

WILLAMETTE VALLEY IDEAL PLACE FOR GROWING PRUNES

Valley's Prune Industry Experiences Its Poorest Season, Reports Indicate

Willamette Valley as Well as Southern Oregon and Clark County..Washington, Close to Harvest Failure but Future is Declared Brighter

THE Willamette Valley Prune association is one of the oldest concerns in that industry in this section; processing and packing and finding markets for the shipping prunes. The managers are W. T. Jenks and H. S. Gile, who have been with the concern from the beginning, in the eighties. Mr. Gile and Mr. Jenks are also prune growers on an extensive scale. They have over 300 acres of bearing prune orchards, in Marion and Yamhill counties. This was the worst year ever experienced in the prune industry here; all over the prune districts of the Willamette valley and southern Oregon and Clark county, Washington—nearest to a total crop failure. Mr. Jenks said the dried prune crop in the district of which this year was the poorest, about 10 per cent of a normal crop of 90,000,000 pounds.

Crop Below Normal
When it is considered that we had a good crop on the petite or sweet prune trees, it is seen that the Oregon, or Italian, or tart prune crop, was less than 10 per cent of normal—though as yet western Oregon and Washington districts have not a large proportion of the petite. The estimated yield given by Mr. Jenks includes the eastern Oregon crop, in Umatilla county. These are all Oregons or Italians; though the growers over there have been selling most of their crops for fresh fruit shipments or canning. This year, however, they showed a larger proportion than heretofore. They had a fair crop.

Much Prune Canning
There also was a larger proportion than usual of the Italian prune crop canned this year than usual. Every Salem cannery ran at least one shift on prunes as long as the harvest lasted, shipping in a considerable tonnage of their supply from the Umatilla districts. The prospects are that the canning pack will in the future be up to the limit of the harvest season in size. The harvest or picking season, however, for prunes is not long—three weeks or so.

In years of normal or bumper crops, the canning demand does not make much of a dent in the supply here. A bumper crop on our acreage might run far above 100,000,000 pounds of the dried fruit.

It Will Persist
Mr. Jenks says not many growers have grubbed up their prune trees; and some new acreage is coming into full bearing, though the new plantings have been comparatively very small since 1920. Many growers could not finance the cost of proper cultivation. As this year's fruit spurs make next year's crop, large losses may be made on next year's income for our prunes; especially in case of a good price year.

Prospects for good prices in 1929 are encouraging. California has taken care of a 375,000,000 dried prune crop this year; nearly all petites, against a 420,000,000 crop of last year. The European crop is short. A sample of this is the French crop of 2500 tons against 8000 tons last year, and larger tonnages in former years. So the buyers will likely be clear before the curing of the 1929 crop. There is a world prune shortage.

Some New Varieties
How about the new varieties? These men are experimenting with several, including the Burton, a tart prune but not as tart as the Italian or Oregon. A promising fruit of large size. Also the Noble French, a large sweet prune.

Also the date or Coates prune. The trouble with marketing the new varieties is their small quantities. But Mr. Jenks says their concern could now fill a fire to 10 car order of the Coates prunes, the acreage in which is growing.

There is still another newcomer, not yet named, a seedling of a petite, discovered by S. P. McCracken, of 830 North Commercial street, Salem. It is a nice looking fruit dried, and runs much larger than the ordinary petite.

Perhaps the time will come soon when there will be a chance to market a large tonnage of the new varieties. Mr. Jenks is experimenting and taking samples. He does not even presume to give any advice on new plantings. But when asked about the advisability of grubbing up prune trees in this district, he said the Gile and Jenks people are not grubbing up any of their trees, nor neglecting them.

What Caused It
What made the short crop—the most disastrous shortage in the history of the industry here? It was not frost. It was the torrential rains of April when the Italian prune trees were in full bloom; preventing fertilization of the blossoms. Even the busy bees could not work; for there were for days on end no sunshine at all. It never happened before to our prune trees. It may never happen again in the life time of people now here. The petite blossoms had come earlier and already fertilized before the steady downpour began.

OIL-O-MATIC

WHAT IS IT?

—SEE—

THEO. M. BARR

Phone 192

PRUNE GROWER WRITES LETTER

Noble Andrews Shows Faith in Industry and Tells Why He Believes

Noble Andrews, of Route 5, Box 67, Salem, has addressed the following letter to the Oregon Statesman: "As this issue of your growing and progressive paper contains the annual report of present conditions and progress or future hope of the prune industry of the Willamette valley, I am glad to do what I can to help out. Probably I have talked the prune subject with many more people than any other man, as hundreds of people know, and there are few people satisfied with the prune situation with present conditions, whether the growers or buyers or prune packers. The little petite is a good prune, but very difficult to get sizes worth while. The Italian is a good canner and a good dryer, and was once a mortgage lifter for the Willamette valley, and many have faith that it will come back to its own."

The New Ones
"Then we have several new prunes which seem to be very promising, and I know many men who have orchards of the older varieties and are planning on working over or grafting in with new varieties. Each grower should acquaint himself with the new varieties. We want a good growing, prolific tree, a tree that will stand under a heavy load, one that will grow a large, uniform prune. Also I would advise the grower to consult the prune packer as to the quality of the prune best fitted for the market, for we have a goodly number of respectable, trustworthy prune buyers and packers who have lots of money invested in large equipment buildings, who, not like the grower who lost faith and grubbed up his prune orchard, are still hopeful and willing to advise in the prune industry."

The Noble French
"Now I hope that I will not be thought of as personal or selfish when I refer to the Noble French prune, one which has had my very careful consideration in every way for four years of growing and drying and canning."

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FRUIT EXPERT GROWS PRUNES

S. H. Van Trump, fruit inspector of Marion county, has been busy for several days harvesting his walnut crop, on Silverton way, so the reporter could not get an interview from him.

Mr. Van Trump has stated several times, in Slogan issues, that he thinks the best prune lands are on the low grounds; the loamy soils. Or the first bench lands. In the high hills, growers are finding it difficult to get large sizes. Mr. Van Trump has pronounced the importance of fertilization, spraying and pruning. There should be thorough pruning.

He thinks favorably of the sweet prune. He has seen several of the large sized new sweet prunes tried out. He thinks a great deal of the Noble French, though it was a shy bearer in 1927. It has in other years shown persistence in heavy bearings.

He estimates that there are 12,000 acres of prunes in Marion county, and 8000 in Polk county. The Marion county orchards, all properly tended, might produce in a bumper crop year 24,000,000 pounds of dried prunes, and the Polk county orchards 16,000,000 pounds.

It ought to be said that the O. A. C. people are favorable to the Noble French variety.

Plenty of Prunes
It will be noted that a possible bumper crop year in Marion and Polk counties, producing 40,000,000 pounds of dried prunes, would make more than four times the total tonnage of Oregon and Washington for the present year, as estimated by W. T. Jenks.

Mr. Jenks, however, believes that the estimate of 12,000 acres of prune trees in Marion county and 8,000 acres in Polk county is perhaps high.

The indications are that the additional plantings for the immediate future will be largely of the varieties of sweet prunes running to large sizes.

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Dates of Slogans in Oregon Statesman

(With a few possible changes)
Loganberries, October 7, 1928.
Prunes, October 14.
Dairying, October 21.
Flax, October 28.
Filberts, November 4.
Wine, November 11.
Strawberries, November 18.
Apples, Pigs, etc., Nov. 25.
Raspberries, December 2.
Mint, December 9.
Beans, etc., December 16.
Blackberries, December 23.
Cherries, December 30.
Pears, January 6, 1929.
Gooseberries, January 13.
Corn, January 20.
Celery, January 27.
Spinach, etc., February 3.
Onions, etc., February 10.
Potatoes, etc., February 17.
Bees, February 24.
Poultry and Pet Stock, Mar. 3.
City Beautiful, etc., March 10.
Great Cows, March 17.
Paved Highways, March 24.
Head Lettuce, March 31.
Shoes, etc., April 7.
Legumes, April 14.
Asparagus, etc., April 21.

Grapes, etc., April 28.
Drug Garden, May 6.
Sugar Industry, May 12.
Water Powers, May 19.
Irrigation, May 26.
Mining, June 2.
Land, Irrigation, etc., June 9.
Floriculture, June 16.
Hops, Cabbage, etc., June 23.
Wholesaling, Jobbing, June 30.
Cucumbers, etc., July 7.
Hogs, July 14.
Goats, July 21.
Schools, July 28.
Sheep, August 4.
Seeds, August 11.
National Advertising, Aug. 18.
Livestock, August 25.
Grain & Grain Products, Sept. 1.
Manufacturing, Sept. 8.
Woolworking, etc., Sept. 15.
Automotive Industries, Sept. 22.
Paper Mills, Sept. 29.
(Back copies of the Sunday edition of The Daily Oregon Statesman are on hand. They are for sale at 10 cents each, mailed to any address. Current topics, 5 cents.)

72,000 Pounds of Prunes Dried at McNary's Farm This Season Says Report

United States Senator Chas. L. McNary and Walter T. Stoltz had this year of almost total prune crop failure 72,000 pounds of dried prunes. This was made possible by a diversity of varieties. They have been experimenting for several years. The crop this year was gathered from trees of the Coates, the Imperials, the regular petites, and the Italians. The highest quality product came from the trees of the Imperial variety. The start of these trees came from California, where they were developed by Mr. Gillette, the father of the nut industries of California, who traveled the world over for the United States government, looking for the best kinds and varieties for use on this coast. The Coates or date prune was originated in Polk county. The Imperial product sold for 9 cents a pound, and the others at good prices.

Diversity the Answer
Speaking of the prune industry for this district yesterday, Mr. Stoltz said diversity in varieties is the answer for stabilization. There was never before a year like this, since we grew prunes; there may not be another in 100 years—but it may come any year. The heavy and steady April rains in Italian prune blooming time did it; prevented fertilization of the blossoms. The petites and all the other sweet prune tree blossoms had already fertilized. Result, a full crop. But our growers have so far very few prune trees excepting the Italians.

4300 Bushels Prunes
The McNary and Stoltz farm gathered 4300 bushels of prunes to make the 72,000 pounds of the dried product; 10 acres of Imperials, 15 acres of the Coates and five acres of common French or petite prunes, mostly young trees, in a 65 acre prune orchard. Only about 300 bushels of prunes on 35 acres of Italians; hardly worth the picking money.

The McNary and Stoltz farm is near the river road paved county highway—on the Marion county side. It has 200 acres in all. Among their other crops this year were eight acres of cherries, on which they had a satisfactory return. They got a crop of three to four tons of walnuts this year, and over half a ton of filberts. The filbert trees are young. They bore a few nuts last year, which were sold for \$40. This year, the crop is worth \$400. Showing how fast the annual increase is made, even by young trees.

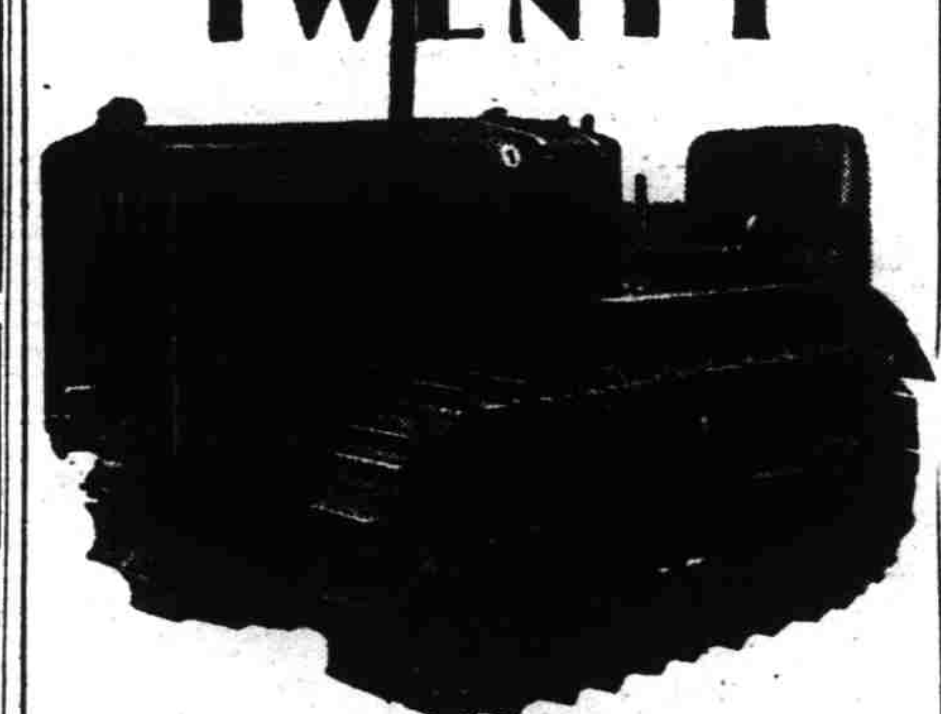
They have 25 acres in filberts, and 60 acres in walnuts. All young trees.

They have had for several years a small experimental planting of filberts. They have tried many varieties, from all the filbert countries. They settled on the Barcelona for their main planting.

They are experimenting also in walnuts. They expect to develop or select a round walnut, which seems to be preferred by the markets. Mr. Stoltz believes this will be forthcoming within a short time.

They are also experimenting with other varieties of prunes, and expect to continue. They expect to select a round walnut, which seems to be preferred by the markets. Mr. Stoltz believes this will be forthcoming within a short time.

Herbert Hoover has a 1313 acre California farm that is largely an experimental station. The Senator McNary farm (in partnership with Mr. Stoltz) is much the same thing. Senator McNary was the first filbert grower in the Salem district. He wrote a series of articles that was published in The Statesman before we had any commercial plantings here, and when the average reader thought it was a fad.



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COLLEGE DOES NOTABLE WORK

Value of O. A. C. to Farming Industries of State is Enormous

One of the most if not the most notable achievement of the Oregon experiment station in its history is that of solving the problem of removal of spray residue from apples and pears, says James T. Jardine, director of the station. In his biennial report to the president and board of regents of the Oregon Agricultural college just released, just two years after the crisis first appeared, the fruit crop of the northwest is being harvested in an orderly manner and placed on the market in better condition than ever in history. Credit is also given growers and equipment companies for cooperation in meeting the unforeseen situation.

Other Achievements
Director Jardine calls attention in connection with other especially notable achievements of the station for period to discovery that western yellow tomato blight and related diseases of truck crops are really caused by the sugar beet curly top virus, discovery that "breaking" of tulips is caused by a mosaic disease, perfection of a means of control of infectious abortion in dairy cattle, exhaustive studies in immunization of chickens from coccidiosis, introduction of several new crops and perfection of a new method of vaccinating fowls against chicken pox.

In listing the activities of the station for the biennium, the director calls attention to the itemized estimate two years ago indicating that benefits to the agricultural industry of the state from station accomplishments approach \$10,000,000 annually.

There is justification now for increasing rather than decreasing these estimates, he says. Listed then as bringing huge money returns were better farm crops and cultural methods introduced, fertilizers developed, disease and pest control methods worked out, and development of higher producing poultry stock.

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IRRIGATION GOOD ON VAST ACREAGE

Close to a half million acres in the Willamette valley alone as well as thousands in other parts of Oregon have been found by soil surveys to be suitable for use of supplemental irrigation. Much of this land can have water applied only by means of pumping from shallow wells or open streams.

For many years tests and elaborate experiments with this type of irrigation have been conducted by the soils department of the Oregon Agricultural college experiment station, results of which have just been embodied in a new bulletin, "The Economic Limit of Pumping for Irrigation," by W. L. Powers.

Economic Returns
The bulletin discusses the advantages and economic returns of such irrigation, factors to be considered in establishing it, location of wells and pumping plants, types of pumps for varying conditions, power to be used and finally, methods of applying the water.

"Crops found to give best response to supplemental irrigation are the truck crops."

Diversify in Variety
THE answer to prune industry stabilization for this district is diversification in variety. Note the news item on the Slogan page concerning the prune crop this year on the farm of United States Senator Chas. L. McNary and Walter T. Stoltz. That is part of the answer.

The other is the larger use of our prunes in drinks and confections and marketable packages of divers kinds. Advertising, too; and articles made of prunes in whole or in part that will advertise themselves.

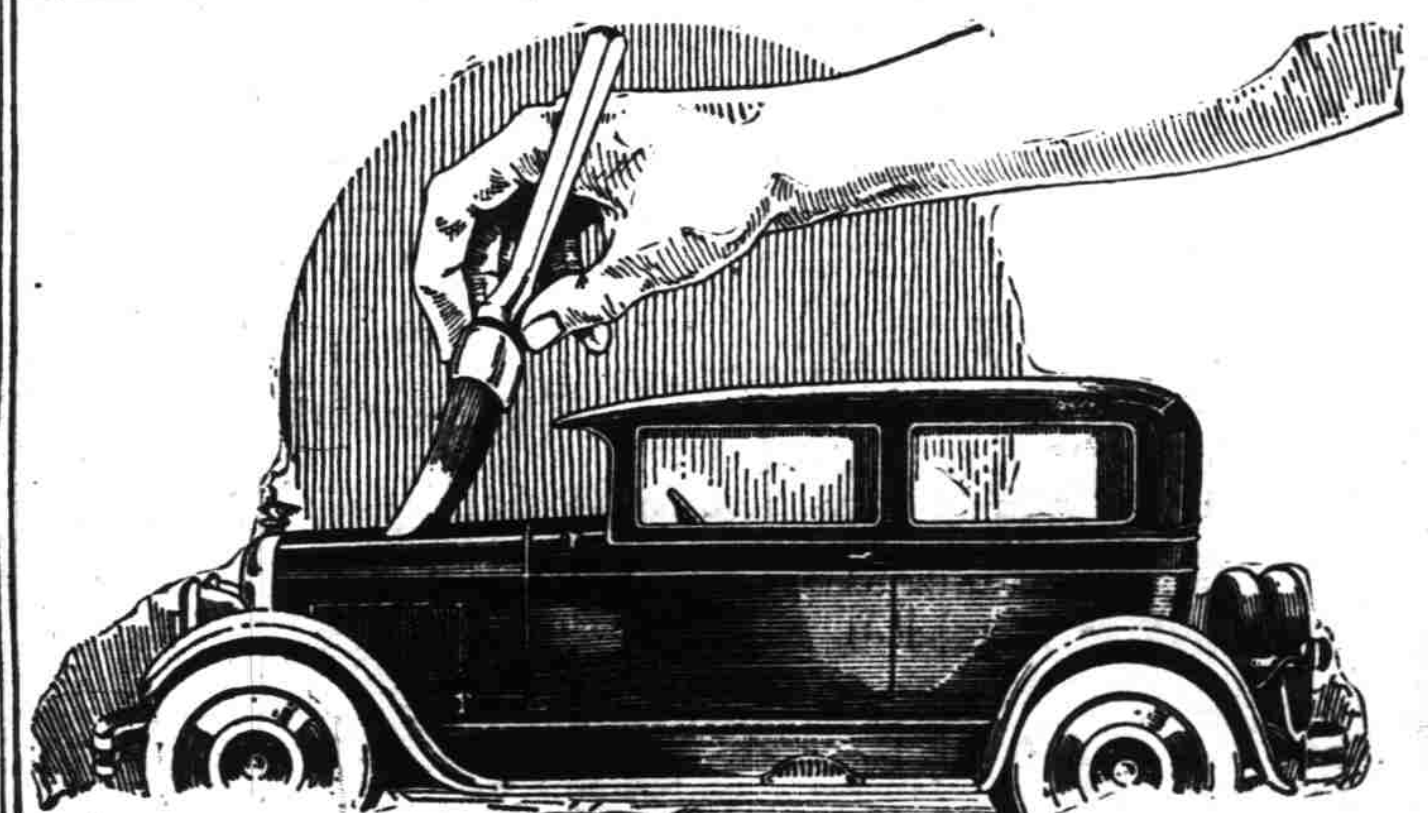
Salem is the pioneer prune city of this section. The industry was started here, by Dr. H. J. Minthorn and B. S. Cook, and the Oregon Land company, when Herbert Hoover worked for them. Mr. Hoover then lived with Dr. Minthorn, who was his uncle.

H. S. Gile and W. T. Jenks, managers of the Willamette Valley Prune association, still active and owning large prune orchards, were among the pioneers.

This is too great an industry to let lag. There are trees enough in the Salem trading area to produce around 100,000,000 pounds of dried prunes in a bumper crop year—if every tree were given the attention its importance and potential value deserve. The lowly prune has come into the aristocracy in the family of fruits, and is capable of higher values. We need leadership. We need sticktoativeness as well. Let's persist in prunes, and fill our manifest destiny as the world's greatest prune center.

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