

## Salem Has a Chance to Be a Great Potato Industry Center and Should Do This

### ON CERTAIN AREAS WHERE YIELD PER ACRE IS LARGE, MORE ACRES JUSTIFIED

Important Things to Get High Per Acre Yield Are Good Seed Thoroughly Treated, Good Land, Use of Plenty of Seed Per Acre, and Careful Handling of Field—College and Government Authorities Foresee Likelihood of a Surplus of Potatoes in the Country This Year.

Editor Statesman:

Potatoes are a very important crop in Oregon as a cash crop. There are several well defined surplus producing areas. These include the north Willamette valley, as Multnomah, Washington, Yamhill, Clackamas and Marion and Linn counties. Another small surplus area is Hood River county. Klamath, Deschutes and Crook counties produce a substantial surplus, as does Malheur county. There are slight surpluses in Lake, Baker, Union and Umatilla counties.

The potato production of Oregon is in active competition with those produced in Washington and Idaho. Idaho producers, because of higher yields per acre under their irrigated conditions and because of a freight adjustment, are this year getting into some markets that have normally been Oregon markets. Yakima has hurt the sale of Oregon potatoes for the current season by shipping many carloads into San Francisco on what amounts practically to a consignment basis.

#### Surplus on Our Farms

Many Oregon potatoes are still in storage on farms, and it is very important that they be kept under conditions where they will remain cool and free from sprouting, as many of them will not move until a very late market.

While correspondence at the Oregon Agricultural college tends to indicate an increase in the interest in potatoes in Oregon, it is doubtful if farmers are justified in increasing their plantings except in some instances for seed purposes. The material below is the national potato outlook report which indicates a substantially larger U. S. planting than heretofore:

#### The Government Report

"Present indications are that unless farmers change their plans there will be a substantial increase in the acreage planted to potatoes this year. Preliminary reports indicate that farmers in the north Atlantic and north central states are planning an increase of about 14 per cent. Scattering reports from the south indicate an upward tendency, but probably no material increases in acreage except possibly in North Carolina and Virginia. In some of the western states, where low prices are now being received, substantial decreases are to be expected, but the limited number of reports so far received do not indicate that growers are as yet planning on decreases sufficiently radical to offset the increases reported as intended in every state from Maine to Nebraska. If these January intentions are carried out as they were last year there would seem to be no section of the country where the chances would be in favor of returns from potatoes comparable to those secured during the last three years. "The acreage of potatoes in the United States is becoming steadily more concentrated in the best producing sections and on the farms of those growers who have learned methods and who raise an acreage large enough to permit the use of labor-saving machinery for plant-

ing, spraying, digging, and grading the crop. The quality of potatoes used for seed is also improving at a remarkable rate. This year sufficient certified seed is available to plant nearly a fifth of the entire acreage of potatoes in the United States, and an even larger proportion of the total acreage will be planted with potatoes grown from carefully selected seed stock. Average yields in the United States have been increasing quite rapidly during recent years. Prior to 1920 yields were mostly below 100 bushels per acre, but with average weather conditions a yield of about 114 bushels per acre must now be expected. As the increased use of improved seed is also increasing the percentage of the crop that is of marketable quality it is evident that fewer acres per capita are now required to supply consumptive needs. In 1927 the yield of potatoes was 114.7 bushels per acre and 402 million bushels were harvested. As potatoes are being extensively utilized this season as feed for livestock, in some of the western states, it appears that the 1927 production was more than was really needed for human food. If production is further increased next year the quantity actually marketed may be expected to show little further increase, but a greater proportion of the crop will be used for stock feeding, starch, and other low value purposes.

"Reducing the 1928 potato acreage below that harvested in 1927 would probably improve returns to growers, but in a majority of the states growers were apparently encouraged by the prices received in the 1927 crop and are planning to increase their acreages. To determine the extent of the increase to be expected some representative growers were asked to report the acreage which they expected to plant. The growers, who have reported to date, expect to plant 7 per cent more acres to potatoes than they planted last year. If these reports represent the present intentions of all growers as they did last year, it appears that the acreage of potatoes will be increased from the 3,505,000 acres in 1927 to somewhere around 3,750,000 acres in 1928, unless growers change their plans or the planting of the intended acreage is prevented by weather conditions.

"With an average yield of 114 bushels per acre, 3,750,000 acres would give a total crop of about 428,000,000 bushels and probably bring a repetition of the low prices which prevailed when the crops of 1922 and 1924 were being marketed. Production will of course depend largely on weather conditions, but if 3,750,000 acres of potatoes are planted there would seem to be nearly three chances out of four that the crop would exceed that of 1927.

"Growers of late potatoes would do well to keep the foregoing facts in mind and to consider the bearish effect upon prices which the greatly increased 1927 crop had as compared with 1926. The increase of some 30,000,000 bushels of late potatoes in 1927

was due largely to heavier plantings in the west. Acreage and production in that section have been gaining more rapidly than is profitable for growers there. Plantings in the mountain states in 1927 were 50 per cent greater than in 1924, and the Pacific coast states show an increase of one-third during the same period. Combined production of 80,000,000 bushels in these nine states compares with 49,000,000 bushels in 1924. The 10 north central and eastern states which produce a surplus of late potatoes show more moderate acreage gains during recent years and in 1927 yields in various important areas were reduced by drouth, frost, or blight. In each of these 10 states the number of farmers planning to increase their potato acreages appears to outnumber those planning decreases by at least two to one. Unless there is a more general realization of what this means there is likely to be a difficult marketing situation in these states next fall.

"In the south, there are as yet no indications of a general increase of acreage, though a few states seem to be planning larger plantings. However, the price of late potatoes is lower, the quantity still in storage probably is greater, particularly in the west, and the chances of profit seem hardly as good as they were a year ago.

"Some of the intermediate states, especially along the Atlantic seaboard, had exceptionally heavy yields last season, which prolonged their marketing period and slowed down the early market or northern or main-crop potatoes. The chances for a repetition of such exceptional yields are not great, but, even with average yields, if this group materially increases its plantings, there is danger of heavy supply and low prices during the late summer period.

"Considering the probability of an increased supply of potatoes, growers of late potatoes will do well to reconsider their plans for the coming season. Growers who plant heavily should make every effort to hold down their costs per bushel. Those who are planning to expand their potato acreage because of profits secured during the last three years should bear in mind the unfavorable returns during the previous three years, 1922 to 1924."

#### The Only Justified Increases

It is probable for regular potato growers to retain their normal acreage and to make little or no increases. As a matter of fact, there is little incentive for outsiders who so frequently demoralize the potato planting, to plunge in and plant.

About the principal justification for any increased acreage rests with the growers of certified seed of which there has not yet been enough developed, and the development of a good line of minor varieties. These include Earliest of All, Early Ohio, Irish Cobbler, and Bliss Triumph. If some growers would clean up a good lot of British Queens, Garnet Chilis and White Blossom White Rose, that also might enlarge our market to some extent in certain sections. A demand for certified lots of these varieties is increasing with no certified stock to offer until some one builds it up. Certain areas whose yield per acre is large, as on rich soils with good rotation practices, may justify additional plantings of commercial stock, but there is little chance for this outside of some of the irrigated sections. The year 1928 is probably the best time in many years to get a start of good certified seed rather cheaply, as both

## WORLD RECORD POTATO PRODUCTION FOR 1928 MADE WITH SALEM SEED

It Was 64,000 Pounds to the Acre, Grown on the Delta Lands Near Sacramento—The H. A. Hyde Company Is Developing a Large Potato Seed Growing and Shipping Business Here in the Salem District—Only Best Bought, on Contract

The world's record for potato production was made last year on the Delta land near Sacramento, California—but the record was made from seed grown in Oregon, near Salem, and shipped to California for planting last spring. The record crop was 64,000 pounds to the acre. The average seeding takes about 700 to 800 pounds of potatoes to the acre, and the average yield is about 20 times the amount used in planting. The California record production shows a yield of more than 80 times the seed used.

The seed used in planting the southern record acreage was shipped from Salem by the H. A. Hyde Co., 3030 Portland road. This company with W. H. Weeks and L. I. Pearmine as local managers, is a branch of H. A. Hyde company of Watsonville, California. This year the company has already shipped more than 25 cars of seed potatoes to California for early planting. Each car holds 300 one hundred pound sacks of the very choicest potatoes, making a total of about 600,000 pounds of seed shipped.

The Garnet variety is the leading variety for shipping. These potatoes are a small round species and are very hardy. They are planted in the southland during December and January and are on the northern markets as early new potatoes along in April and May. The hardy northern varieties grown without irrigation make a phenomenal growth in the warmer climate and with the help of irrigation.

#### Doing Large Business

The H. A. Hyde company has been in the potato seed business here for a number of years and has steadily grown until now it is one of the largest buyers and handlers of seed potatoes on the Pacific coast. The contracts of this company for seed potatoes from the local growers are all practically

closed now. In the growing of seed potatoes great care must be taken in getting potatoes free from disease and of uniform size.

Local growers are urged to plant the round type potatoes instead of the long type. The present potato market is based on number one product and a potato that will not grow true to form is not a number one. The round potatoes are just as remarkable as the long ones and true to form in nearly all instances.

The company can afford to pay a premium for the better grade product, as the growers in the south will pay additional for guaranteed planting stock. They expect to develop the seed potato industry in the section to a great extent, as the market for seed in California is growing steadily each year. The southern potato growers are trying to avoid seed grown on wet or irrigated lands. This makes a very bright prospect for the farmers growing first class potatoes on the unirrigated hill land near Salem.

#### The Varieties Grown

The varieties grown and handled by the Hyde company are Garnet and Burbank mainly, with a few Earliest of All, Early Rose, American Wonder and British Queen. This company is now buying seed stock from all parts of the valley, but only under contract. The price paid is such that the farmer raising seed potatoes can take greater care and produce only the very best. All potatoes are sorted and regraded in the company's plant before shipping so that the product can be absolutely guaranteed.

The Hyde company also does a big business in strawberry plants, shipping many millions each year. In the summer time when the potato and strawberry seed business is at a standstill the company handles berry crates and boxes for the local canneries.

commercial stock and certified seed are selling substantially below prices of recent years. The important things in getting a high yield per acre are good seed, thoroughly treated with corrosive sublimate; good land; the use of seed per acre; and the careful handling of the field to keep out weeds.

—G. R. HYSLOP.

Corvallis, Or., Feb. 14, 1928.

(Prof. Hyslop is professor of farm crops, Oregon Agricultural college, and is the best authority we have in his field.—Ed.)

### THE PROBLEMS OF THE CITY GARDENER

(Continued from page 1)

from the carriage problem. Vegetables in the home garden are more palatable, fresher and of higher quality than those which have been brought from a distance. Quality in vegetables is the one factor that cannot be bought in the market.

The millions who work in offices, stores and manufacturing plants have hours in the morning or evening that might well be devoted to the garden, providing the healthiest kind of exercise. These hours usually are wasted in no

valuable pursuit. The garden should be of family interest and one in which each member has a part. There is no better outdoor work or recreation and none that gives the returns.

Soil conditions are often discouraging but it has been shown that certain vegetables may be grown successfully under very adverse conditions and the results obtained by back yard gardens as exhibited at shows during the summer are truly remarkable.

Frequently in winter turkeys suffer impaction of the crop, caused by eating indigestible substances such as feathers or dry grass. Often the crop can be emptied by giving the turkey a tablespoonful of sweet oil and then, with the fingers, working the contents of the crop up through the gullet and out the mouth while the turkey hangs head down.

The dwarf bedding dahlias will be worth adding to your list of annuals. Sow them in the house in March for July bloom.

A little lemon added to water in which rice is boiled will whiten it wonderfully. This will also help to keep grains separated.

**SALEM'S FINE VALENTINE; \$600,000 STATE OFFICE BUILDING**