

Continuation of the Slogan Page: Subject this Week, the Mint Industry

HERE IS A CITY MAN WHO IS WILLING TO PAY EXTRA TAXES FOR COUNTY AGENT

Mr. Prescott Farmed for 17 Years in Polk County, and He Found the Help of the County Agent Useful, Also That of the Fruit Inspector and the OAC

Editor Statesman: During the general discussion of the county agent question, I realized there was some opposition to the move for a county agent, but did not believe this opposition would be sufficient to defeat the movement in having provision made for one. It apparently has been a case where the individual believing in a county agent has not realized the importance of giving expression to his sentiments and has allowed a few knockers to holler so loud that to the untrained ear they have sounded like the general public.

Just Natural to Bark This bunch reminds me of an experience I had years ago while visiting my homestead in eastern Oregon. I was late in getting to my claim and darkness overtook me. I laid out with but a sage bush for protection. I slumbered, but was suddenly awakened by what I believed to be a thousand wolves yelping at me. Of course I was scared and gave up to be devoured, but for some reason not known to me I escaped them. In talking to a sheep man of the district of my experience I was informed that my disturbers were not wolves at all, but merely coyotes, and that three sounded like a thousand. He informed me that they were entirely harmless and that their natural inclination was to bark at everything.

Organizer Needed The county agent in many ways is an organizer, inasmuch as he assists the farmer to organize his activities. He is much more, but if he does nothing more than assist the farmer to better plan his work and plant the right thing at the right time he is well worth his hire.

A certain farmer takes exception to being called "unprogressive." Possibly he is justified in taking offense, but tell me why it was that not until the state compelled

Notice of Intention to Improve Thompson Avenue From the North Line of Center Street to the South Line of Frederick Street.

Notice is hereby given that the Common Council of the City of Salem, Oregon, deems it necessary and expedient and hereby declares its purpose and intention to improve Thompson Avenue from the north line of Center street to the south line of Frederick street in the City of Salem, Oregon, at the expense of the abutting and adjacent property, except the street and alley intersections, the expense of which will be assumed by the City of Salem, Oregon, by bringing said portion of said street to the established grade, constructing Portland cement concrete curbs, and paving said portion of said street with a six-inch Portland cement concrete pavement, thirty feet in width, in accordance with the plans and specifications therefor which were adopted by the Common Council on November 15th, 1926, now on file in the office of the city recorder, and which are hereby referred to and made a part hereof.

The Common Council hereby declares its purpose and intention to make the above described improvement by and through the Street Improvement Department of the City of Salem, Oregon.

By order of the Common Council the 15th day of November, 1926.

M. POULSEN, City Recorder. Date of first publication hereof is Dec. 8, 1926. Date of final publication hereof will be Dec. 19, 1926. d19

Notice of Intention to Improve Cross Street From the East Line of South 12th Street to the West Line of South 13th Street.

Notice is hereby given that the Common Council of the City of Salem, Oregon, deems it necessary and expedient and hereby declares its purpose and intention to improve Cross street from the east line of South 12th street to the west line of South 13th street, in the City of Salem, Oregon, at the expense of the abutting and adjacent property, except the street and alley intersections, the expense of which will be assumed by the City of Salem, Oregon, by bringing said portion of said street to the established grade, constructing Portland cement concrete curbs, and paving said portion of said street with a six-inch Portland cement concrete pavement, thirty feet in width, in accordance with the plans and specifications therefor which were adopted by the Common Council, on November 15, 1926, now on file in the office of the city recorder, and which are hereby referred to and made a part hereof.

The Common Council hereby declares its purpose and intention to make the above described improvement by and through the Street Improvement Department of the City of Salem, Oregon. By order of the Common Council

PEPPERMINT CULTURE AND DISTILLATION (Continued from page 9.)

The mint is between two-thirds and full bloom or sooner if there is danger of fall rains or early frosts.

Cutting is done early in the day with scythe or mower, according to the size of the plan and the condition of the soil. If the stand is very close and heavy, and because of the unevenness of the ground it cannot be cut closely with a mower, it will be found profitable to cut it by hand.

Curing The mint is allowed to lie in the swath until half dry, and the curing is finished in cocks or windrows, as with clover hay.

Not more than can be handled with an ordinary pitch fork should be placed in one cock. When fairly well dried, but before the leaves shatter on handling, it should be hauled to the still.

The dry herb is not only less bulky and less heavy than the freshly cut herb, but it is more quickly distilled and requires less steam for the thorough exhaustion of the oil.

It is not advisable to cut the mint faster than the crop can be distilled, as shattering of the leaves and hard rains lessen the yield of oil.

Fall Plowing In favorable seasons a very abundant second growth of mint occurs after the crop is harvested, but this aftermath is now seldom cut, as it has been found to weaken the roots greatly and to subject them to winter killing. The usual practice is to plow down this second growth after it has been killed by frost, turning it under about three inches. This apparently harsh treatment breaks up the clumps, buries the surface runners and is thought to give a better stand when the plants are fully exposed to the weather. The fertilizing effect of the herbage when buried is also greater than when it is permitted to decay on the surface.

Yield Yields of 2 to 4 tons of mint herb may be expected. The yield of oil is extremely variable, ranging from 25 to 100 pounds to the acre, according to the stand of the herb, its condition, treatment on cutting, and particularly the method of distillation.

Cost of Production As there is no great diversity in mint culture, the cost of preparation, tillage and handling is perhaps more easily ascertainable than for many other crops. Careful inquiry in 1920 showed that the labor cost for establishing an acre of the mint on suitable soil in the Michigan-Indiana district and caring for it during the first season was about \$55. The cost in subsequent years could be placed at \$30 per acre. (U. S. Dept. of Agriculture).

M. G. J. Moisan, one of the most successful and experienced growers in the northwest, and secretary of the Oregon Mint Growers association, places the cost of growing mint at \$1.25 to \$2 per pound of oil, including labor, fuel and all incidentals.

The cost of production is no doubt subject to some variation due to managerial ability even in districts where everything else is equal.

Miscellaneous The value of the oil depends much upon its composition. The principal ester constituent, menthyl acetate, possesses a very fragrant minty odor, to which the agreeable aroma of the oil is largely due. The alcoholic constituent, menthol, possesses the well known penetrating minty odor and characteristic cooling taste. The flavoring properties of the oil are due largely to both the ester and alcoholic constituents, while the medicinal value is attributed to the latter only.

The elaboration of these constituents depends upon the various cultural and climatic conditions to which the plant is subjected during growth.

In an experiment to determine what effect drying the plant has on the yield and constants of the oil, A. M. Todd states that no loss of oil results when the plant is dried before distillation and that the color and solubility of the oil from the dried plants are superior to those from the fresh plants. The specific gravity, however, is slightly higher.

From the general averages during the three successive stages of growth of the plants, it appears that the yield of oil tends to decrease as the plant matures.

From experiments, it is concluded that the largest portion of the oil in the peppermint plant is found in the leaves. The flowering tops contain slightly less than the leaves, and the stems are nearly devoid of oil.

OREGON AND WASHINGTON PEPPERMINT OILS THE BEST PRODUCED IN THE U. S.

The Greatest Yield Per Acre of High Class Oils Is That Produced on the Beaverdam Lands in the Willamette Valley, and Especially the Labish Lands Near Salem

Editor Statesman: Oregon and Washington oil of peppermint is now known to be the best quality produced in the United States. After the 1926 crop was harvested, samples of the product from both states were sent to different places for analysis. There being some difference in returns, samples were sent to Washington, D. C., for a true analysis. Many of the samples went above 60 per cent menthol, both from Washington state and Oregon, but the Columbia river peppermint oil over averaged the Marion county oil in esters and menthol. However, the Oregon oil was all above the U. S. P. requirements. The writer is informed that the Cowlitz county growers of mint are receiving a premium of \$1 per pound for their oil, account of the high tests.

The beaverdam land in Marion county, near Gervais, Oregon, however, claims the record for producing quantity per acre, and quality standards above the requirements for first class oil. We also claim that we have the best mint land in the United States. It is not uncommon to have a yield of 80 pounds per acre, and the writer knows positively of the small fields the past season making more than 100 pounds per acre, four miles from Gervais, while the Columbia river lands in Washington state made an average yield of 50 pounds. However, some of the fields that were well cared for produced around 70 pounds. We will admit this is a very fine average, with mostly new growers, and the quality being the best in the world.

Select Land Carefully I would advise any one who has good mint land to grow mint, but be sure that your land is mint land, for why should you make a failure, if you are not sure of your judgment go to some one who knows. Mint land must be good, moist land or irrigated land, and at the same time the land must not be too wet and should be in a condition that you may take the water or moisture away about the 15th of July for maturing season. From the number of failures this year I would advise any new grower to be sure of his lands before attempting too large an acreage.

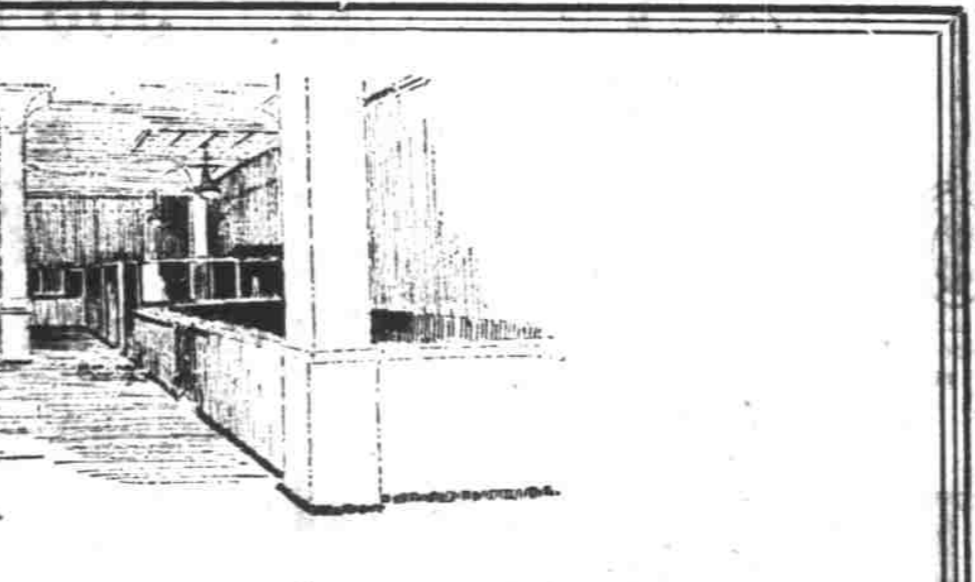
Mint Advantages Mint can be produced for much less than onions, and when distilled you have the waste for feed and the soil in cans that does not freeze or deteriorate and does not require more than a small Ford to

The time required in distilling a vat will vary from thirty minutes to three hours or more, depending on the condition of the hay and the atmospheric conditions. A smelling cock is placed in the cover which is opened from time to time to determine when all the oil has been extracted. When the sharp minty odor can no longer be detected, shut off the steam, move the cover over to the adjoining tank, which can be put in operation at once on the Eastman still, and remove the hay from the finished tank. Approximately one cord of fuel (fir cord wood) is required to distill 100 lbs. of oil.

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GIFTS THAT CHEER

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