

AGRICULTURE.

Although our soil and climate are second to none for the production of vegetables, and our means of transportation are good, we still import garden products from California. We hope not only to see this changed, but a surplus raised to supply outside markets. It will pay somebody to raise vegetables extensively.

The favorable aspect of the grain crop still continues. The desired rain has watered the fields, and there is now apparently nothing to prevent a large yield. This state of affairs is universal in the northwest, and the consequence is a widespread feeling of confidence and increased efforts in investment and development. The exceedingly poor condition of the English wheat crop is a guarantee of good prices, while the increasing facilities for handling grain here will result in giving to the producer a greater share than formerly of the price realized in the foreign markets.

The question of making our own butter or importing it from California, is one that should receive the careful attention of farmers. Home manufacture of this great staple means thousands of dollars annually in the pockets of our producers. Western Oregon and Washington are unexcelled in the world in dairying facilities. With a mild climate, abundance of water, infrequency of snow, and green and nutritious grass growing luxuriantly the year round, what more could be desired? The establishment of cheese factories and co-operative creameries on the plan adopted in the east, is the proper step to take. Let half a hundred farmers of a neighborhood band together, build a creamery at some central point, employ a competent man to operate it, and then each one keep from ten to fifty good milch cows and turn the milk into the factory every morning, receiving *pro rata* the earnings of the business. With butter averaging forty cents such an investment cannot fail if managed with any skill whatever. There is a splendid opening here for a number of experienced cheese and butter men to establish a paying business. Even if farmers feel timid about adopting the co-operative system, there is no doubt about their willingness to keep the cows and sell milk to any factory that will guarantee for it a permanent market. Half a dozen of the many factories now struggling for an existence in the east could transfer the scene of their operations to this region with profit. It will pay them to visit us and investigate this matter. Two creameries, the Farmington and Elmwood, are illustrations of what can be done on a larger scale. Edward Nelson, secretary, said recently to the Oregon City *Enterprise*:

"In 1870 the Farmington creamery was started with a capital of \$4,000, in shares of \$25 each. There were twenty-four stockholders in all. The dairy has been managed by a board of directors, which meets once a month and determines what shall be divided among the patrons. In the first year the creamery had the milk of seventy-five cows; now it has the milk of over seven hundred, and is deemed an indispensable necessity. The creamery buildings cost in all \$4,000. We have an icehouse which will hold about one hundred and seventy-five tons, and this cost \$350. A cottage cost \$500. The first year we were in business we made butter for five months, and now make it the entire year."

HOPS.

Many hop vines are being planted along the Chehalis river.

The land purchased in the forks of the Santiam and Willamette for a hop farm amounts to 2,100 acres. The work of setting out roots is already begun.

Two large farms near Salem, Oregon, were recently purchased at forty dollars per acre by practical hop growers. They will be converted into hop fields, much of them this season.

The acreage of hops in Puyallup valley this season is nearly double that of 1882. The young roots will augment the crop but little this season, but hop growers express themselves as satisfied with a yield as good as last year if the prices remain as at present.

In regard to this industry the Philadelphia *Record* says:

"The plan in England is to select a good rich soil and plow it deep, at the same time manuring well and heavily. Good drainage is also necessary, and every precaution is taken to afford the most favorable conditions for securing the crop. Cuttings or shoots of any approved sort which have been reared in a nursery are planted in rows six feet apart, and the hills should be that distance apart in the rows. From two to three plants are allowed to each hill, and they are separately staminate and pistillate, one male plant being planted for every fifty of the others. Each hill has a short pole, which is fixed before summer, to which the young vine is fastened and trained. Early in spring the ground is again cultivated, both the cultivator and hoe being used, and the hills are finally earthed up in June. In this country the distance between rows varies from six to eight feet, and some growers use two poles instead of one, the poles being from twelve to eighteen feet in height. Seven feet apart each way is also a favorite distance, which gives 900 hills to the acre, and allows fewer vines to the hills. Plenty of sunlight and a free circulation of air are beneficial to the vines, and manure may be added at any stage of growth, owing to the plant being a gross feeder. The use of manure and the quality of the soil are also important, but first in the management is the judicious use of the plow, cultivator and hoe, to say nothing of setting, tying and training the vines. From four to six pounds have been gathered from each hill on good locations, and it is not expecting too much to claim one ton of hops for every acre cultivated, though much less is often obtained. The New York hop district last year produced 16,000,000 pounds of hops, and the cost of production was from ten to fifteen cents per pound, including all expenses of wages, interest, use of land, etc., and the average price obtained was sixty cents, although some lots sold for \$1."

FRUIT.

The fruit crop of Boise City was valued at \$50,000 last year. The opening up of Southern Idaho by the Oregon Short Line will aid in the development of that industry there.

A gentleman from the east recently paid \$6,000 for 200 acres of land between Freeport and Alki, on Puget sound. He is clearing the land and will plant a large orchard and an immense garden of small fruit, to supply the Seattle market.

A tract of 350 acres in Windy cove, Mason county, W. T., has been purchased by two gentlemen for a cranberry marsh, on which they will plant the best New Jersey berries. On seventy-

five acres of this tract wild cranberries grow in profusion. The whole patch will be capable of producing 20,000 barrels annually.

In buying fruit trees, orchardists should be careful to get those reared in localities with climate and soil as near like that of the region in which they are to be planted as possible; the hardier varieties for the colder and more exposed sections, the more tender for the mild or sheltered regions. Much loss and discouragement may be avoided by using good judgment in selecting the young trees, seeds, cuttings, etc.

There is no question about the future of the fruit industry, which will develop to large proportions in the northwest. The completion of the transcontinental roads will open a market for fresh, dried and canned fruit that must soon cause orchards to appear on every hand. The apples, plums, cherries and pears of Oregon, Washington and Idaho are unexcelled for flavor and soundness, and must hold a prominent place in the market. In many localities, and especially in Southern Oregon, peaches grow that are superior to those of California in delicacy of flavor, while grapes, apricots, almonds, etc., are equal to those of the Golden State. By raising in each locality those varieties of fruit that are specially adapted to the soil and climatic conditions, complete success can be obtained throughout this whole region. Hitherto, in the absence of a suitable market, apples and other fruit have been allowed to rot upon the ground. During the past three years a number of patent fruit dryers have been in use and the result is so favorable that many more will be purchased this season. An orchardist at Corvallis sent a box of dried apples to New York last December. They were submitted to three leading houses and were rated at sixteen cents per pound in that city. A bottle of dried plums was also sent, and they were pronounced equal to the best in the market. Drake Bros., of St. Paul, recently made inquiries of Superintendent Muir in regard to the possible supply of Oregon and Washington fruit, in which they expect to deal as soon as the Northern Pacific is completed. Something over a year ago we had a conversation with Washington Porter, of the firm of Porter Bros., Chicago, the heaviest shippers and dealers in California fruits, in which that gentleman said that owing to climatic reasons the Northern Pacific would be preferable to other routes for the shipment of fruit, and that probably on the opening of that road and the California extension, much of the California fruit would be sent over its line. In that event, in purchasing he would prefer to buy in Oregon as much as possible, because he expected to get sounder fruit and would have less distance to transport it. When it is understood that these gentlemen handle several thousand tons of California fruit annually, it will be seen that this opinion is very significant. There is a splendid opening here for practical orchardists from the east to lay the foundation of a sure and speedy fortune. Men of energy and intelligence, even without previous experience in fruit-growing, need not hesitate to embark in a business so promising, where land can be had so cheap and the elements of success are so plentiful. The farmer who wisely decides now to plant an orchard or to enlarge the small one he already owns, will have reason in a few years to congratulate himself upon his investment.