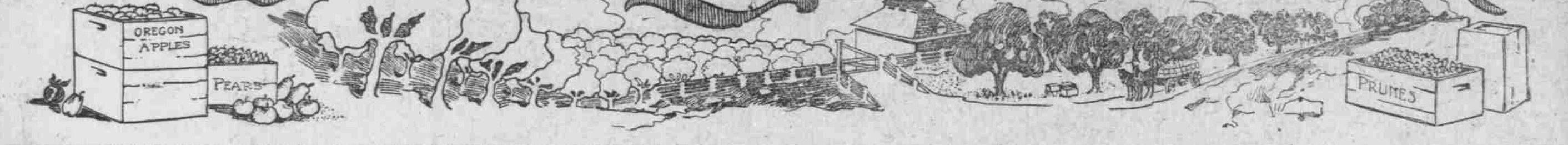


ORCHARDS YIELD ABUNDANCE



WHEN the balance sheet for the year is made up and the combined fruit industries of the state show on the right side of the ledger to the extent of \$250,000 to \$300,000 over the preceding year, we can congratulate ourselves that the fruit business is in a thrifty and prosperous condition. This is shown in detail by the reports from the several districts.

First District.

Comprising the counties of Multnomah, Clackamas, Columbia, Yamhill, Washington, Clatsop and Tillamook, Wilbur K. Newell, Commissioner, reports the yield of apples and pears was only medium, but quality averaged good.

The prune crop was the largest ever grown in this district, fully up to the June estimate. The French or Petite prune is no longer handled in a commercial way, not being profitable here.

The new sugar prune, of which so much was expected and hoped for, is not proving so good as anticipated, and will take some years further trial to demonstrate whether it has any commercial value for Oregon.

Estimates of the yield for the district are as follows:

Apples	\$40,000
Pears	20,000
Prunes	25,000
Cherries	10,000
Strawberries	10,000
Total	\$125,000

Second District.

Comprising the counties of Lincoln, Marion, Polk, Benton, Linn and Lane, Charles A. Park, Commissioner, makes the following estimates of the fruit crop for this district:

Prunes	\$300,000
Cherries	5,000
Pears	5,000
Apples	10,000
All other fruits	10,000
Total	\$440,000

Third District.

Composed of the counties of Douglas, Jackson, Klamath, Josephine, Coos, Curry and Lake, A. H. Carson, Commissioner, reports as follows: Unfavorable weather at blossoming period of the peach in this district cut the yield down to 20 per cent in some and 40 per cent in other sections, but what was put on the market was of superior quality and brought top prices.

The apple, pear and prune were record-breaking crops, by far the largest ever grown in this district. Prices are good, due to Eastern and European shipments being strong, averaging 40 per cent to 50 per cent higher than last year.

At ruling prices I place the value of the fruit crop in the third district as follows:

Apples	\$25,000
Pears	10,000
Prunes	10,000
Cherries	5,000
Fruits for home consumption	5,000
Total	\$60,000

The increase in value and quantity of fruit over former years is not entirely due to the heavy crop, but to many new orchards coming into bearing for the first time and more and better methods in spraying and cultivating.

Fourth District.

Comprising the Counties of Morrow, Wasco, Gilliam, Crook and Sherman, R. H. Weber, Commissioner, reports:

The percentage of the apple crop is not as high as last season, but the increased number of young orchards coming into bearing will bring the product up to that of one year ago. Pears are ruling higher than last season, ranging from \$1 for Ben Davis to \$2.25 for Newtown and Spitzenbergs. Pears were a bountiful crop, and of excellent quality. Cherries produced fairly well, prices ruling high, netting handsome returns. Plums and prunes produced full crops. Sixty cars of plums and prunes were shipped from The Dalles, some of them finding their way to London, England, where they brought fancy prices. The strawberry crop was very large, amounting to about 120,000 crates. The European grape is grown mostly here, maturing perfectly, and of excellent quality. The local markets could not absorb all the crop, and a great many went to waste.

Large plantings will make this season of apples, pears and cherries. Estimates for the Fourth District are as follows:

Apples	\$100,000
Pears	20,000
Prunes	10,000
Cherries	10,000
Strawberries	15,000
Grapes, apricots, etc.	25,000
Home consumption	10,000
Total	\$220,000

Fifth District.

Composed of the Counties of Baker, Union, Wallowa, Malheur, Grant and Harney, Jack Geer, Commissioner, reports:

The fruit season has been a prosperous one, beginning with berries and cherries, the crop was large and prices fair. The same can be said of prunes, plums and pears. Large quantities were shipped in the fresh state to Eastern markets.

There is a full apple crop, and the quality is first-class, a large percentage of the crop being sold to Eastern buyers. The good fruit being put up by the apple-growers on all insect pests is improving the grade of this fruit very materially.

Estimates for the district are:

Apples	\$125,000
Pears	20,000
Prunes	10,000
Cherries	10,000
Peaches	10,000
Berries	10,000
Fruits for home consumption	10,000
Total	\$225,000

The Apple.

Commercially, the apple from this time forward is to lead all other fruits as a money-maker in Oregon. For the past 15 years apple-planting has been almost continuous, and each season new orchards are helping to swell the output of this king of all fruits. During the past three years this has been very marked, and thousands of acres have been added to

our orchard area. The fame of Oregon apples has gone far and wide; they compete in the markets of the world and have never been found wanting.

It is quantity as well as quality that attracts the buyer, and we shall find that, if improved methods are adhered to, the demand for Oregon apples will be in the ratio of production.

Properly cared for, the apple is a sure cropper in Oregon. The age limit of the tree has never been reached. We have orchards that have never made failure in 30 years, are still vigorous, and producing wonderful crops.

The "off year" is an unknown term to the Oregon orchardist, for, nourished by wonderful soil fertility and ideal climatic conditions year by year, the Oregon orchards produce their wealth of crimson and gold.

In these strenuous times the old saying, "time is money," means more to this hustling generation than it did half a century ago. The time saved in the bearing age of an Oregon apple orchard over almost any other section of the Union is from three to five years. This saving, from a financial standpoint, is no small matter.

When the size of this state is taken into account, the area devoted to orcharding is very small. Perhaps one-twentieth of all land suitable for this industry has been utilized for this purpose. Practically, commercial apple planting has but just begun. The opportunity for up-to-date, energetic orchardists is nowhere equaled outside the limits of this wonderful State of Oregon.

Prunes.

Our figures show that the prune crop just harvested was the largest ever grown in the state. Prices are not meeting with the views of growers, and shipments have not been stimulated thereby to any large extent. The Eastern horizon has begun to clear; reports are to the effect that markets are cleaned out of prunes, and that quickly. This will be good news to the Oregon pruner.

Buyers for the French market have paid their annual visit to the state, buying quite heavily of the petite prune, which they prefer to the California sundried prune. Ours, being dried in evaporators, come nearer being like their own product.

There has also been more inquiry from England for our prunes than ever before.

The Grape.

It is but a few years ago that grape-growing in Oregon was an experiment, meeting in some instances with success, and in others a flat failure. It has been demonstrated, however, that right varieties, planted in suitable locations, will do as well in Oregon as in other sections of the country. In the Portland market this season, finer grapes and in greater quantity were never seen before, almost shutting out the California product, except the very early and the very late varieties.

Opening for a New Industry.

A large and growing industry in the New York and Ohio grape-growing sections is the manufacturing of unfemented grape juice, which can be found on sale in all the drug houses of this city. It would seem that right here in Oregon is an ideal location for the manufacture of this wholesome beverage.

Oregon will become famous some day for its wine production. Winemaking is in its infancy, nevertheless it has been successfully demonstrated that wine grapes grow and mature here, and a first-class wine product is produced.

A German settlement near Forest Grove, in Washington County, has succeeded in growing the grapes and making the wine, the pioneer in the business, F. A. Rieter,

receiving a high award at the Pan-American Exposition for samples of Muscat and Burgundy wines. No doubt this is an industry that will grow when it becomes known how favorable the conditions are for successfully carrying it on.

The Cherry.

Oregon has the enviable reputation of producing more new varieties of cherries of merit than all the other states of the Union combined. They are the Bing, Hokin, Lambert, Lewelling and Black Republican, all originating within a few miles of Portland. For size and quality they stand at the head of the cherry family. A large business is growing up in the Eastern part of the state in shipping cherries by car lots in fresh state to Eastern markets. Grown in the dry climate of this section, they develop a wonderful keeping quality, and carry to Atlantic points without loss.

Oregon is peculiarly adapted to the growing of the cherry, where it acquires size and flavor unsurpassed in any section of the United States. It is being largely planted, and is growing in importance each year for shipping fresh and canning.

The Strawberry.

Last but not least of the fruits for which Oregon is justly celebrated comes the strawberry. While it grows to perfection in all sections of the state, more attention to growing the berry for export is given by the people of Hood River Valley than by those of any other section. When you remember that 100 cars were shipped out of this little valley this season, something was done.

Some years ago there was more or less discussion on the subject, "ten acres enough." It would seem as if ten acres in strawberries located in this little paradise, which net from \$150 to \$200 per acre, ought to satisfy a moderately ambitious man. GEORGE H. LAMBERSON, Secretary, State Board of Horticulture, Portland, Dec. 17.

A MILLION IN PRUNES.

Industry Permanently Established as One of Best for Oregon.

IN 1900 the prune crop of Oregon is estimated at 25,000,000 pounds, not including some 5,000,000 pounds grown in a portion of Washington, which is commercially a part of Oregon. The total crop of what are called "Oregon prunes" is about 30,000,000 pounds. While the crop is not entirely sold, those who are extensively engaged in the marketing of the fruit estimate that the average net price to the growers will be 34 cents a pound, which will make the entire crop worth \$1,125,000. As the fruit is nearly all sold outside the state and the production of the crop requires very little expenditure for material brought in, the value of the product represents a clear gain to the industrial wealth of Oregon.

It is only in the last few years that the pruning-growing industry has become firmly established in Western Oregon, but it is now recognized as one of the permanent and profitable enterprises. The establishment of the industry has been difficult for the reason that many important lessons had to be learned by dear experience. The selection of varieties, choice of soil, methods of planting, cultivation, curing and marketing were all more or less troublesome and many growers became discouraged before they began to get returns from their orchards. Some growers gave up entirely and dug out their trees in the belief that pruning-growing could not be made a success. This period in the development of the industry has passed, however, as is indicated by

the assertion of the managers of a nursery, that all the nurseries in the state will not be able this year to supply half the demand for young prune trees for planting new orchards. It has been demonstrated that there is a good profit in growing prunes in this part of the state and the production will double within the next few years.

It is now quite generally agreed that of the varieties in common use, the Italian prune is best suited to this part of the Coast. It is large, rather tart and a thrifty grower. In the course of time this prune may be changed somewhat in its nature or another variety developed, to meet the requirements a little better. What is wanted is a prune a little sweeter, earlier and with a thinner skin. Nevertheless, the Italian prune is achieving a great success and practically all the new orchards are being set to that variety. Prunes are grown successfully on both prairie and hill land, but the results of the last few crops have made the hill lands most popular.

Capital Required for Prunegrowing.

Prunes are grown in every part of Western Oregon, between the Cascade and Coast Range Mountains, and in the favored valleys of Eastern Oregon. Orchards range in size, as a rule from ten to 20 acres, 20 acres being a very convenient size for a man who does his own work and makes his home upon the land. An orchard of this size is also best suited to the capital which the average orchardist

Fruit Crop of Oregon in 1900.		
	1900.	1901.
Apples	\$400,000	\$750,000
Pears	145,000	150,000
Prunes	900,000	525,000
Peaches	75,000	100,000
Cherries	25,000	30,000
Grapes	50,000	45,000
Other small fruits and fruits for home consumption	652,500	632,000
Totals	\$2,201,000	\$2,238,000
Increase		212,000

has to invest. L. M. Gilbert, president of the Willamette Valley Prune Association, gives the following statement of the amount of capital required to start a prune orchard and bring it to bearing:

Clearing land, ready for planting can be secured in an average location at from \$40 to \$50 per acre, or an average of about \$45 per acre. About 100 trees are required per acre, and these will cost \$10 per hundred, or practically \$20 per acre. Flowing the land and setting out the trees will cost another \$10 per acre, making the cost the first year \$70 per acre. A prune orchard will not bear a crop sufficient to pay expenses until the fifth year, so that it must be cultivated and cared for four years without returns. This will cost \$2.50 per acre per year, or another \$10 per acre for the four years. Interest and taxes to the bearing period will bring the total up to nearly \$100 per acre, or \$200 for a 20-acre orchard. This is an estimate based upon the planting of an orchard where all the work is hired. A man may, of course, invest his own labor instead of money, and thus reducing the cash investment accordingly.

Every 20-acre orchard should have an evaporating plant, and it is estimated that this will cost about \$1200, or an additional \$60 per acre, making the total investment about \$160 per acre, or \$3200 for a 20-acre orchard. Many of the smaller orchards, of ten acres, have no evaporating plants, but the owners sell the fruit green or hire it dried at some commercial evaporator. An the commercial evaporators must make a profit on the busi-

ness, it is apparent that the grower can save some expense by owning a curing plant.

Figures on Cost of Production.

The annual cost of production is variously estimated by growers, the variation being due to the manner in which an orchard is conducted. In the hills south of Salem many small orchards are owned by nonresidents, who hire all their work done, and it is therefore possible to determine definitely what it costs to run an orchard under such circumstances. The general care of an orchard up to picking time, including plowing, cultivating, pruning and spraying, may be secured by contract at \$10 per acre per year.

The fruit yield of a prune orchard varies with the season and the orchard. Some orchards in full bearing yield 400 bushels per acre. This is an exceptional yield, however. Occasionally there will be an almost entire failure of crop, but this seldom happens in a good prune district. Mr. Gilbert estimates the average yield of an average orchard, through a period of years, at 100 bushels of green fruit per acre, or one ton of dried fruit.

If a man has no evaporator he can usually sell his prunes, delivered at a nearby evaporator, at 5 cents per bushel. Picking and hauling will cost 7 1/2 cents, leaving the net price 27 1/2 cents a bushel. At this rate the returns from an acre would be \$27.50, and deducting the \$10 per acre, cost of cultivating, etc., would leave a net profit of \$17.50 per acre, which, on an investment of \$160 per acre, would be a dividend of 11 1/2 per cent. These figures are based upon a very conservative estimate of an average yield. Orchards that produce 300 bushels per acre made a correspondingly large profit.

Pays 20 Per Cent on Investment.

If a grower prefers to do so, he can hire his prunes cured at a commercial dryer, and then market the cured product. Careful estimates made by Mr. Gilbert, who has charge of several orchards owned by nonresidents, show that the total cost of picking, drying, hauling to town, grading and storing is about 24 cents a pound. The selling price varies with the season and with the size of the fruit, but an average price for prunes of all sizes is estimated at 34 cents a pound. This would leave a profit of 10 cents a pound. A crop of 100 bushels per acre makes a ton of cured fruit, and the profit on 2000 pounds would be \$30. From this must be deducted the \$10 per acre cost of care up to picking time, leaving a net profit of \$20 per acre, or 20 per cent on the investment.

By owning and operating an evaporating plant, and by doing much of the work of the orchard during the year, a prune-grower may save some of the cost of production, or rather make good wages for himself in addition to the net profit. A man who owns a 20-acre orchard can with profit operate an evaporator costing \$2000 and having a capacity sufficient to handle the crop from 20 to 40 acres of land. With this size of drying plant he can always be sure of being able to handle his own crop and can dry prunes for owners of small orchards.

Day of Careless Work is Past.

When the statement is made that a profit of 20 per cent on the investment can be made growing prunes in Oregon, many people are incredulous and ask why it is that the industry is not overcrowded if such returns can be had. It should be stated that a great many of those who went into the industry did

not find it profitable and gave up before their orchards had reached their full productiveness. Many thought that all that was necessary was to dig small holes, put in the trees and then leave them three or four years, when they would begin to bear big crops. But trees carelessly planted in poorly adapted soil and never properly cultivated did not make a healthy, productive orchard.

Many went into the industry without counting upon the outlay that must be made before returns would be received and they became discouraged. The boom in planting prune orchards came in the early '90s, and before the trees came into bearing the hard times came on. Men who were in debt and had no regular income were crowded to the wall. Orchards were sold for what the land was worth without the improvements, and some of the orchards had been so poorly cared for that they were practically worthless as such. Primitive methods of marketing were in vogue and often the growers consigned their fruit and received nothing for it.

This stage of the prune industry in Oregon has passed. New orchards are carefully planted and cared for. The old orchards are in full bearing and yield good crops at least three years out of four. Co-operative associations have introduced better methods of marketing and have prevented the dealers from compelling the growers to sell at unreasonably low prices. The associations have also introduced the latest methods of processing and packing fruit, using an attractive box bearing a trade label, and the fruit commands the best price the market will warrant.

Growers have learned how to cure fruit to satisfy the trade and there is no longer a loss because of poor curing. These changes have marked the advance of the industry in the last four or five years. There are men who do not and probably never will make a success of raising prunes. The great majority, however, find it profitable occupation, and some few have made enormous profits. Some men who were awake to opportunities that offered and purchased improved orchards at low figures were able to make 100 per cent on their investment in one year. These are exceptional cases, as also are those instances in which complete failures are experienced.

FAMOUS FOR FRUIT.

Hood River the Banner Orchard District of Oregon.

HOOD RIVER, it is fair to say, is better known for its fruit than any other section of Oregon. Retailers on Broadway display Hood River apples with placards reading, "Choice Hood River Spitzenbergs" and "Oregon Pippins." At the Waldorf-Astoria and aboard the great trans-Atlantic liners "Hood River apples" may be found listed with the other fruits on the menu cards, and during May and June, "Hood River strawberries" are sold at leading grocers and fruit stands in all the principal cities of the Rocky Mountain and Missouri Valley States. Fruit dealers in all parts of the United States, who might have difficulty in pointing to Oregon on the map, know Hood River as the great fruit country somewhere in the far West.

With Hood River farmers fruit-growing is made a business to be scientifically studied and mastered in all its many details. Varieties are selected for their thriftiness and commercial value. In the orchard the trees are planted 28 and 30 feet apart, carefully pruned each Spring, and the ground thoroughly cultivated and kept entirely free from weeds. Insect pests and fungus growths are kept in sub-

jection by the use of Winter and Summer sprays.

The soil of the valley seems peculiarly adapted to the production of large, sound, well-colored apples of fine flavor and keeping qualities, but, were it not that the orchardists take every possible care of their trees and fruit, apple culture would be a complete failure. Hood River apple-growers strive to produce nothing but first-class fruit, and, succeeding in this, they receive higher prices than any other section of the Pacific Coast. This fall the whole crop of Spitzenbergs was sold under contract at \$2 and Yellow Newtowns at \$1.50 a box on board the cars at picking time.

The Hood River apple crop for 1900 amounted to 50,000 boxes, which at an average price of \$1.25 per box was worth to the growers \$62,500. It is estimated that hardly one-tenth of the acreage planted to orchards is in bearing, while not one-tenth or even one-twentieth of the available ground is planted. In the next few years the increase in production will be very rapid. The orchards are not large, 25 and 30 acres being the average orchard for an individual grower. Incomes of \$2000 and over, for a single acre are not uncommon, while the Davidson Fruit Company, which bought the larger part of this year's crop, is authority for the statement that a bearing orchard this fall was worth to the grower fully \$500 an acre.

The principal varieties sought for planting are the Spitzenbergs, Yellow Newtowns, Jonathan and Baldwin. Other varieties are grown, but not extensively, and the first two named are considered the most profitable commercially.

In September of this year the Hood River Apple Growers' Union was organized with a membership of 80 per cent of the growers. The organization was very successful in marketing the crop at a good price. A. L. Mason, for nine years a Portland letter carrier, is president of the board of directors, and Joseph A. Wilson, manager. Some of the largest growers are not members of the union, preferring to market their apples independently.

All apples sold by the union are packed under the supervision of expert packers. The fruit is carefully sorted and graded, each apple is carefully wrapped in paper, the boxes lined, and paper is placed between the layers of apples. In this shape the buyers place the fruit in the New York markets, whence some of it finds its way to England and Germany, while some of the apples even cross the Pacific to the ports of China and Japan.

The Hood River strawberry yield for 1900 was nearly 90,000 14-pound crates, which brought into the valley over \$120,000. The field yield will be considerably increased next year, there being at least 1000 acres in bearing plants. A conservative estimate places the average strawberry yield at from 125 to 150 crates per acre. The average grower grows and markets 500 or more crates from a single acre. The secret of the great success Hood River has made in the strawberry business lies in the firm, frugal, hardworking, and the painstaking care in grading and packing.

Strawberries are shipped in refrigerator cars, and for the last several years a dozen cars a day leave for points in the Rocky Mountain States, Kansas, Nebraska, Iowa, the Dakotas, Minnesota and Montana.

Cherries are a coming crop for Hood River. This year extensive shipments were made for the first time, and the experiment was very encouraging. The fruit does not even begin to show signs of being overripe.

E. N. BLYTHE.

Hood River, December 19.

SCHOOLS OF MULTNOMAH.

Country Districts Well Provided and Almost Free from Debt.

THE schools of Multnomah County outside of the city are organized on much the same basis as those of the city, but are divided into four groups according to the number of rooms. There are sixty districts, each with its own building, nine of the buildings being formed jointly with adjoining counties, part being in each.

Children between the ages of four and 20 years number 4800 outside the city. That nearly all the children of the age at which they ordinarily attend school are enrolled is evident, the total enrollment being 3011. The population is growing so rapidly in the suburban districts that the schools at St. John, Montavilla, Mount Tabor and Woodstock are all overcrowded and need more room and an additional teacher each has been employed at St. John, Woodstock, Mount Tabor and Woodstock. Seven new buildings have been erected in the year, mostly in the suburbs.

The total expenses of the schools outside the city last year were \$100,823. Few of the districts have any debt, and these are almost entirely in the suburbs, where the growth of the population has exceeded the capacity of the annual revenue to provide additional accommodation. Much of this debt, however, will be extinguished in the year 1904.

In several adjoining districts with one large school, instead of each having a small one, with provision for conveying the children from a distance. This system has been found successful in some rural districts in Ohio, where it originated, and in other Eastern States. It was found to afford opportunity for grading and consolidation of schools, to afford better teaching and to give a longer school term, all without increasing, and in some cases, diminishing the cost of maintenance. Elections were held in some districts on the question of consolidation, but it was found that the people were not ripe for the change, and it was defeated. The agitation has been indirectly beneficial, for it has caused improvement in some of the schools.

Plans have been perfected by County Superintendent R. F. Robinson by which the library privileges of the city will be extended to every school district in the county. The Portland Public Library will furnish a box of books to each school for distribution among the children, the books being passed around from one school to another until all have had the use of each one.

The pride taken by the people of each district in their school answers well for their progress, and as wealth and population grow, the schools will grow and improve to keep their standard up to the highest set by any state in the Union.

How They Love Each Other.

TACOMA NEWS.
The steamer Hyades leaves Tacoma tonight with a cargo which loads her down to the water line and fills her holds to the bulwarks. She will stop at Seattle long enough to give the Seattle newspapers a chance to expatiate on the size of the cargo she takes from Seattle—loaded at Tacoma.



PRODUCTS OF OREGON ORCHARDS.