infancy in this district, promises to be a valuable asset. Small fruits and vegetables are profitably grown and in those cases where broccoli has been set out, it has thrived in a satisfactory manner, proving that this important product of Douglas County might be grown in this district.

Diversified farming and the rais-

ing of sheep, cattle, goats, and poultry form important industries. A goodly number of the county's turkeys come from this valley also.

From the hills a large supply of wood is taken annually. The mineral resources of this locality are as yet undeveloped. Outcroppings of coal have been found in several places among the hills and it is generally conceded that there are several veins of varying thickness underlying the valley. At the present time a derrick is being erected in order to exploit the oil resources, indications pointing towards an unlimited supply.

A splendid gravel road circles the valley and within the past year a new grade has been constructed connecting with the old Coos Bay wagon road. This road has been widened, straightened and gravelled and by summer time will offer one of the most attractive drives out of Roseburg. Because of the general interest being shown in the oil findings in the county, considerable interest will undoubtedly center in Looking Glass valley in the months to come. The autoist unfamiliar with this drive will find a most delightful and interesting route over the new grade, circling the valley and returning thru the pass in a southeasterly direction, choosing thence one of several routes to the State Highway.