

AGRICULTURE.

FRUIT.

The Walla Walla fruit cannery is making large preparations for putting up vegetables and small fruits. By purchase and contract the proprietors have secured a large supply. A similar cannery will probably be built at Yakima City by business men of that place.

The farmers of the Yellowstone valley believe firmly in the possibility of the successful cultivation of fruit in that region, and many of them are planting orchards. If their opinion is well founded, a valuable industry will spring up in that fertile valley.

Rogue river valley seems to be an exception in the matter of fruit this season. While the balance of the state will have an exceedingly short crop, Jackson county promises an abundance. A local paper says: "The peach crop here will be the largest ever seen, while pears and plums will break the limbs all off the trees in many orchards, unless props or pruning shears come to the rescue. Cherries and other small fruits are abundant." With the completion of the road, the orchards of Rogue river valley will find a market for every pound of fruit they can produce, and within a few years fruit growing will no doubt become the leading industry of that delightful region.

The Northern Pacific is making special preparation for the transportation of fruit in refrigerator cars, and the man in Oregon or Washington who owns a bearing orchard will find that it is a veritable gold mine. In speaking of this matter Mr. C. W. Sleeper, superintendent of the refrigerator line of that road, says: "These cars have proved a great success. They are of use both ways and carry westward eggs and dairy products amounting to a very large quantity. Other cars are now building to take care of the fruit on the Pacific slope when the transcontinental is completed. The fruit trade will commence at once upon the joining of the divisions. Last year the Central Pacific turned over to the Union Pacific more than 900 cars of fruit. The Northern Pacific proposes to have its share of that. The orange belt stretches from Los Angeles into Northern Pacific territory, and is 400 miles wide. The Northern Pacific, you must remember, will also have direct connection with San Francisco and Sacramento. Oranges are ripe in the lower regions by May 1, and as you advance northward the season is later, until in the upper portion of the belt the fruit is not ready for market until July 31st. Then, too, there are the fruits of the Oregon valleys, back from the coast. These are acknowledged to be firmer and more luscious than the growth further south." We have repeatedly urged our farmers to plant orchards of the most marketable fruits, and we again urge it upon them as the most profitable investment they can make.

HOPS.

A strip of tide flats at the head of Commencement bay, near New Tacoma, amounting to fifty acres, is being dyked, with the intention of converting it into a large hop field.

The acreage of hops along Puget sound in 1882, was about 1,000 acres, producing 1,600,000 pounds. This year the acreage has been nearly

doubled, and taking into consideration the fact that the new roots will not produce as well as old ones, the crop is estimated at 2,400,000 pounds. The average price will be about fifty cents, giving the hop growers \$1,200,000 for their work, the bulk of which will be clear profit. In speaking of the crop and its prospects, a Tacoma paper says:

"Washington Territory hops are still quoted at 85 to 90 cents per pound. Dealers are ready and anxious to make contracts at 27 cents, but the most of the farmers prefer to take their chances until the harvest. Last year at this time few or no hops had been contracted for, and as late as July large fields were offered at 25 cents. Although the hop crop is a reasonably sure one on our rich bottom lands, there are still important contingencies to be considered in any estimate of the results. The large increase of acreage will not only enable the pickers, of which there was last year a short supply, causing considerable competition among the farmers to obtain sufficient help, to dictate terms, but will render it difficult to harvest the entire crop in the proper season. There is no crop made which requires closer or more timely attention than that of hops. To pick too early or too late is equally disastrous, and picking must commence and proceed continuously, so that neither the first nor the last harvested shall be too premature or too ripe to retain to a large extent the essential qualities of the plant. Last season some of the Indians from down the Sound who had been accustomed to assist in the Puyallup harvest, were said to have been frightened away by a smallpox scare, and doubtless there will be great competition next fall among the hop growers to obtain reliable help. As the supply of Indians used to this business is not large enough to meet the increased demand for their services, other help will have to be obtained or a considerable proportion of the crop will remain in the field unpicked. Doubtless the labor of children and of families could be utilized for this work, if wages commensurate with the value of the crop were offered. Last year the planters paid at the rate of \$1 a box of 100 pounds, and it may be that a higher price will be demanded this fall, should the market price of hops continue at anything like last year's figures.

STOCK.

In Montana the stock men find it impossible to maintain their herds by natural increase and keep the market supplied. Beef cattle are so valuable that calves are rarely killed for veal. The importation of young cattle to fatten on the ranges and help maintain the supply of marketable beef would be embarked in on a large scale if the rates of freight were made low enough to permit it to be done at a sufficient profit. We think the railroads will find it to their interests to make a low tariff on all stock coming westward, as the increased shipment of fat cattle to market will amply compensate them.

More than 100,000 sheep have been sold in Umatilla county this spring at an average price of \$2.12½ per head. They were all driven out of Oregon to market or to ranges further east. This is 37½ cents higher than the price received last year. Though it appears to have affected the sale of sheep but little, the rise in the value of live stock has decreased the number of beef

cattle driven from the country. The Grant county News estimates the value of live stock exported from Eastern Oregon in 1882 at \$2,000,000. Three-fourths of these were driven to eastern markets, viz.: 4,000 horses at \$15, 55,000 cattle at \$18, 200,000 sheep at \$1.85. Notwithstanding the price of cattle has nearly doubled, stock men are not anxious to sell, preferring to increase their herds, with the expectation that the market will continue firm for the future.

In regard to the shipping of dressed beef from Montana, C. W. Sleeper, superintendent of the refrigerator line of the Northern Pacific, in a recent interview with a representative of the St. Paul Pioneer Press, said that companies had been organized to establish slaughter houses at Miles City and Billings. After showing that the hide, horns, tallow, bones, etc., could be utilized there nearly as profitably as in Chicago, he gave the following valuable statistics:

"A steer at Billings or Miles City averages 1,200 pounds on the hoof. Load it into a car and send it the 1,300 miles or more to Chicago, it shrinks 10 per cent. or 120 pounds. This is agreed to by all stock men. Kill it near the range and the steer will dress 60 per cent. in the 100, or 720 pounds to the 1,200. The dressed beef, killed, cooled and quartered, and then sent to Chicago in our refrigerator cars, only loses 1 per cent. or 7.2 pounds. The 120 pounds lost on the live steer at \$5 per 100, the price on the hoof in Chicago, would amount to \$6.20. The 7.2 pounds net at 9 cents would represent a loss of 64.5 cents, or in round numbers \$5.55 more loss on the hoof than dressed. But this is not all. The railway charge on a car load of live stock is \$7 per head; to this add 50 cents per head commission in yards, costs of attendants, food for five times in transit and yard charges, and all stock men agree that the total cost is \$10 per head, exclusive of shrinkage, or \$16.20 shrinkage included. Now take the same animal, slaughtered and dressed at Billings or Miles City. The 720 pounds costs about \$1 per 100 or \$7.20 to transport, then there is 65 cents shrinkage, commissions—the commission is usually 2½ per cent. on the price paid for the beef, which, at 9½ cents per pound, would make \$1.67 add 25 cents (about \$10 per car of forty animals) for ice, making the cost \$9.77 laid down in Chicago. You can tabulate in this way:

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| On the hoof..... | \$7 00 |
| Freight commission, 1,300 pounds gross..... | 60 |
| Shrinkage—money value..... | 6 20 |
| Food, attendances and yard charges..... | 2 50 |
| Total..... | \$16 20 |
| Dressed and quartered—720 pounds net freight..... | \$7 20 |
| Commission a 2½ per cent..... | 1 67 |
| Shrinkage—money value..... | 95 |
| Ice for preservation..... | 25 |
| Total cost..... | \$9 77 |
| Difference in favor of dressed beef..... | \$6 44 |

"In the St. Paul or Chicago market—there is not much difference, and the average prices are given—the steer shipped on the hoof and shrinking from 1,200 pounds to 1,080 in transit, would be worth \$54, at 5 cents per pound. The dressed 720 pounds, losing 7 pounds, would be worth \$65.65, at 9 cents per pound. Ditch or wreck a train loaded with live stock and your salvage is liable to be very small; but accidents to a train laden with dressed beef are no more serious than to one laden with packed pork. You save almost everything. If a storm comes