

# Station Carries Out Grain, Forage Tests

Product of experimental feeding of beef cattle and sheep at the Union experiment station is more than 75 tons of fat cattle and lambs finished for market since Dec. 9 of last year to Sept. 1, according to H. G. Avery, superintendent. The station also carries on experiments with several hundred grains, forage crops and fertilizers, and production methods. The crops produced are marketed through livestock fatteners on this station.

Commenting on results of this year's livestock experiments, Avery said, "We produce in our experiments many varieties of grain which are not all readily marketed in the small quantities produced. All of this grain and a large tonnage of hay and forage crops are marketed through feeding to cattle and lambs and sale of these fat animals. We are especially pleased this year with the fact that we have produced the highest quality of both cattle and lambs in the history of the station."

Since 1903 immediately west of the town of Union, the agricultural experiment station was established by act of the legislature in 1901 and began active operation in 1903. While several men were connected with the operation of the station in its early years, residents of this community will remember best Robert Withycombe, superintendent for over 20 years until his death in 1932, and Supt. D. E. Richards, who succeeds him and served until his resignation in December of last year. The work of both these men has had an important influence on the farming operations of this community and eastern Oregon.

Reviewing some of the experimental work carried on in past years, Richards says the field pea crop, which in these days of canneries has produced several million dollars of income in this and adjoining counties, has been successfully grown at the experiment station for more than 25 years.

Production of grass seeds has been the subject of experimentation at the station to determine rates and spacing of plantings, and best use of fertilizers. This work has aided in the development in Union county of what is now said to be the most important production of fancy lawn and turf grass seed in America.

Many other instances of the past work of the station, including development and introduction of new grains and grasses, crop rotation practices and fertilizers, could be enumerated. Perhaps the most important of these experiments is the series of fertil-

izer plots and rotation crops which include alfalfa for a five-year period, peas and barley hay one year, corn one year, and winter wheat one year.

In the 23-year period (beginning in 1922), in which this series of experiments has been carried on, the yield of winter wheat plots not fertilized, but grown in rotation with two legumes peas and alfalfa, has increased, and in the past five years of the experiment was 21 percent higher than the yield of the first five years of the test. Good results and still larger increases in yield were also secured from several fertilizers. Use of barnyard manure increased yields when applied to peas and barley, corn and alfalfa, and showed a good profit above costs of application. Phosphorus fertilizer on wheat has consistently shown a profit from its application. Either landplaster or sulphur applied to alfalfa has given increased yields and this practice has been generally adopted in the county with several hundred tons used annually.

**Lower Cost**  
Of current interest to livestock men are the results of this year's work in fattening yearling steers. Contrary to results in all previous years only one light case of bloat occurred, and cost of producing gains was lower than in the previous year. Providing a hay ration consisting of about one-third grass and two-thirds alfalfa chopped together is believed to be the reason for this freedom from bloat, an opinion in which authorities of the federal experiment station at Beltsville, Md., concur. Chief grain used in all experimental feeding pens was wheat. Cheapest gains and also heaviest gains were made by lot IV which was fed an average of 2.20 pounds of dried beet pulp and 7.59 pounds of chopped wheat daily, and lot V which was fed an average of 9.52 pounds of chopped wheat.

New information in sheep production is provided by this year's operations in lamb production and fattening on the station. Using the same corrals and pastures where sheep have been fed for

many years and where severe losses of lambs from parasites or disease have occurred in previous years, the death loss this year has to date been three head out of 438.

Feeding of grain in creeps from birth and use of a new drug known as phenothiazine mixed with the salt is credited with the low death loss. Since losses of farm lambs have been heavy in the Blue mountain counties for a considerable number of years,

this new drug should prove welcome to the owners of farm flocks.

Pasture grasses under test at the station continue to interest farmers as this common but little understood crop is studied. In the pasturing of the various grasses which are planted in separate plots in an experimental pasture, sheep in late May and early June in 1945 ate 90 percent or more of orchard grass, smooth brome, meadow foxtail and tall meadow

oatgrass, and seemed to prefer these to 17 other varieties in the enclosure. Crested wheatgrass which is very palatable to sheep in the early part of the season was not attractive in June with these other grasses available.

Varities of grain which have given best results at this station and also at some other experiment stations in Oregon and nearby states are listed herewith in the order in which they yield at this station. Win-

ter wheat, first Elgin; second Alice; third Rex Selection M-1; fourth Hybrid 128; fifth Golden (Improved Fortyfold); sixth Athena.

Among spring wheats Union, the club type of spring wheat released from this station, excels when moisture and growing conditions are favorable. Federation has proved the highest yielding on most stations. Several new high yielding spring wheats are now being grown in the nurser-

ies at the Union station, but insufficient testing has been made to determine whether they are worthy of release for commercial planting.

Among barleys, Olympia introduced through the county agent's office several years ago has proved the highest yielding winter barley at the station. Wong, also a winter barley, has been distributed by the station to a few farmers in this area. In comparison with Olympia, which lodges rather

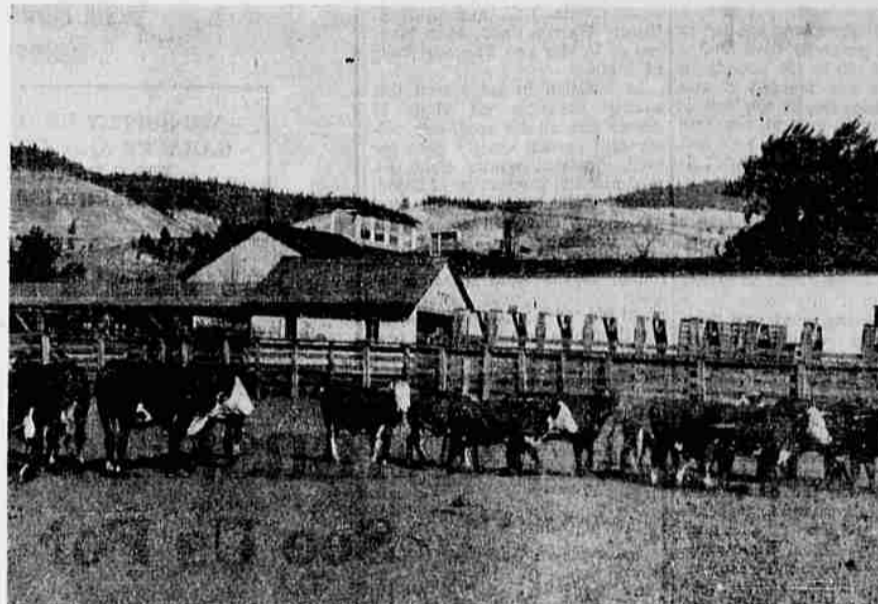
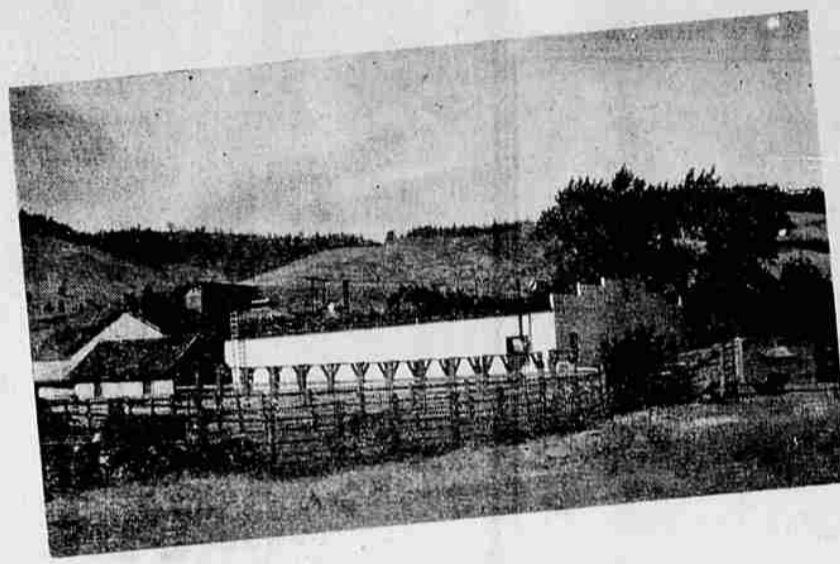
badly, Wong is stiff strawed. Neither variety is as winter hardy as our common winter wheats.

Of spring barleys, Trebi 227 feed and Hannchen for brewing and milling are the leading varieties at this time. Several new high yielding varieties are being tested in the nursery.

Victory oats continues to be the leading variety at the station from the standpoint of both yield and milling quality. Several new varieties show promise.

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