

FLAX INDUSTRY HERE OFFERS BOUNDLESS POSSIBILITIES

State Making Marvelous Strides In Development of Flax Raising Industry

Crop Projected For Next Year Will Come From 4,500 Acres With Yield of 8,000 Tons All Under Contract to Oregon's Own Mills

MARVELOUS developments are taking place in the flax industry of Oregon. The state's flax industry was up to the mark in 1927, compared with that of 1926. The methods were comparatively crude. Yet the industry started at the penitentiary in 1915, with 370 acres of flax contracted for. It had its ups and downs; more downs than ups.

More Efficiency
A humidifying plant has been put into the scutching room, so that work may go on in the dry months of July and August. There is a balanced all the year around operation.

On Its Own
First is the fact that the flax industry has been put on a definitely certain paying basis. The legislature of 1925 made an appropriation of \$100,000 when the present revolving fund law was passed; but this represented a saving of the cost of maintenance of the two years previous, and the \$100,000 was all used in the capital investment; in new buildings and machinery and equipment.

Headed the List
Col. W. B. Bartram is now making a tour of the east, getting every new slant of the marketing and manufacturing details of the flax and linen industries in the United States. He will be home about the first of November. He writes in one of his letters just received:

Market Growing
The market for Ulster linen in the states, declares Mr. Robinson, is growing rather than decreasing. The Oregon Statesman, in its farming and industrial magazine section, recently stated that he has for a number of years been quite active in the promotion of the growing and production of flax and linen in the Willamette valley, and has spent considerable time and money in this work.

State Owns Machines
The state owns 28 flax pulling machines. It will build 18 more for the next year. It builds unquestionably the best pulling machine in the world; the 1928 model.

Dates of Slogans in Oregon Statesman

(With a few possible changes)	Grapes, etc., April 28.
Loganberries, October 7, 1928.	Drug Garden, May 5.
Prunes, October 14.	Sugar Industry, May 12.
Dairying, October 21.	Water Powers, May 19.
Flax, October 28.	Irrigation, May 26.
Filberts, November 4.	Mining, June 2.
Walnuts, November 11.	Land, Irrigation, etc., June 9.
Strawberries, November 18.	Floriculture, June 16.
Apples, Pigs, etc., Nov. 25.	Hops, Cabbage, etc., June 23.
Raspberries, December 2.	Wholesaling, Jobbing, June 30.
Mint, December 9.	Cucumbers, etc., July 7.
Beans, etc., December 16.	Hogs, July 14.
Blackberries, December 23.	Goats, July 21.
Cherries, December 30.	Schools, July 28.
Pears, January 6, 1929.	Sheep, August 4.
Gooseberries, January 13.	Seeds, August 11.
Corn, January 20.	National Advertising, Aug. 18.
Celery, January 27.	Livestock, August 25.
Spinach, etc., February 3.	Grain & Grain Products, Sept. 1.
Onions, etc., February 10.	Manufacturing, Sept. 8.
Potatoes, etc., February 17.	Woolworking, etc., Sept. 15.
Bees, February 24.	Automotive Industries, Sept. 22.
Poultry and Pet Stock, Mar. 3.	Paper Mills, Sept. 29.
City Beautiful, etc., March 10.	(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.
Paved Highways, March 17.	Current topics, 5 cents.
Head Lettuce, March 31.	
Silos, etc., April 7.	
Legumes, April 14.	
Asparagus, etc., April 21.	

LINEN INDUSTRY BEING STUDIED

Aurora Man in Ireland Gives Interesting Interview to Belfast Newspaper

The Belfast, Ireland, Telegraph tells of a talk with E. G. Robinson, who has been stated in the columns of The Statesman, in making a study of the flax and linen industries in Europe, with a view to entering those industries in the Willamette valley. Mr. Robinson owned the electric light and power plants in the Aurora and Canby sections, but sold them last year, giving him the opportunity and means to take the course he is pursuing. The following is part of the article from the Irish newspaper:

THIS WEEK'S SLOGAN
DID YOU KNOW that ours is the best country in the world for the production of flax for its fiber—for the making of yarns, twines, thread and linens; that our water, being "soft," is just right for the treatment of the flax straw, and taking it through all the processes of manufacture, from the retting to the weaving of the cloth; that our climate and elevation are just right; that, when these facts become universally known, the flax industry will be fully developed here, and that it will bring to our valley a hundred million dollars annually; that we have now in successful operation our first mills for making flax yarns, twines and threads and the woven linen fabrics of commerce, and that Salem is already the fiber flax center of the United States, with an immediate future that is most promising?

his main object being to study the flax-growing and linen manufacturing industries. In addition to making his own personal investigations throughout the province, Mr. Robinson is taking a course in spinning, weaving, etc., in the textile school of the Belfast Municipal Technical Institute. He is by profession an electrical engineer, being a graduate of Stanford university. His daughter has also graduated at his alma mater, and his son will enter his third year at Stanford this fall.

Course of Action
"I must build up our soils to a high state of fertility and maintain them in that condition. The question of weed control must be mastered, particularly of the fibre consumed in the factories. Nearly all the flax in Ireland is grown in Ulster. It is producing only about one-third of the flax that we need."

Flax Lead Here
"According to soil experts, there are more than 100,000 acres of land in the Willamette valley that are adaptable to flax growing, so we have vast possibilities for the raw material. We have proved beyond all doubt that we can raise a superior grade of flax. It is a profitable crop to the farmer; the most profitable of all non-cultivated crops. Flax does not deteriorate the land; it is a good rotative crop. We have a number of instances of from \$50 to \$80 and more per acre net. We also have, in Oregon, a dependable and ample supply of fibre from the state scutching plant, which is being excellently managed. I am informed that fibre is being shipped to Belfast at a good price and profit."

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State Flax Industry Has Definite Contract Policy

On September 13, immediately after the state board of control put its O. K. on the increase of the flax acreage from 3000 to 4500, the state flax industry, H. W. Meyers, superintendent, by W. B. Bartram, manager, prepared and sent out to the farmers of this section the following bulletin, under the heading, "1929 Fiber Flax Contracts."

"To enable our flax growers to prepare the program for their fall and spring crops, the question of the flax acreage for next year has been taken up by the management here as early as possible. The Oregon state board of control has authorized 4500 acres for planting this year. This is 1500 acres more than was planted last year. In order to handle this acreage we must start planning and organizing our work now. The flax crop this past harvest was not as good as last year, largely due to a very unfavorable condition of the soil. You will agree with us that this is a condition controlled only by a supreme power, the flax crops in a large part of Europe were also the poorest that they have experienced in many years. We have had enough experience with this crop in Oregon to know that in a normal season it is a very profitable cash crop and that it demands good farming. This last feature is of considerable importance in Oregon because the lack of good farming has accounted for most of our agricultural troubles up to this time. We believe that the time is not far distant when several hundred thousand acres of flax will be grown in western Oregon, with many small cooperative flax mills located throughout the Willamette valley. To reach this desirable situation we have to master many objectionable conditions that now exist."

Our Flax Industry
THE dreams of the dreamers of a great flax and linen industry in Oregon are coming true—the foundations are firmer and the hope of realization clearer than at any time since they were first sensed, over a half century ago. Why? Because all experts now know definitely that we can produce here as fine a fiber as the best in the world; because we can turn out a yarn finer in quality than can be had elsewhere in any market; because the state flax industry, upon which all substantial progress has been built here, is now definitely on a paying basis, and set for growth from 370 acres in 1915 and over 8,000 acres this year, to 4,500 acres of flax next year, and 10,000 acres within three to four years—

Set for growth on the basis of J. W. S. pedigreed seed, yielding three to four times former per acre tonnages and a still larger proportion of fine fiber—
Set to four tons or over of straw to the acre, and 1,000 pounds or over of fiber; against around 260 pounds an acre of cotton fiber to the acre.
These things are epochal; the larger production of fiber to the acre will make linen manufacturers "price sellers." They will be cheaper than cotton, and four to ten times as good in quality, in wearability and durability.
We are definitely set towards the realization here of a \$100,000,000 annual industry, employing directly and indirectly a million people. How soon? It may become very soon. We are making for more progress each year now than in all the years of the past.

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The 1928 and the 1929 models are to be sold at \$1250 each. The 1929 models have no engines on them. They are operated from a power take-off on the tractor and this model operated very successfully this past harvest.

Unit Plan Adopted
"We desire and expect to let all future flax contracts in units—that is to say, a number of farmers located within an area of one square mile or a little more will contract for not less than 125 acres. One or all of these farmers comprising that unit could purchase a flax pulling machine from us. The idea of letting out flax contracts by units is to avoid having to move the flax pulling machines by motor truck from farm to farm, which we have found very costly in every way."

Outstanding Problems
"One of the outstanding costly problems confronting our flax growers has been the question of pulling the crop. We have not been unmindful of this and believe the following will reduce the cost of pulling 50 per cent; after studying this question for some years so as to hand on to our farmers a definite plan that would give this to the satisfaction of all. The state has for years been pulling flax at fixed charges each year, adding improvements to the flax pulling machine and also reducing the cost or purchase price of these machines. The first machines cost \$250 plus the cost of the freight to Oregon. The operation of the flax crop have now become so large, and as these machines can now be operated much cheaper and more efficiently than in years past, the board of control has decided to sell the flax pullers to our flax growers at less than half the original cost of these machines and accept flax in payment of them. These machines will be sold as follows:

Cracks in slate, soapstone, or cement laundry tubs can be made water-tight with litharge and glycerin, mixed and stirred to form a smooth heavy paste which could be worked into the cracks with a case knife. A paste of Portland cement and water, or the white of an egg and fresh lump lime, also can be used successfully for this purpose.
The new practice of putting a high finish on grass-fat cattle by feeding them a supplement to grass is increasing rapidly in certain sections of the middle west and the Appalachian regions. The supplements usually are corn and cottonseed cake or meal.

MID-OCTOBER BEST FALL SEEDING TIME

The most favorable period to plant fall grain is usually between October 10-20 in Oregon. finds the O. A. C. experiment station. Op land that is planted much before this date there is often little opportunity for sufficient cultivation to destroy the weed crop. The main advantage in delaying seeding an early plowed land lies in the opportunity for weed destruction. When planting is delayed until after November 1, unfavorable weather may prevent the plants from becoming well established in the fall, and this will reduce yields the following year. Together, says the O. A. C. experiment station.

fall sown wheat is treated for smut with copper carbonate after it is cleaned and freed from smut balls. Oats and barley are treated with liquid formaldehyde. Grain so treated is planted as soon as the grain is dry in order to prevent killing a certain amount of the seed.

Progressive farmers are now cleaning out surplus runs and outlet ditches and connecting these with "dead" furrows to provide surface drainage before the heavy rains come. Recent rains have provided a good moisture condition in most Oregon soils for plowing. The fall seed bed need not be worked down fine, as a moderate proportion of the small lumps tends to prevent the surface from "puddling" or running together, says the O. A. C. experiment station.

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