



NEWS OF FARM LIFE

GRANGES

COUNTY AGENT'S REPORTS

CROP NEWS

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE NEWS



each state are now being completed by state land planning specialists.

FRUIT STANDARD HEARING IS DATED

SALEM, March 23.—(AP)—Frank McKennon, chief of the division of plant under the state department of agriculture, announced a hearing on proposed changes in grades and standards of horticultural products, to be held in Portland April 4.

Douglas County's Agricultural Status Detailed in Report

INDUSTRY ABSORBS 20 PCT. TOTAL AREA

Advice on Possibilities of Betterment Offered by Conference Group.

Approximately twenty per cent of the total area of Douglas county is given over to agricultural uses, according to the report of the farm crops committee to the recent Douglas county economics conference.

The report states: Of the total area of 3,194,000 acres in the county, farms occupy 633,000 acres or approximately 20 per cent of the total area. Of this farm area, approximately 600,000 acres is in pasture lands and about 10 per cent tillable. Approximately 81,000 acres is cropped for harvesting, 33,000 acres in hay crops. Small grains were seeded to 24,000 acres in 1934.

The acreage of cereals has increased in the last five-year period and is now about on the same basis as in the period from 1909 to 1919. The acreage of wheat has decreased to a point where it is grown only for local consumption and large quantities of wheat are shipped in. Oats are grown only for local feed supply.

Acreages of barley have increased about three and one-half times in the last five-year period. Yields of most grains have been too low for profitable production on the average, and methods of improving should be given considerable attention. Undoubtedly some of the land devoted to cereal production is planted to these crops because nothing better is offered. Yields of cereal as well as other crops have been decreasing gradually due to poor soil fertility and increasing soil acidity, the acidity problem affecting the growing of legumes in rotation and throwing much of the land into a system of year after year grain farming.

More attention should be paid to the growing of cereal crops in combination with or rotation with legumes. In some sections of Oregon similar to Douglas county on lower producing uplands, farmers have adopted the practice of growing hairy vetch in combination with grey winter oats, and as a result have increased their oat yield. The vetch seed would be used as a by-product.

All grain seed should be treated for smut with the dust method, using improved Ceresan dust. This method is satisfactory for wheat, oats and barley.

There is a possibility for a few farmers to engage in the business of producing well selected variety of grains under certification for use as local planting stocks.

Farmers should include a cultivated crop in rotation with small grains and where possible corn is recommended as the crop to be used.

Fall grains should be planted whenever possible, yields generally being better than spring planted crops.

Grain Varieties Advised
Varieties for winter wheat planting should be Zimmerman and Jentura. For spring planting Jentura on the more fertile soils and Houston or Marquis on soils of lower fertility will be best.

For fall oat seedling grey winter oats is recommended. This variety also does well when planted early in the spring. For spring planting Kabota Red is recommended for hay and Victory for grain, on the more fertile soils. Marquis is well adapted to drier and lighter soils.

In the coast section, Schoonman oats is recommended for hay because of its rust resistance. Oat yields have averaged too low to be profitable. On the hill types of soil, use of the vetch combination is suggested.

Since the production of small grains in Douglas county is based entirely on local demands and because average yields of barley are more than either oats or wheat, it is recommended that farmers give attention to increasing their barley acreage. Barley as a feed fits well into local livestock and poultry feeding programs and could well replace more grain now imported. The winter seed O. A. C. No. 7 is well adapted to Douglas county production. A few farmers could make trial of O. A. C. No. 1, a variety showing promise due to higher winter resistance than No. 7. For spring plantings, blue barley and Hanchen are recommended. Hanchen barley is particularly adapted to poultry feeding because of a low percentage of hull and high feeding quality.

The acreage of corn in this county has remained somewhat stationary for a good many years but experience of local farmers indicates that it should be increased. Many tons of corn annually are imported into the county, both in the whole grain form and in mixed feeds. Local experience indicates that corn yields more pounds per acre than other grains and at a lower cost per pound, that it can be produced without specialized machinery, and it is particularly well adapted to many of the smaller farms. Corn fits into the crop rotation and the cultivation necessary has a tendency to control weeds and increase subsequent crop yields.

Recommendations on production

of corn are:

The growing of corn for grain should be expanded above the 3,000 acres now produced.

Additional attention should be given by farmers to results of those who have been growing corn for a number of years.

Increased information is needed on corn variety and corn yields, and the county agent is urged to send a number of corn variety trials.

There is a need and demand for improved sources of locally grown seed corn and this possibility is suggested for a limited number of farmers who will follow this as a business from year to year. Douglas county seed corn is fairly known in many sections of Oregon. Seed corn growers are advised to pay particular attention to development of seed by the crossed inbred method.

Commercial producers of corn for grain might give serious consideration to the support of the seed corn industry by purchasing annually their seed supplies from seed corn specialists. This procedure is being adopted rapidly in many of the larger seed corn producing states.

Plans for corn cribs should be made for proper storing. An investigation might be made concerning the need of drying of corn artificially.

The use of superphosphate is recommended at the rate of 250 pounds per acre.

Favorable publicity has been attracted to corn producing possibilities by Douglas county 4-H club work. This work should be continued and expanded with the possible aid of developing corn breeders among the 4-H club members.

Varieties that have done well include Golden Glow, which matures well on all soils, and McKay Yellow Dent, Golden King is suggested for silage.

Forage Crops Increased

Alfalfa acreage has expanded in the last five years from 2,000 acres in 1929 to 4,000 acres in 1934 and expansion is continuing. This is in line with developments in dairy and livestock, alfalfa offering possibilities for more expansion on the river bottom lands and other deep well drained soils. There also is the possibility of increasing the yield by irrigation, although alfalfa does well on many soils without irrigation. Douglas county is on a hay making basis and it is sufficient forage should be produced to supply local demands, additional markets might be had in the coast area if production exceeded local demands.

Grimm seems to be best adapted to the county for general purposes. Ladak in rows on bench lands should be given a thorough trial, fertilizing annually with sulphur, 50 pounds per acre, or landplaster, 100 pounds per acre, brings profitable returns.

On the heavy uplands in the north portion of the county red clover does well on soil not adapted to alfalfa and should be more widely used in connection with the program for further use of lime. Alsike clover is well adapted to the wetter lands of the coast area and may be used in meadow mixtures.

Oats and vetch may replace much of the grain hay produced on approximately 17,000 acres of land in the county. This crop would improve the quality of the hay and have a tendency to improve the soil.

Vetch is particularly well adapted to much of the land in the county, common vetch and grey winter oats being adapted to the lands of better fertility and good drainage. For the hill soil of lower fertility, hairy vetch of the smooth type (sometimes known as Smooth Vetch) would be better in combination with oats. On the heavier, wetter soils Hungarian vetch and oats would be better.

Vetch acreage in Douglas county expanded about three times in the last five years, the 1934 census showing 7,500 acres devoted to vetch and peas for hay.

Oats and Austrian winter peas is a crop well adapted to use as a cover crop in orchards, and choice between it and vetch is largely a matter of personal opinion of the orchardist. It will produce good yields of hay of fair quality on better drained soils.

Eye Pasture Improvement
Grass, primarily as a pasture crop and secondarily as a hay crop, occupies the position of being the most important crop in the county, both from the standpoint of acreage and cash return to the farmer.

Douglas county farmers have become specially grass conscious in the past few years, and are extremely interested in improving the forage production by adopting a program for the improvement of their pasture lands. The importance of grass is seen with 40 per cent of the county's total income being derived from livestock and dairy, and additional returns being received from grass in the turkey business. Approximately 84 per cent of the total area in farms of the county is devoted to the production of grass crops.

Stockmen have had this grass problem brought to their attention in recent years due to overstocking, improper management, and in general a lack of sufficient attention to this crop.

Before making specific recommendations, certain fundamental requirements in the development of any well organized and intelligently handled pasture program, are mentioned.

Unrestricted grazing of pasture lands to the point where grasses are not allowed to exceed naturally can result in but one thing,

a depletion of the grass. This can be met only by some plan of rotation grazing (deferred grazing) allowing the more important grasses an opportunity to reseed.

We cannot forever take fertility away from the soil in the form of livestock products without in some manner replenishing the fertility taken away. The most logical method in which fertility of most of our grazing lands can be kept up is to have a legume crop in the pasture.

The average life time of all Douglas grasses, even under best conditions, is variable and it is not to be expected that pastures seeded with such grasses as domestic or western rye grass, even though cheap in price, will last more than a few years at the best. Plantings of such grasses are run out in a few years and leave only weeds and grasses of little importance.

To combat this, perennial grasses that will last many years should be planted, even though higher in price.

Reseeding of range land is an expensive and long time program, and must be founded upon thorough investigation into the crops best adapted for the purpose. It also involves the problem of securing sources of seeds and many farmers will make better progress in reseeding pastures if they will make attempts to grow limited acreages of the desired grasses on their farm lands.

In view of the above facts, the following recommendations are made:

The county agent is commended for the establishment of four grass and legume nurseries in the county and farmers are asked to observe their progress.

These nurseries should be increased until there is at least one in each important agricultural district and on the soil most prevalent in that area.

The time of the county agent is fully occupied and the Oregon agricultural extension service is asked for additional specialized help to develop the important project of improved pastures in Douglas county.

Fall seeding is recommended and farmers are urged to plant mixtures of their own preparation rather than so called "ready mixed" mixtures that many times contain only cheap grasses and seeds, the following mixture is suggested for general seeding on hill lands:

English rye grass—4 lbs. per acre
Orchard grass—3 lbs. per acre
Tall oat grass—2 lbs. per acre
Burrow clover—2 lbs. per acre

Total—12 lbs. per acre
This is not a cheap mixture but is one of long life if farmers produce part or all of their own seed, costs can be reduced. In areas where there is wet land or "seepy" soil, it is suggested that upland reed canary grass be added to these spots.

Supplemental Pastures

Sudan grass offers possibilities as a pasture crop for use in filling in between other pastures. It is an annual and may be planted on well prepared land as late as corn planting time. It makes a rapid growth and will supply late summer green feed but must be classified as temporary.

In the coast area on wet or over-flow lands, reed canary grass is well adapted. Also in the coast area bent grasses are commonly produced and pastured, although their value lies in seed production rather than as a pasture land.

Douglas county presents many favorable opportunities for the expansion of irrigation in small areas, and irrigated pastures largely solve the problem of a complete summer feeding program. It would seem that the development of irrigated ladino clover and grass pastures offers splendid possibility for a feed for finishing lambs. The farmer with possibilities for developing irrigation can well afford to investigate the opportunities of either buying feeder lambs or renting pasture for a cash rent or a percentage of the gain. The use of this type of pasture for lamb finishing is becoming widely adopted throughout California. For this purpose the following mixture of grasses and Ladino clover is suggested:

Domestic rye grass—4 lbs. per acre
English rye grass—4 lbs. per acre
Meadow fescue—2 lbs. per acre
Meadow foxtail—1 lb. per acre
Ladino clover—2 lbs. per acre
This mixture should be seeded on well leveled, carefully prepared and firm seed bed and not common with other pastures. It should be rotation grazed. Fertilizing with landplaster or superphosphate is advised.

The possibility of using Williams stem resistant sweet clover as a pasture crop on many of the lands of the county is worthy of thorough trial plantings. In many sections this crop is proving to be an exceptional pasture crop and if farmers are equipped with drills so that small amounts of time (500 to 700 pounds) can be sown with the seed, the possibility of success should be better. This crop could be tried upon any of the soils in the county that would produce red clover.

Farmers interested in increasing their pasture reserves are urged to follow closely the grass nurseries established and cooperate with the county agent in making further trial plantings of these trial grasses on their own lands.

Those desirous of making such plantings may secure special information about their pasture problems from the county agent.

lens from the county agent.

Seed Crops May Be Increased

Production of seed crops, particularly legumes and grass seed, is attracting considerable attention in Oregon. Although this field offers some splendid opportunities, expansion should be gradual and based upon careful trial that should show a proven adaptability to the various crops.

Use of vetch is increasing in the United States as well as in Oregon, this state becoming quite firmly established as a producer of vetch seed of several varieties. Some crops, particularly hairy vetch, are produced now on a basis equal to the demand and should be expanded only in line with market developments. Hairy vetch seed is produced over a wide area in Oregon and is not recommended unless the seed is produced as a by-product with oats, or on land not well adapted to any other crop.

Purple vetch is well adapted to production in Douglas county and is not produced very successfully in other parts of Oregon. It enjoys a good demand and grows well on the heavy soils which are not too wet. Common vetch should be grown for local demand only. This also is true of Hungarian vetch.

Production of Austrian winter pea seed is a specialized business due to the serious loss encountered from pea weevil, the control of which depends upon cooperative action of all producers in a district through prompt harvesting, fumigation of the seed, and dusting of all pea crops in the area.

Possibilities of clover seed production possibly are limited to trial production of Crimson clover seed and if attempts of this kind are made they should be limited to anthracnose seed.

Small amounts of domestic rye grasses have been grown in Douglas county and the crops do well on the heavier black soils. These soils, if properly cleared by cultivation may produce the higher price and longer life English rye grass for use in range re-seeding.

Bent grass is produced in the coast section of the county. Because of rapid expansion in this industry no increase in acreage is recommended.

Weeds Demand Attention

Serious weeds in the pastures and in the cultivated land of the county include morningglory, Canadian thistle, sweet brier, blackberry and poison oak. There are others of lesser importance but each of these constitute a particular problem.

The morningglory, commonly known as blind weed, infests some of the better lands in the county and can best be controlled by the use of spray of sodium chlorate at the rate of two to three pounds per square rod. This seems to be the most effective control. Special instructions on use of this material should be secured from the county agent.

Canadian thistle is of increasing importance, particularly in the northern part of the county, and is securing a foothold along roads and fence rows and in pastures. It may be controlled by summer fallowing or spray as mentioned above for morningglory. Farmers in other sections of Oregon report good control of Canadian thistle by the use of hairy vetch and a "smother" crop, reporting that after about three years the thistle is under control. Trials of this method are suggested.

Sweet brier or wild rose rapidly is becoming a very serious weed in pastures, and while best methods of control are not known, it is suggested that pulling out by the roots, followed by pasturing with sheep, is advisable. Cultivation of the soil for a year or two where practical will assist in control and at the same time provide a better seed bed for replanting grass. Under certain conditions

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corn might be a good crop for use on some of this land.

Both the evergreen and Himalaya blackberry are becoming serious in some sections. Cutting and pruning, followed by sheep or goats, seems to be the best practice available.

Price of Lime Is Too High

The problem of increasing soil acidity has been developing in Douglas county for a great many years and the returns from the use of lime on many of the soils has been thoroughly demonstrated. Nearly all of the lime used in the past has been shipped in under heavy freight rates and its costs are above the ability of the average farmer to pay.

There are several sources of lime in the county that need developing and a committee of five is suggested to cooperate with the county agent in the investigation of possible development of one of these local sources of lime at a price farmers can afford to pay. This committee should take into consideration the possibility of using relief labor, if and when available, in the developing of these lime deposits, for it is believed that no single use of relief labor would result in a greater good to all of the residents of Douglas county than the development of a cheap lime supply.

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LAND PLAN STUDIED TO FIGHT POVERTY

PORTLAND, March 23.—As part of a determined attack on rural poverty and destruction of land resources, the resettlement administration is conducting land use studies in Oregon, Washington and Idaho, under direction of H. E. Selby, regional land use planning head.

Facts gathered and inferences drawn will be made available to county planning boards and serve as the basis for future land use programs and policies.

Studies include correlation of soil, topographic and cover maps, together with records of tax delinquency, rural relief, crop yields, mortgages, school costs, local government costs, and practices resulting in serious soil erosion and flood damage.

After a complete survey, land planning specialists are able to indicate areas of good farm land that can support more population as well as regions that will repay cost of drainage, irrigating or clearing.

Cutover lands where soil is poor are recommended for reforestation, wild life conservation and agriculture. Range and arid wheat lands with shallow soil, low rainfall, frequent crop failures and

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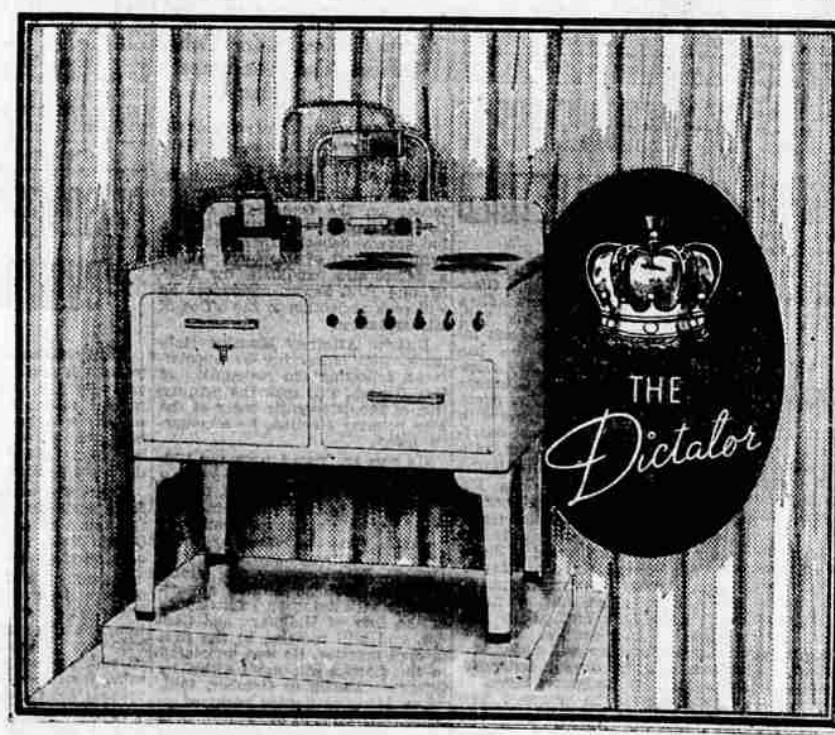


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