

In The Mailbox:

Editor, Pilot: We have reached a stage in the culture and propagation of a product that has brought our area into national significance. With pride we can look at this accomplishment; and with equal pride we are proud of our residence in this part of Curry county. We have much to be thankful for.

Our product—our Easter lilies—are at this writing, fields of white, a magnet for the eyes of passing tourists, and a source of admiration and pride of possession in our own. They are gradually approaching the stage of fulfillment, then digging time, when eager eyes look to see what their year of labor brings to the surface. It is a time of hope, as the long months, past long months, when we labored throughout the days, with tender care, were also days of hope.

But now, we are in a shadow of misgiving. Rumors follow rumors. Black clouds that should be tinged with silver remain black clouds. And folks, can much of our possible market problem be accounted for, through keeping our head in the clouds and living in the past? Those were beautiful days, but like the dodo—dead and gone. We have passed the days of rugged individualism, those days when we shipped our product to market, with no quibbling as to price, for the price set was an acceptable one to the buyer. But now they see their opportunity. Don't blame them. Business is business. Disunited as we are and with rumors filling the sky like blackbirds, there is bound to be an air of foreboding.

And as to rumors: until they are turned into figments of the imaginations, or the false word proven untrue, they still retain the possibility of fact. People are gullible. But again where rumors follow rumors, the old saying applies: "Where there is smoke—there must be some fire."

Our independence in marketing our commercial bulbs can be our downfall. By open admission the distant buyers are besieged by growers. "Distant buyers" is used advisedly. Have any trampled down your fields in their eagerness to buy your output? May I repeat, those were wonderful days. The writer, unfortunately, didn't profit in that era. Just a fledgling trying his wings.

Price maintenance, dear folks, can't be placed at a satisfactory level through independent marketing. How many of us have gone throughout the year with nothing but expense as our portion? We look forward to digging time, so that the debts many of use have acquired may be scratched from the books. Are we then, as individuals, in a position to hold out for a set price? No, folks. We are just human and survival is paramount.

The now very defunct Hitler practiced a stratagem with a slogan of "Divid and conquer." Disunited as we are in our industry are we not susceptible to this method?

We hear of the tremendous fields of Easter lilies, 75 acres, a 100 acres, and ever so many more that makes us a little fellows wonder what it is all about. We hear of prices for which they will sell, far below the present price we hope to receive and with which we could not compete and survive. Rumor possibly, but as aforementioned, where there is smoke there must be some fire. And as mentioned, we small growers must follow suit if we operate independently. Survival, you do know—or quit. And who among us will courageously say we insist on better than that? We see a price quoted by another writer as the price we will get. Arbitrary, isn't it? What of the price of your materials that you so ur-

gently need throughout the season? In the upheaval in the price of food, clothing, shelter and the attending necessities of life, is there, or should there be this differential? Should we remain individualistic and permit the opinion of one or more to lead our destiny? We deserve better than that.

We want a healthy, a physically healthy, a spiritually healthy community, where we may enjoy the fruits of our labor. We want avarice exceeded by community welfare; the small to prosper with the great. We want to see that prosperity expanding into newer ventures, the participants confident of a sound future. And in consumption, we want to pridefully say, "This is our home. You can't beat it."

United and organized, we lily growers can reach the attainment of being the representative outlet for our market. Through this instrument a fair price can be maintained. But as individuals, remember the strategy of the ex-paper-hanger.

This critical situation is here, folks. Let's not sit on the fleecy clouds and view the beautiful scenery. We need something more substantial. It is worth of sober consideration. It is our beds that are in the making.—W. K. Harmon.

Fertilizer Tips

By R. Sloan

The use of organic compost on land with the exclusion of chemical fertilizers is not new. It has been used for thousands of years in China, India, and many other countries.

In England and Europe, they have used it for year. In the United States, scientific organic compost methods are of comparative recent adoption, but the movement is getting a strong acceptance, and is gaining momentum.

There need be no fear of weed seeds and spreading of disease, even though the raw materials contain harmful properties. The heating, fermenting, kills the weed seeds and harmful germs of disease. This is one reason why the use of raw un-composted manure is not advisable.

Another reason why use of raw un-composted materials is bad, is that it takes much bacterial action in the ground to break it down and rot it. At a time when such bacteria are needed to aid in the growing process of the crop, some of them are being used to break down this material. This is poor military strategy, if we may compare the bacteria in the soil to an army.

Research work is going on constantly on types of fertilizers, by both scientists and growers alike, and the advancements are almost incredible. Almost every issue of the Journal of Agricultural Research relates new illuminating experiments. In the February issue, I quote: "It was shown that a good carbohydrate balance in the plant made disease innocuous or renewed health in the plant. This balance was achieved by proper nitrogen fertilization. This makes us think that moist years, when nitrogen leaches out rapidly, would be years of increased fungus infection. And so it is. If nitrogen is applied in organic form, it remains longer in the soil; compost leaches out less quickly than a supply of nitrate. This then would explain (or at least help explain) why compost-grown crops are more disease resistant."

I might add: information used in this column is gathered from reading extensively of fertilizers with the purpose of obtaining the ideal fertilizer for lily growers. I now feel that the present fertilizer used is not sufficient, and that few growers have the time to look into the situation thor-

oughly. Experiments carried on throughout nation very seldom deal solely to the propagation of our Easter lily, which leaves a gap to bridge and plenty of room for extensive study.

Results of fertilization experiments does not always deal solely to the lily, but through these experiments lie the success in obtaining a "natural" or our lilies.

"Fertilizer Tips" will be published weekly, hoping it will create substantial interest among the growers of this area.—R. S.

Local News Items

Sam Gott returned Saturday evening from Texas where he had been called by the serious illness and death of his mother. He reported terrific temperatures through Arizona on his way home and expressed satisfaction on arriving home that he lived in an

area where temperatures were mild.

Mrs. Kenneth Layman, daughter, and niece, of Smith River, were in Brookings, Sunday evening to attend the vesper service, given by the choir of the Community church. Rev. E. C. Hicks, also of Smith River, attended the services.

Kay Kessler returned Saturday evening from Eugene, Salem, Portland, where he had gone since last Wednesday. He completed his enrollment at University of Oregon, under the G.I. bill and will start with opening classes at the university.

For your every insurance need see Pete at Lesmeister Agency.

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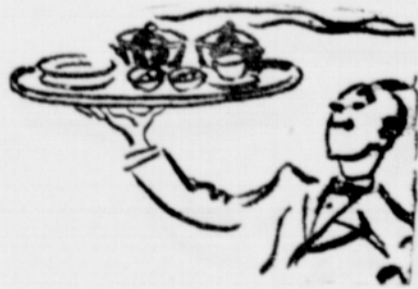
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