

# The Shipments of Broccoli from Western Oregon This Year Have Been Sixty-odd Cars, and There Is a Market for 5000 Cars a Year; a Profitable Money Crop

## OREGON BROCCOLI

There are few States in the Union that can equal Oregon in the growing of broccoli and certainly none that can beat her. The factors contributing to this superiority in crop production are suitable climatic conditions and an unlimited amount of fine soil which is fully adapted to this vegetable. In the marketing of the crop, growers are becoming more careful in grading and packing each year, realizing that if this crop is to be sold in large quantities in eastern markets it must bear the stamp of quality and uniformity that leaves no doubt in the mind of the wholesaler.

In the increased acreage which is contemplated at this time, there are several things worthy of mention as being necessary to be considered by every grower. First, this crop cannot be well grown as a sideline. It must receive proper attention in all of the phases of production and marketing if one is to be successful and make money. There can be no good broccoli grown with poor farming, no good broccoli sold by poor methods of cutting, grading and packing. Broccoli is not a lazy man's crop and every grower who has had experience knows the crop is well worth his best efforts of production and marketing. Second, first class broccoli demands high class seed. I would hate to see any grower this year launching out into this crop with a seed strain of unknown value. Fully equal to well drained ground in point of importance is the question of seed. The crop takes nearly a year to grow to maturity and you can't afford to gamble with anything. This question must be very carefully considered. Good seed this year is a scarce article.

Third, Oregon broccoli must in the future be standardized. There is too much difference between the idea of one set of growers in one section as to what is a first grade or second grade. Grades and packs must be standardized in all producing sections. There must be set a high ideal for this crop and its quality.

Again I say, let no one grow broccoli as a sideline or something to dabble in. We want only honest-to-goodness broccoli growers who are in the business for all they are worth, aiming to outdo each other in the quality of their crop and yet cooperating in every respect to put out a uniform product.

—A. G. B. BOUQUET

Corvallis, Or., March 28, 1921.

(As most readers know, Mr. Bouquet is professor of vegetable gardening at the Oregon Agricultural College. He is a broccoli enthusiast, has aided the industry from its beginning in western Oregon on a commercial scale; and he is one of the best authorities on broccoli in this entire country. Prof. Bouquet will be with the broccoli growers and prospective growers at the meeting on Saturday evening at the Salem Commercial club, to make plans for a large acreage in the Salem district.)

## THE BROCCOLI INDUSTRY IN DOUGLAS COUNTY, BY THE MAN WHO STARTED IT

How It Was Started and Some of the Obstacles That Had to Be Overcome — The Industry Was Begun in That County With About Forty Acres Pledged to The Growing of Broccoli.

By DR. C. H. BAILEY.

Eight years ago the county court of Douglas county appointed me fruit inspector and I immediately assumed the responsibility of the office. In my travels amongst the orchard men it was made plain to me that while in time their orchards would bring them in an income, at that time their trees were young and producing no fruit. Douglas county had been invaded by a large number of eastern men who had come to the Umpqua valley to embark in the fruit industry, and many of these men had been assured by real estate promoters that a living could be made by growing truck crops between the trees for local consumption. Upon trying to dispose of their vegetables, however, these incipient orchardists found that the supply was already larger than the demand.

Not only were many of the owners of young orchards finding it hard to make a living, but owners of farms ranging from 40 to 80 acres were also up against the fact that the home market was oversupplied, with no demand from the local merchants except for butter and eggs. In fact, our problems were the same that still face the northwest, except in sections where co-operation has been thoroughly developed, namely, poor markets.

Growing On Commercial Scale. Many of these young apple, pear and prune orchards had been

planted on our richest river bottom soils, and while the trees were making a splendid growth, the spaces between the trees were an economic waste; in most cases only enough being grown to supply the owner with what vegetables he and his family could consume. With these conditions confronting us it became an obsession with me to promote the growth, collectively, of some crop that could be shipped in carload lots, that would not come in competition too much with other sections, and a crop that would assure the grower an immediate cash return.

Realizing the fact that my efforts must be confined to promoting the growing of not more than one article of consumption, if the movement was to result in success, and having grown broccoli for home consumption for the three years previous, it came to me as an inspiration that the Umpqua valley, with its equable climate and rich soils, was ideally situated for the growing of this vegetable on a commercial scale.

At this time I had the honor of serving as master of the Douglas county Pomona Grange, and one meeting in the fall, placing another member in the chair, I offered a resolution to the assembled grange that we promote and encourage the growing of broccoli on a commercial scale. One of the members of the grange who has since become one of the most successful broccoli growers

in Douglas county and whose beautiful home is situated on the banks of the South Umpqua river. W. C. Winston, seconded the motion, which, after considerable discussion, was adopted. I am frank in saying that if we had had no organization of farmers such as the grange, the movement would not have resulted in success.

Visited Local Granges.

Mr. Winston immediately agreed to plant ten acres of his river bottom land to this crop, but only a comparatively few of those present seemed to think the movement would prove successful, so it became necessary to visit the different local granges to explain the growing of the crop and to urge the members to plant a sufficient acreage to make the movement a success.

Many of the merchants of Roseburg were skeptical of financial results, some claiming that the vegetable would not arrive on the eastern market in fit condition for human consumption. J. H. Booth, of the Douglas National Bank, however, was an exception, and from the inception of the industry has shown a confidence in its success, and in every way in his power encouraged us to go ahead and make the movement what it is now—a staple crop in Douglas county.

The lecturer of the Pomona Grange, Mrs. O. C. Brown, immediately saw the possibilities in the broccoli industry, and she, as part of her lecture hour, arranged her programs to include every one who had any knowledge along the lines of broccoli growing. The Pomona Grange also promoted two farmers' institutes which had for their basis the stimulating of interest along these same lines. The Roseburg Commercial Club was liberal in its help in financing these institutes, one of two days' duration being held in Roseburg, while the other was of week's length, the various speakers from the agricultural college visiting six cities and towns of the county, while I went along to act as advance agent and to speak upon broccoli culture and its possibilities for financial success.

At that time I was serving as president of the board of directors of the Umpqua Valley Fruit Union, and one of my most enthusiastic co-workers in promoting the industry was the secretary of the union, S. D. Cooley. To prove that the doubters were mistaken in saying that broccoli would not reach the eastern markets in edible condition, he shipped several crates to Chicago, while I shipped at the same time to friends in Duluth, Minn., both shipments arriving in good condition, which proved conclusively that if the product could travel in a warm express car and arrive in good condition it certainly could be shipped under refrigeration and arrive fit for consumption.

We had at this period only in the neighborhood of 15 to 20 acres signed up to grow broccoli, and it was realized that at least 35 to 40 acres were needed to make the movement a success. During the winter I visited every local grange in the county in the interest of broccoli production, and where the grange meetings were held in the school houses I was particularly fortunate in interesting the growers, for here blackboards and chalk were available.

Their 1920 Crop.

## ACREAGE OF BROCCOLI IN ROSEBURG DISTRICT WILL BE ABOUT DOUBLED

The Matter of Seed is the All Important One Now For The Growers of Douglas County — The Market is Clamoring For More, So Why Not More Broccoli? Asks Mr. Busenbark.

Editor, Statesman:

The broccoli industry of Douglas county is a growing industry. The crop just harvested is one of the best that has been grown. While not as large as the 1917 crop, yet the quality is exceptional and the price has averaged much higher than the 1917 crop, so the net returns to the grower equal that of 1917. The worst setback the industry has received is lack of good seed. Before the war, the seed was imported from Europe (Denmark), and was true to name. Since then growers have been attempting to raise their own seed, with variable results.

At present the seed produced by Chas. W. Kruse of Oswego, is the most reliable. Local growers produced about one-third of the seed used locally the past season. The results were not satisfactory. Plants from one grower's seed began to head by the first of January and the bulk of his crop was off by Feb. 15, thus coming too early to get the best market. The market is clamoring for more than is produced, so why not more broccoli? There is much demand for seed at present, and the supply is limited, but the indications are that the acreage this year will be nearly double that of last year. The Oregon Growers Cooperative Association shipped the bulk of the crop this year. They are requiring the growers to meet their standard of grade and pack, thus putting an article on the eastern market that can be depended upon and insuring the future market.

—R. A. BUSENBARK.

Roseburg, Oregon, Mar. 27, 1921.

## SLOPER BROS. OF INDEPENDENCE USE POWER FARMING METHODS IN BROCCOLI

They Set Out the Plants With a Common Kale Planter, Adding a Device Making it Suitable For Broccoli; They Cultivate With a Tractor, and They Put Their Product Into Crates Ready For the Railroad Car at Four and a Half Cents a Crate.

The most extensive growers of broccoli in the Salem district are Sloper Bros. of Independence. They have been growing broccoli for 10 years. During their first eight years they raised this vegetable in a rather small way, though they had four acres during one of those years; and they sold their product on the local market and produced seed for the seed houses.

The past two years they have produced broccoli on a commercial scale.

Their 1920 Crop.

They lost about \$1 a crate on

the purchase of a new tractor, to assist them in their farming operations. On account of their experience with the car of broccoli that was held up in Denver, and for other reasons, W. A. Sloper believes broccoli might be shipped to Europe, if there were a call for our product there; that is, it would arrive across the Atlantic in good condition, if proper shipping precautions were observed. But it would no doubt meet there the competition of the broccoli of Norway and Denmark and other continental countries. And, thus far, western Oregon has not produced nearly enough broccoli to meet the American demand.

This Year's Crop.

Sloper Bros. estimates that they had 13 acres in broccoli this year. It was between the rows of a "baby" hop yard of 37 acres. It was interplanted. The rows were eight feet apart. They planted in August, and they will have easily eight cars; the seventh full car lot was shipped on Tuesday.

The Slopers are mechanically inclined. They took a common kale planter and put a check row appliance on it, for planting broccoli. It worked fine. They have invented a hop plow, run with a tractor. It has two discs in front that act as a middle breaker, with three discs on the side, and it leaves the ground loose and pliable. They expect to patent this device.

They expect to use solid planting in their broccoli growing this year; with perhaps about the same number of crates as last year; but with a smaller number of acres.

Harvesting the Crop.

Sloper Bros. have worked out cheap and quick methods of crating and loading their broccoli. They have put it into crates at about 4½ cents a crate. They use a wagon with a hay rack, holding 30 or 40 crates, with arrangements on the rear for crating. They pack the broccoli into the crates right on the wagon. When the wagon is loaded, the load is ready to take to the railroad car. They send their cutters two or three hours ahead of the crates and loaders, to have the leaves slightly wilted, in order to make a closer pack; because they had complaints last year that the crates were not well filled.

It is hard to fill them with the broccoli right from the hands of the cutters, because the leaves are very crisp and brittle. An hour's sunshine will remedy this, or a few hours of rainy weather. (By the way, broccoli must be cut when ready, rain or shine.) But, at one time, last year, they were delayed in packing the crop that had been cut in the field, and it was on the ground for four or five days, in a drenching rain—and it was shipped to Chicago by express and sold there at \$2.75 a crate. Broccoli will stand a good deal of waiting, in rainy or cold weather.

The plant must not be allowed to dry out during the summer time. The better broccoli growers of both the Umpqua and Willamette valleys often plow twice, drag the ground several times, and take every precaution to hold the moisture. This plant loves the cool open winters, such as we are passing through this year. Mild temperatures and plenty of moisture are the prime requisites.

If exceedingly cold weather comes in, he will often curl up and die, unless there is snow enough to protect him. He is also subject to chilblains, and if there is freezing and thawing weather, Mr. Broccoli crumples up in the stem or stalk. This can be prevented by throwing earth up over the stems during such periods.

After all this good care is given him, the grower must not be disappointed if about 25 per cent of the plants are spindling, run away.

They have been trying to get their neighbors to go into broccoli growing, in order to facilitate the handling of the crop in car lots, and they have succeeded in getting some of them to grow a little, in a small way. The indications now are, however, that the growing of broccoli will be quite general in that neighborhood, beginning with this year.

And Sloper Bros., who have thus pioneered the industry, deserve all the success they themselves have secured, and besides great credit for bringing to their neighborhood the opening of a new line in the way of a profitable money crop that has great possibilities.

W. A. Sloper was in Salem yesterday making arrangements for

Former Premier Viviani is coming to the United States. Sounds like a new hair lotion.

## FOR A BLUE RIBBON QUALITY WITH A SALEM MARK WILL BE HIS GOAL

Thus C. C. Russell, the Father of the Industry in the Immediate Salem District, Dedicates His Labors in This Field, and He Has Already Made a High Mark in Quality.

Editor Statesman:

There has been much said of that delicious vegetable, broccoli, in recent issues of the Salem daily papers, especially The Statesman.

The broccoli is a vegetable of the cauliflower family, but, grown as it is in the Willamette valley, is far superior to the cauliflower, inasmuch as it grows in cool weather, and usually the crop is gathered at the time of year when we have more or less rain. I have found in my experience that broccoli harvested in such weather is superior to that gathered in the warmer and dryer days, as the cool weather makes it brittle and more tender.

I believe the climate near Salem is especially adapted to the growing of broccoli. While we may have some winters that would injure the crop, I think it is no more subject to a freeze-out than grain crops. In the seven years I have grown it, it has been more in an experimental way than anything else, and I am sure the experiment has been a pleasant one.

I have learned that it takes good, fertile, well drained soil to produce the fancy article, and it is a crop that will stand all the work you can give it; while I have grown good crops when I was compelled to partly neglect it.

Methods of Planting.

I plant the seed in a seed bed, either with a seed drill or by hand. Care should be taken that the soil is well worked, deep and fine; the seed planted about half an inch deep in drill rows about 12 inches apart, and it should be planted from the first to the 15th of May, and reset in the field about July 15th.

Special care should be made to get the best seed on the market. If

you can find an individual who has made a practice of raising seed and is a success, buy of him, and don't plant anything but the St. Valentine, or a sprout from same.

The seed is a very careful, and, one might say, a scientific study to select specimens that will improve rather than run out.

I see the seedmen still continue to list a variety by name. White French. Any one should be careful not to plant this variety, as it is not good, and is a disgrace to the broccoli family.

There could be much said regarding marketing the crop in a commercial way, but for this time I will omit this, except to say the east, up to the present time, wants our broccoli, and I am one to put up a blue ribbon quality with a Salem mark in big red letters.

C. C. RUSSELL,

Gervais, Ore., Route 2, March 29, 1921.

(Mr. Russell has already progressed far toward a blue ribbon quality in the production of broccoli. He told the men assembled at the noon luncheon of the Salem Commercial Club, a week ago Monday, that he had already sold \$356 worth of broccoli, to Salem growers, from three-quarters of an acre, and was still cutting the crop. He told the Salem Broccoli association crowd, at the organization meeting last Friday, that the independence growers of broccoli were receiving higher prices, for their product shipped in car lots and sold in the east, than he has been getting in the Salem market.

Mr. Russell will be at the broccoli meeting at the Salem Commercial Club rooms on Saturday evening. He will himself grow twelve acres of broccoli this year.)

Editor Statesman:

All reports indicate that the broccoli season just completed in the Roseburg district — has been the most successful one since the industry started. This applies not only to the quality of the crop harvested but to the prices received by independent growers as well as members of the Cooperative Association claim to have received satisfactory prices.

The most notable feature of the marketing end of the deal this season is in the fact that all sales were made to the Roseburg Independent Association. While the independent growers do not appear to have been able to reach the high average of \$1.35 to \$1.75 as reported by the Oregon Growers' Cooperative Association, our net prices of \$1 to \$1.25 are very encouraging. A little competition puts life and pep into any sort of business, and all look forward to other seasons when even better prices may be possible for our crops.

Another item of interest is the fact that California has gone into the growing of broccoli on quite a large scale. In the past she concentrated on cauliflower, which was harvested during fall.

—FOSTER BUTNER.

Roseburg, Or., Mar. 26, 1921.

## BROCCOLI IS AN ARISTOCRAT AND DEMANDS TO BE TREATED AS SUCH

Comes Strutting Into Our Market in February, March And April, at a Time When We Have No Succulent Vegetables, Except Hot House Products or Some That Have Been Sent From Sunny Climes.

By C. I. LEWIS.

Broccoli belongs to the cabbage family. The broccoli is really an early spring form of cauliflower. It has been said that the cauliflower is a cabbage with a college education, which is probably true. But if the cauliflower is a cabbage with a college education, then the broccoli has taken a post graduate course.

True the broccoli is an aristocrat. Comes strutting onto our market in February, March and April, at a time of year when we have no succulent vegetables, except some which have been sent to us from hot houses, or from sunny climes. Is it any wonder that he struts around with an aristocratic air when all he has for competition is some dried up beets and carrots, with a parsnip or turnip here and there, or some old dried up cabbages of last year's vintage?

Like the true aristocrat, the broccoli demands the best of service. It has been said that the broccoli is a very easy crop to grow. This we feel is hardly true, because the broccoli is very exacting in some of its requirements. First, good seed is absolutely necessary. Unusually good and expensive seed, seed running \$30 a pound or more. This seed must be planted in a good seed bed in April, and the young plants transplanted in June or early July.

From the very start, it must be seen that this aristocrat has plenty to drink. He doesn't stand prohibition and drought at all well. He will grow spindly, run to seed, and will refuse to grow at all if he suffers. Therefore the ground should be rich and deep and preferably rolling, or of such a nature that it will hold water for long periods in the winter.

The plant must not be allowed to dry out during the summer time. The better broccoli growers of both the Umpqua and Willamette valleys often plow twice, drag the ground several times, and take every precaution to hold the moisture. This plant loves the cool open winters, such as we are passing through this year. Mild temperatures and plenty of moisture are the prime requisites.