

FARM AND ORCHARD

Notes and Instructions from Agricultural Colleges and Experiment Stations of Oregon and Washington, Specially Suitable to Pacific Coast Conditions

How to Handle Peaches.

Oregon Agricultural College Corvallis—The Stanfield district of Oregon as well as several other parts of the state, is loaded with a heavy peach crop, which many of the growers do not know how to handle profitably. Prof. C. I. Lewis, head of the division of horticulture at the college, gives the following advice.

"All in all the peach is one of the poorest established fruit crops in the Pacific Northwest," says Prof. Lewis. "With us it is largely a case of feast or famine. During the years of heavy crops it is often hard for us to dispose of the crop with profit, while in California, to the south of us, the peach industry, many times as large as ours, is handled very profitably. They ship only a small percentage of the fruit in the green state, but dry and can a large portion of the crop.

"One reason why we have not done better with the peach for many years is that we have not handled it well. If peaches are not handled skillfully they arrive in the market in a very poor condition, and consequently bring low prices. There is no fruit upon which it is harder to give good advice in handling than the peach. It is a fruit where personal experience is necessary. The careful handling should begin at the time the fruit is taken from the trees.

"It is always desirable to have as much color on the fruit as possible. With some varieties that must be shipped long distances, of course, it is impossible to let them develop much color, but for short shipping distances more color can be allowed to develop before the fruit is picked. When shipped the fruit must never be in a ripe condition.

"The color may or may not be an index as to the time to pick the peach. Many rules are given. With the yellow peach, it is generally picked when the greens begin to lighten and traces of yellow begin to show. The touch is sometimes used as an indication, the peach being pressed lightly with the thumb on the suture side. Care must be taken, however, not to press too hard, and the thumb and finger nails of the packers should be trimmed down closely. It is easy to ruin the shipping quality of your peaches by jabbing the finger nail into them or pressing so hard that they are bruised and turn brown and black.

"Take great care not to get the peaches soiled. If dirt gets on the fuzz it is almost impossible to get it out. Pick in small receptacles, baskets or small pails lined with burlap. Do not handle the peaches more often than is absolutely necessary. Plan to pack directly from the picking basket to the boxes. If picked in too large receptacles and allowed to stand around, they will tend to become mellow and ripen too rapidly. In hauling them from the orchard to the packing shed be sure not to get them shaken up much. If you do not have a packing house, use some shed or put up a tent or sheet so as to shield the fruit from the sun. Handle the fruit as rapidly as possible. Do not allow the peaches to become over-heated if you can help it. As soon as packed in boxes, get them placed in a cool location. In shipping carload lots, send under refrigeration. It is sometimes better to pick in the late afternoon and pack the boxes in the cool of the evening. In most parts of the Northwest the nights are cool, so that the fruit would generally be in good condition in the early morning.

"In your packing shed you should make room for three boxes. Three packing boxes, a cull box and a basket which contains the fruit, should be provided for every packer, as there will probably be about three grades of peaches to be packed, and the packing should be done directly from the picking receptacle. Do not dump out and pour out the peaches onto tables and into boxes, for you can't do much of this without getting them bruised. If the fruit is damaged certain moulds and rots will soon start and the entire box of peaches will be ruined before they arrive in the market. Cull out carefully all damaged fruit.

"In ordering your boxes you will want to get various sizes, probably, according to the size of your peaches. The length and width of the boxes are all the same, 18½ by 11½ inches, inside measurement, but the depth varies. There are seven different peach boxes used on the Coast. The 2½ inch, 3 inch, 3½ inch, 4 inch, 5 inch and 5½ inch. The reason for this variation in the depth of the boxes is that they never pack peaches with more than two layers and the 5½ inch depth is used for extra large peaches. The sides, tops and bottoms are generally made of ½ inch material, and the ends of ¾ inch material.

"There are various grades used in packing the peaches. Such terms as 'extra fancy,' 'fancy,' 'choice,' etc., are often used. Unfortunately these

terms are misleading to the buyer. A system of grading that has been used in Ashland formerly, I believe, is very satisfactory. Their peach grade known as 'fancy' contains 64 or less peaches to the box. The second grade, known as 'A1' contains from 64 to 80 to the box. The third grade, known as 'B,' grade, contains 80 to 92 peaches to the box. All the fruit in these grades must be free from fungi, split pits and worms, and all are very carefully wrapped in paper.

"In many sections of the United States they pack smaller peaches than the 92s. Some as small as the 108s are used, but there is very little money in such small peaches, and one had better not try to ship them to the open market. There will be more money made by leaving them at home. Smaller peaches and peaches containing some imperfections are often put in boxes without being wrapped and are sold for pies and canning, or disposed of to advantage locally. I would recommend that smaller peaches than the 92s be not shipped, as I doubt if it would warrant the freight and express charges. There might be seasons when the peach crop was very light that one could realize profit on such small peaches, but only under such conditions.

"In packing peaches in boxes, avoid what is known as straight pack. In the straight pack each peach in the second layer comes directly above the peach in the bottom layer. This makes considerable bruising. Pack what is known as the diagonal pack, the 2-3, 3-3. These throw the second layer into the spaces left in the first layer. The 4-5 is used with some smaller grades. The 4-5 pack, however, has not received much favor in the market, too many open spaces being left on the sides of the boxes.

"The 2-3 pack will be put up in the following way. Start with the end of the box, bottom layer, and put three peaches down against the end of the box, the first peach going up against one side of the end, the second touching the opposite side and end, and the third peach will be directly between the second and first. Then take the two peaches for your second row and fit them in between the three. Your third row will have three fitting in against the two, etc. So every other row in the box will be 3-2, 3-2, 3-2, etc. The second layer will be just the opposite, starting two and fitting them down into the little spaces that are left by placing three in the first row of the bottom layer. When your box is done if you count your rows the long way of the box you will have seven peaches in every row and there will be five such rows in each layer.

"The 3-3 pack differs from the former in only one respect; every short layer of the box has three peaches and your long rows will vary. The first row will have 9 peaches, the second 8, third 9, fourth 8, fifth 9 and sixth 8.

"Be sure that your peaches are so packed that when the covers are nailed on the boxes they cannot rattle and move in any way. If you can run your hand in under the covers and rattle the peaches around, you can rest assured that they will arrive in the market in poor condition. The fact that you can use this test of your box allows you to get a good firm pack. Clean your covers securely. In warm sections of the state it will not be a bad plan to have small holes bored in the sides of the peach boxes. This will allow a little better ventilation.

"In wrapping your peaches with paper, wrap them as smoothly as possible. The first layer you put into the box, put the smooth side down. In the second layer, put the smooth side of the wrapper up, so that no matter whether the bottom or top of the box is opened, it will present an attractive appearance.

"The paper that you use in wrapping peaches should be rather heavy tissue, and the size varies, 7x7 and 7x8. This paper is of great assistance in keeping the peaches clean and absorbs the extra moisture and will allow you to make your pack firm. Peach packing is something in which you will easily become skillful, with little experience. The points which you will need to emphasize most, however, are to grade carefully, throw out all culls, leave the small peaches at home, and be sure your pack is firm."

[Dry Quarters for Swine.

A nervous, irritable sow has no place in the breeding herd.

It is absolutely necessary to provide clean drinking water for the sheep. A sheep will stand a long while before taking a drink of dirty water.

A warm, dry pen for the pigs is needed for best results. Give them plenty of dry bedding and a place to sleep that is free from drafts.

While ground shelled corn is somewhat more valuable for fattening hogs than is whole corn, it is not, as a rule, economical to grind corn for hogs.

BIRDS AID TO FARMER

Most Efficient in Controlling the Codling Moth.

Does More Damage to Apple and Pears Than All of Other Insect Pests Combined—Things Some of Songsters Devour.

Weather conditions, parasites, fungi, insect disease and mechanically applied poisons (most of which are both dangerous and expensive) together are insufficient to check the multiplication of insects without the assistance of insectivorous birds. Edward H. Forbush records seeing a pair of grosbeaks visit their nest 450 times in eleven hours, carrying to their young two or more larvae at a time. Sparrows, chickadees, vireos, martins and



The Purple Martin.

warblers made from forty to sixty trips an hour to their nests with all kinds of insects for their young. One of the reports of the biological survey records the finding of sixty grasshoppers in the crop of one nighthawk and 500 mosquitoes in another; thirty-eight cutworms in the crop of a blackbird and seventy canker worms in the crop of a cedar bird. Professor Tschudi estimates that a song sparrow devours 1,500 larvae a day, and Professor Forbush says that a single yellow-throated warbler will consume 10,000 tree lice a day. A scarlet tanager has been seen to devour gypsy moths at the rate of thirty-five a minute for eighteen minutes at a time. It is known that more than fifty species of birds feed upon different kinds of caterpillars, while the eight species live largely upon destructive plant lice.

"By far the most efficient aids to man in controlling the codling moth are the birds," says the "Year Book" (1911) of the department of agriculture. A report of the bureau of entomology says that this insect does more damage to apples and pears than all the other insects combined, this damage being estimated at from \$12,000,000 to \$15,000,000 a year. Thirty-six species of birds attack this insect, these species representing thirteen families, of which the three most important are the woodpeckers, the titmice and the sparrows. In some localities these birds destroy from 66 to 85 per cent. of the hibernating larvae of this insect.—Review of Reviews.

Chick Rations.

Rolled oats, pinhead or steel-cut oats, cracked wheat, bran, broken rice, millet seed, kafir corn, corn bread and parched corn (to which list a little cracked corn may be safely added) are good to start chicks on, and a mixture of all is better than any one. The tested-out eggs, boiled and crumbled or merely cut in two, are a good addition always, so is cottage cheese squeezed dry and green stuff of some kind should always be added. Little chicks will eat dry alfalfa leaves readily, and chopped vegetables also. Nothing is better than dandelion leaves for green food, and they come early and stay late. Like alfalfa, they are good dry.

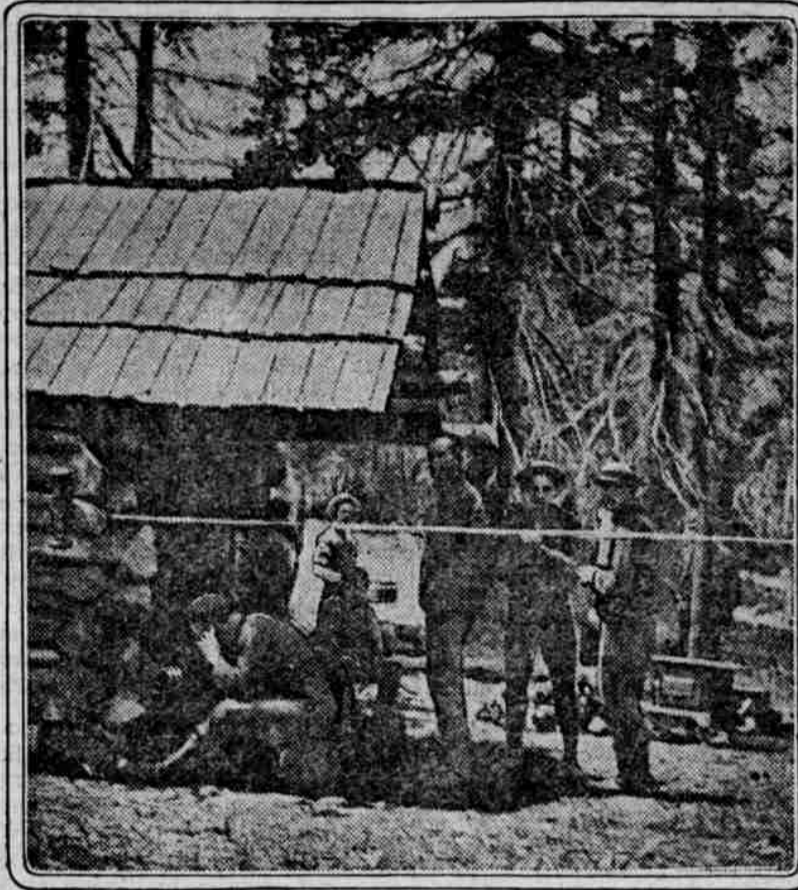
Corn for Chicks.

While corn is not regarded as the best thing on which to start chicks, hundreds of strong, thrifty chicks have made an excellent start on dampened corn meal. We must remember, though, that the people who have not used much except corn for feeding chicks usually do not attempt to start them at all until the season when grass and flies and worms are available for the hunting, and chicks balance their own ration with what they pick up. The same method of feeding little chicks that are hatched very early and kept indoors for weeks is apt to prove disastrous.

Pea Crop More Popular.

In the last federal census year the United States was credited with 1,305,000 acres given over to dry peas, compared with 968,000 acres ten years earlier. But a recent federal census bureau casts some doubt on this total, because it says a considerable proportion of the area returned is probably duplication of other crop acreage; this is particularly true of the South Atlantic coast and a number of the state in the middle south.

San Pedro Martir Mountain



One of the Camps

THE Coast Range culminates in the peaks of San Geronimo and San Bernardino of the San Bernardino mountains, with San Antonio and San Jacinto only a little lower on either side. Then the range makes a decided drop to the south and shows heights of quite a different character, with blunt tops instead of sharp peaks. Palomar and Cajon mountains are bold and conspicuous but not high, as mountains on the coast go. Still farther south, however, in the peninsula of Lower California, the range makes another lunge upward and produces the great San Pedro Martir mountain, more than nine thousand feet high. That is its last great effort, for in its more southern reaches it is much broken, with plenty of peaks, to be sure, but no high ones.

While some of the mountains of the upper part of the range are higher than San Pedro Martir, none other presents so huge a bulk. Seen from San Telmo, it is an unbroken wall forty or fifty miles long, which at the north end is first cut down sharply and then beyond is almost completely demolished, as mountains rank; and at the south end is torn into gaps and has had its crest knocked off.

There are two picachos, sharp, needlelike, of pure white granite, but they are so near the eastern side of the mountain that they cannot be seen at all from the west, and not from the south till one has reached San Juan De Dios, then they appear pointing heavenward, shining white like great icebergs.

Almost Perpendicular.

The western side of the mountain is abrupt, with very few places where it may be climbed, but the eastern side is still more so and makes an almost perpendicular drop to the desert. On that side one may descend, in scarcely more than an hour's time, from snow and freezing temperature to a spot where the sun is warm and birds are nesting. And then from beneath the feathery crowns of tropical palms he may look back to where, almost directly overhead, stand the rugged pines he has just left.

It is miles across the top from east to west, and with its great length the dimensions of the mountain are such as to almost entitle it to be called a high tableland, with hills and valleys and streams of its own. As it is high enough to catch winter snows and summer rains, the pasturage on the top is always good, and when the lower lands between the mountain and the Pacific are parched with drought here is a haven for starving herds. They come from as far away as San Juan De Dios and grow fat on the sweet grasses and the delightfully cool summer air. When winter grips the mountain, however, the herds must descend, for then the climate is too rigorous to be borne without sufficient shelter.

The cattle and horses are not the only ones that grow fat from a summer residence on San Pedro; the herders also are in clover, for the great forests are the home of innumerable deer, and bighorn as well, though not in so great numbers as the deer. Two Mexican friends of mine who were tending a herd of cattle on the summit, in two weeks shot fifty deer and might easily have shot more.

Another man had a standing offer from a San Francisco firm of \$25 for every head of a male bighorn, and he

shipped a good many. That traffic of course was stopped when Mexican law declared a closed season for mountain sheep. It was high time, too, for they were wantonly destroyed, sometimes not even for their heads and skins, but merely for the pleasure of slaughter. I think if American nimrods had understood how easily those marvelous hunting grounds might be reached by boat to San Quintin, where an efficient Mexican guide with excellent saddle and pack mules was to be procured, the slaughter would have proceeded more merrily still. I heard of one American, and he from distant Boston, who had discovered this hunter's El Dorado, and who made periodical trips to it. That was before Mexico, in fear of insurrectos, forbade the importation of firearms into the peninsula.

It is not strange that San Pedro should harbor so much game, for it is the only really wooded mountain on the peninsula, and the timber here is very fine. Deer and bighorn are not the only game; other animals there are, not so harmless, and that may even play the roll of hunter instead of hunted. Mountain lions are so numerous that young colts, which they consider the most delicious of tidbits, have a hard time trying to become horses. A man living on the western slope of the mountain showed me a corral fully five feet high from which a mountain lion took a three-year-old filly, leaping the fence with ease with the colt in his mouth, and dragging the carcass a mile up the side of the mountain before he stopped for his meal.

Raging Torrents.

On the eastern side there are streams that start bravely from the mountain, but they are immediately sucked up by the sands of the desert. Canyon Diablo is an excellent example of this; in the time of rains the water rushes from the mouth of the extremely narrow, rocky canyon, which is a mere slit in the mountain wall, in a tumultuous flood. It entirely fills the narrow opening so that the canyon cannot be ascended beyond its mouth, and it cannot be crossed, such a raging torrent is it. Yet in less than a mile it has disappeared, and not only is there no stream, but the rounded arroyo sides are of smooth sand as though years had passed since water flowed between them. Many streams of abundant flow start out in this way, but all promptly disappear. And as the mountain acts as a barrier to check the rains that come in from the Pacific, the strip of land between San Pedro and the Gulf of California remains absolute desert.

On the western slope, however, the streams flow with greater assurance. One of them is turned from its channel and is carried along the skirt of the mountain for twenty miles to wash the gold from the soil of Socorro.

San Antonio creek is a fairly typical mountain stream, a rushing little river, flowing through its own dense growth of alders and alamos. It proves the mountain quality of its water, too, by sheltering speckled trout that reach the very respectable size of twelve inches.

In one fertile little cove in its deep, rocky canyon it nourishes an oasis of really tropical verdure, a tiny half-moon of land set thick with fig, grape and peach, where Jack Frost never intrudes.