

Crook County Journal

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Demonstration Farm Work How Best to Conserve Moisture

The recent period of abundant rainfall has left the soil unusually well supplied with moisture, and with the tremendous possibilities of our growing season just begun it seems desirable to direct attention to the most approved methods of conserving this supply of moisture for the use of crops throughout the dry months. The efficiency of soil water may be measured by the actual useful work performed by a given quantity of this water. To increase the efficiency and maintain the maximum supply of water during our growing period requires a careful consideration of the reasons for the loss of water, and of the means of maintaining a suitable supply.

A greater average moisture content may be maintained (1) by direct addition of water in irrigation; (2) by increasing the water capacity; (3) by checking the losses of water.

Omitting the first method, the water capacity of soil may be increased by changing the texture and structure. Any treatment such as liming or tillage which will increase the mellowness of the soil and introduce more pore space, makes it possible for the soil to absorb more of the late spring rains.

The only way of modifying the texture of soil is to increase the organic matter content as the per cent of sand and clay is fixed. In experiments conducted by the writer it was found that the water capacity of the soil was increased on an average of 8 per cent for each per cent of manure used. After applying manure to the field there was gain in moisture about the manured strata, even before any irrigation or rain water was received.

The soil's supply of moisture is lost in three ways, viz:

(a) Percolation can be lessened in irrigation by using only moderate amounts of water, and this should be much less for cultivated crops than for meadows. A loose, cultivated surface will prevent percolation of spring rains over the surface.

(b) Transpiration is the passage of water up through the plant and out through the pores in the leaves and will vary somewhat with the drought resistance and water requirements of different plants. The loss is greater in proportion to the amount of energy used in securing the water. Lifting water from depths, poor cultivation, poor fertility conditions, arid weather, elements, all have some effect on the water cost of dry matter.

(c) Evaporation is responsible for the greatest waste of soil moisture, and it is this loss that must be understood and controlled. Evaporation consists of the absorption of water in the form of vapor by the air. The capacity of the air for vapor depends on temperature percentage saturation of the air, wind movement and other atmospheric conditions. Evaporation from a water surface is a good indicator the mean effect of all weather conditions upon evaporation of soil moisture. Measurement of evaporation is as important as measurement of rainfall. The annual evaporation here from a water surface is something like four feet. We find by experiment that wind movement has more effect on evaporation than temperature and humidity combined. The mean increase in

evaporation per mile wind movement was found to be 1 per cent, and a three-foot windbreak saved 21 per cent of the loss of an exposed water surface. Evaporation from a soil surface depends on the above and condition and wetness of surface and character of soil. Experiments conducted throughout the West show that a wet soil surface may lose more than a water surface, but where the top layer of soil becomes dry there is a saving by storing water in the soil tank. If we call the loss from a water surface 100 per cent, then the unmulched soil tank lost 56.7 per cent of the loss of the water surface; a 1-inch mulch 31.1 per cent; 3 inch, 22 per cent; 6 inch, 15.5 per cent; and a 9-inch mulch only 13.3 per cent of the loss of the water free surface. Use of furrows in irrigation saved 22 per cent.

Mulching is at present the most practical means of checking evaporation, but its importance is not fully appreciated and made use of. Mulches absorb rainfall and lessen runoff, lessen capillary rise and evaporation; aid ventilation; encourage deep rooting and make plants more drought-resistant.

The mulch must be provided promptly to be most effective, and the aim should be to stir the upper stratum which is to form the mulch so that it will dry out rapidly and it will then interrupt upward capillarity from below. The kind of mulch which is most effective is one that contains a good proportion of crumbs from the size of a pea to that of a walnut, and is kept dry by cultivation throughout its entire depth. To provide such a mulch it is necessary to cultivate when the soil is yet moist enough to hold together in small lumps. In cultivating the soil should be turned but not pulverized to a dust.

The time to cultivate must be modified for each particular soil, but in general, level cultivation every twelve or fifteen days to a depth of 2 or 3 inches gives the most effective and economical kind of a mulch. Cultivation must be most frequent early in the season and should be given after heavy rains to prevent crusting. The depth of cultivation should be varied slightly and a sandy soil that is naturally mulched will lose more moisture if the mulch is fined or inverted so as to expose moist soil unnecessarily. In places where the grain was put in early and the

ground has been compacted by spring rains, it is desirable to use such a tool as the hallock weeder. Potato ground and cultivated fields need harrowing and continued, level cultivation to conserve moisture and keep weeds down. Alfalfa fields go through the dry months in better moisture condition and make more growth with lower per cent of foreign matter where they have been thoroughly cultivated in early spring with the alfalfa weeder and the loose earth rolled or harrowed down, making a valuable mulch. Early spring plow

ing and plowing for fallow should be harrowed promptly afterward and after heavy rains to kill weeds and maintain a mulch.

Providing windbreaks and maintaining a cultivated soil mulch should increase the yields in the dry farming sections, while irrigation of moderate amounts applied in deep furrows where possible and followed promptly by cultivation will save water, which would otherwise injure the soil, to be useful in enlarging the irrigated areas.

W. L. POWERS,
Supt. Crook Co. Demonstration Farms.

The New Home of the Crook County Bank Completed This Week

Significant of the progressiveness of Prineville bankers and their confidence in the future growth of the city, is the completion of the handsome new building of the Crook County Bank. The building and interior fixtures are the finest in Central Oregon, while the interior equipment is considered finer than anything in any city in the United States which is not on a railroad.

Architecturally the building is very massive in appearance. It is two stories high and is constructed of a dark basalt stone. It was designed so as to allow spacious quarters for the bank on the first floor, and has well-appointed offices on the second floor.

The interior fixtures are very beautiful. They are a combination of marble, bronze and mahogany. The entire front of the counter is of verd antique and Toheen Alaska marbles, surmounted by a solid mahogany top screen with bronze panels, while the partitions forming the directors' and safe deposit rooms are of mahogany with beautiful panels of art glass. The main lobby is of tile with wainscoting of verd antique marble.

An idea of the security of the

vaults can be gained by the knowledge that the walls are of reinforced concrete 12 inches thick. The doors opening into them are of the heaviest construction manufactured. These vaults are divided into two separate compartments, having one door leading from the special customers' room to the safe deposit vault, which is equipped with the latest styles of safe deposit boxes for the convenience of customers, while the other door opens into the working space which is securely guarded from the public. This vault is used exclusively for books and the home of the burglar-proof coin safe.

The Crook County Bank was founded in November, 1904, by W. A. Booth, Fred W. Wilson, D. F. Stewart and C. M. Elkins. The present officers are W. A. Booth, president; D. F. Stewart, vice-president; C. M. Elkins, cashier; L. A. Booth, assistant cashier. The bank has a paid up capital of \$36,000 and a surplus of \$14,000. The popularity and growth of this institution is evidenced by its progressive spirit in giving to Prineville a bank with facilities and equipment equal to any city bank.

Big Irrigation Dam Finished by August

The State Land Board in a meeting recently at Salem has approved and accepted the \$25,000 bond of the Central Oregon Irrigation Company, which is now building a large dam and canal on the river near Deschutes, in Crook county. The work will be finished by August. The total expenditure on the dam and canals, which will feed thousands of acres, will be \$150,000.

The dam will be 35 feet high and is being constructed at one of the swiftest points of the Deschutes near the town. The company has recently constructed its own home,

in the heart of the business of Deschutes, of stone quarried within a stone's throw of the town. The firm is one of the most active in the development of Central Oregon and the arid wastes which it will make rich and fertile will soon be classed with the best of productive soils on the eastern side of the Cascades.

Special Sale.
I must sell all the following goods between now and Saturday next, as I have to move away. Team, Wagon, Buggy and Harness, Cow, Chickens, Pony, and Saddles, Organ, Range, Dresser, Bedstead, Springs and other household effects.
LAST CHANCE, SAT., JUNE 15TH.
On view one door west of Winick's drug store, Prineville, Ore. J. S. FOX.

Brown Leghorns
Pure-bred Brown Leghorn eggs, \$1 setting; day-old chicks. Mrs. LELA ZELL, Prineville, Ore. 37

Neighbors Laughed at Sundquist Sundquist Now Laughs at Neighbors

C. J. Sundquist was in Monday making arrangements to prove up on his homestead seven miles north of Prineville. This is the place that Sundquist was laughed at by neighbors for filing on a few years ago. Now look at it. He has a big stand of rye 6 feet 10 inches high. He has wheat 3½ feet high. He has 20 acres in beans. Thirty acres in potatoes. Seven thousand head of cabbage. He has watermelons, cantaloupes, muskmelons, and a few strawberries. He tried a new scheme of covering his strawberry plants but it didn't work. He will know better next time. His fruit looks fine, he says. When asked to name the different varieties he explained that it was just a

regular family orchard. He was not going into horticulture just yet, but he would have loads of apples, peaches plums, prunes, etc., for family use. He has tomatoes—“just say you cannot mention anything I cannot raise on my place in the vegetable line. And mind you,” said Mr. Sundquist, “people thought I was crazy when I took it up. Today I wouldn't trade it for any ranch in Crook county. I came here with nothing but a big family and had hard luck in breaking my leg freighting, but I stuck to it and I'm mighty glad I did.”
Mr. Sundquist is but one of many farmers that are made glad they came to Crook county and stuck.

Suplee Homesteaders' are Delighted With Eastern Crook County

Mrs. E. J. Clark of Suplee passed through Prineville Monday on her way home from the railroad. Erwin J. Clark, her husband, and family, came to Crook county four years ago from the Palouse country, in Washington. He took up a 320-acre homestead in the Suplee country and liked it so well that they sent for his sons-in-law to come and do likewise, which they did. Louis Miller filed on 320 and so did Oscar Oberg. Miss Bertha Clark, a daughter, also filed on a 160 acre homestead.

“The first year or two were pretty hard ones to get over,” Mrs. Clark says, “but after that things began to come easier. We had to work out to get a start but we managed to get ahead a little. The third year we had quite a harvest and this year will be a bumper. Rye is waist high. Now we have hogs and cattle which are doing fine. There is lots of water and

plenty of wood within six miles. We are building a new barn. We have a rural mail delivery and a telephone line. We did our part in getting both these conveniences. They were not here when we came. While we are a long distance from a railroad, yet we would not take anything for our homestead. We like the people out there and we like the country.”

When asked if there were plenty of homesteads to be had out there Mrs. Clark replied that there was lots of land. Just what kind of homesteads it would make she was not able to say. “One's first impressions of the country are not very favorable. If we had acted on ours we would not now have such a good prospect for our declining years nor for our growing boys.”

“Yes, I have three boys—one 14, one 17 and one 19. Well, be sure and send the Journal,” and with these parting words the lady left for her Suplee home.

Three-year Homestead Bill Now a Law

The Borah-Jones three years homestead bill became a law last Thursday at 10, at which hour it was signed by President Taft in the presence of a delegation of Western Congressmen. After signing the bill the President turned to those present and said:

“Gentlemen, I am glad you were here and saw me affix my name to this bill, making it a law. If within a few days we hear from a certain place that this bill became a law without my signature, you will bear

witness that the report is untrue and that I have in your presence shown my belief in the wisdom of reducing the burden upon the homesteader.”

As he said it President Taft smiled broadly, and the assembled Congressmen appreciated his reference to Roosevelt's recent claim to credit for the creation of a bureau of mines, which was actually created by a law passed when Roosevelt was in Africa and which President Taft signed.

Face Possibility of Being Recalled

A Bend dispatch to the Telegram says: “Without a Mayor since February 26, when Mayor U. C. Coe's resignation was accepted, Bend people have put the matter up to the City Council in such a way that they must elect a city executive or face the probability of being recalled. A petition signed by 180 men, practically three-fourths of the voting population, has been presented to the Council asking it to act. That body has set June 18 as the date when a meeting will be held for the purpose of naming a Mayor.”

The citizens became aroused following the murder of Carrie Patterson in the restricted district. They asked that a Mayor be elected to see that the laws are enforced and that the lid be screwed down tight. This the Council had done, prior to the presentation of the petition.

For Sale or Trade.
One Warrior Jack, four years old, for sale or will trade for good horses. Warranted. Address: 6-13-21. NEIL SLY, LaPine, Ore.



News Snapshots Of the Week
President Gomez of Cuba requested President Taft not to issue orders of intervention until it was absolutely necessary, declaring that Cuba could overcome the uprising herself. General Montegudo is in command of the federal forces and Admiral Hugo Osterhaus is in charge of the American fleet. The German cruisers Moltke, Bremen and Stettin arrived in New York harbor on their official visit to this country. Joe Dawson, driving a National car, won the 500 mile Memorial day race at Indianapolis in 6 hours 21 minutes, creating a new world's record. Mexican federals under the command of General Huerta took possession of the cities of Jimenez and Parral after sharp skirmishing. John D. Rockefeller was a witness in a suit brought against the Standard Oil company in New York.