WILLAMETTE VALLEY WALNUT INDUSTRY HAS BIG FUTURE

High Filbert Authority Gives Salient Points on Care of Valuable Trees

Prof. C. E. Schuster of Oregon's Agricultural College Writes for New Oregon Statesman Regarding Pruning and Planting

(C. E. Schuster, writer of the following for the benefit of readers of the Blogan pages of the New Oregon Statesman, is professor of pomology at the Oregon Agricultural college. He is the highest authority of the state in his field.—Ed.)

By C. E. SCHUSTER

THE expectations of a great number of filbert growers are being realized this season from the yields of filbert plantings throughout the Willamette valley. A large number of orchards, four, five, six and seven years old, are yielding at a rate that is returning the owners good profits at current prices. Filberts apparently are well adapted to this section, and under conditions such as we have had this year, are returning yields that justify the expense and care that has been expended on them.

Traveling through the Willamette valley, one cannot help but notice a few points which are of particular interest—particularly to beginning growers.

Fertile soils, whether naturally fertile or built up after long years of use, are the ones on which the orchards are doing exceptionally well. While the filbert stands a good deal of abuse and makes a good growth even under adverse conditions, in those soils where fertility is being maintained at a high level or where the soil is naturally very fertile, the growth is such that it is making a large bearing surface that under proper conditions will set a large amount of fruit. We find our dark green foliaged orchards at this time are the ones that are returning the best yields. Those orchards in which the foliage has a tendency to turn a little yellow or golden during August or the first of September, are the ones in which results are not satisfactory. Too often this indicates lack of fertility of the soil or sometimes a lack of thorough cultivation and care to mantain the moisture content of the soil.

We find it quite a general practice among the growers of the better orchards to cover crop annually. The use of the cover crop is a great aid in maintaining fertility. It opens up the soil and allows the work of bacteria in the soil for the liberating of plant food and also has a great tendency towards increasing the moisture holding content of the soil. All of these combined tend to furnish plant food at the optimum amount for the tree's needs. Some are supplementing the use of straw and similar material. These are probably not applied as cheaply as the green manure on cover crop, but are used wherever practicable in furnishing additional plant food to the young trees.

To date there seems to be little difference in the types of soils, provided these soils are fertile, deep and fairly well drained. The fertility has been mentioned before. The depth has quite a bearing upon the size of the tree in some sections. Where the soil is deep its moisture holding capacity is relatively large and we find the trees are making a good growth, forming large trees with a fairly large bearing capacity. On the other hand, where soils are shallow, we find small trees struggling along, not dying but merely holding their own. Such trees can never be productive. Soils acting this way are usually three foot or less in depth.

Where the trees have been planted on heavy soil with poor drainage, their reaction is not the best. This may not be so noticeable the first three or four years of their life, but it comes to a head along about the eighth or ninth year. We have few orchards reacting to that now if they have been well cared for. If not well taken care of they often react sooner. Filberts in soil where they have their roots in water a good part of the winter are taking on a stunted appearance. Filbert trees will undoubtedly grow and survive with poorer conditions, so far as drainage is concerned, than will most of our fruit trees, but the resulting trees will be far from satisfactory to the grower. The filbert is naturally a hardy tree under all conditions, but it is doubtful if planting on such soil can ever be considered commercially profitable as compared to planting on deep, well-drained soil.

Where land has been drained to take off the excess moisture, the result has not been the best. In places where int is necessary to drain a small tract in a large planting it probably is advisable. But where the whole tract needs draining in order to grow the filberts the result would not seem satisfactory enough to justify the expense.

One thing that is quite noticeable now is the bearing of younger trees where older trees are beginning to fail.

In the younger trees it is noteworthy that many of the shoots are bearing from the outer tips back to the attachment or to the main branches and many of the main branches are bearing and producing nuts near the crotches. This same area in the older tree is often dead or dying, or so weakened that it bears very little fruit. With the younger plantings during the coming winter would be the time to correct this condition. If the filbert tree is allowed to develop naturally it will become so bushy that light cannot penetrate the inner part of the tree, so that the inner bearing surfaces will gradually be killed out. Although the filbert in its bearing can stand more shade than most fruit trees, nevertheless, sunlight in a greater or lesser degree is necessary in order to have the fruiting machinry function.

Pruning each winter is a good insurance against lessening the productivity of the tree in the top. The trees are of such a type and so vigorous that they can well produce fruit throughout the whole top, rather than limiting production to a rim around the outer part. Thinning out the top so that the light can penetrate will not reduce the crop appreciably, but will maintain good productive machinery throughout the whole of the tree. If this machinery is not kept vigorous in the interior of the tree, too often the nuts produced there are small and inferior.

Matter of Drying

It has generally been the opinion that filberts require little or no drying. Although for the season of 1928 little drying was necessary, results in 1927 were not always best when nuts were not well dried. In a few cases they developed a moldy condition when piled in stacks or heaps, causing considerable loss to the packing houses. Filberts take relatively little drying, but that little is often essential.

The adoption of definite filbert grades is general and has aided materially in disposing of the crops. The filbert crop can be expected to increase rapidly in the future as new plantings come into bearing. New plantings can also be expected to follow the success of present planters. The success of a good many people will induce still more people to plant filberts as long as the price is as satisfactory as it is today.

PIN MONEY FOR HOOVER FUND

Mrs. Grace Semple Burlingham, Missouri National Committeewoman, gives a check to John W. O'Leary, vice-treasurer of the G.O.P., covering contributions without personal solicitation, of one dollar each from 1281 Missouri housewives. Mr. O'Leary is in charge of the "nickels and dimes" campaign, by which he hopes to obtain at least 600,000 subscribers to the Hoover fund.

WALNUT TONNAGE MAKES BIG GAIN

It was predicted in these columns a few weeks ago that the Oregon walnut tonnage reaching commercial channels this year would approximate 1,500 tons, and filberts perhaps under 100 tons. But the present estimate for the walnut tonnage is slightly less than that; some authorities say as low as 1,200 tons. But the filbert tonage will be around 125 tons. Our walnut tonnage for last year was about 750, and of filberts we marketed commercially around 60 tons; probably less. Local consumption in small lots here of filberts is large; the same is true of walnuts. There is no way to estimate the amount of this.

Salem Big Market

Salem is the principal market for both nuts. The Salem Nut Growers co-operative, N Front street, a part of the North Pacific Nut Growers co-operative, will handle about 200 of the total of 1,000 tons handled through that channel. The Salem branch may handle 60 tons of filberts. The capacity of this Salem branch is around 20 tons a day; on a 24 hour run. It will be increased; probably doubled next year. And made five or six times as large in a few years.

This Salem branch shipped a car of nuts several days ago to Spokane, and rolled a 20 ton car to Denver yesterday.

The Rosenberg people are handling nuts at Trade and Winter streets; cleaning and grading and shipping them. Buying them, including a supply of black walnuts. Earl Pearcy is Salem manager.

The Willamette Valley Prune association (Gile and Jenks) is handling about 60 tons of nuts this year, in the old Salem Fruit union plant, High and Trade streets.

All these operations are bound to grow fast here. Black walnuts will become a major operation. So will chestnuts. The nut center of the United States is moving to Salem. It is bound to come.

THIS WEEK'S SLOGAN

DID YOU KNOW that Salem is the center of a great and growing walnut industry; that the super nut is grown here—the highest quality and the highest priced walnut produced in the world; that our walnuts have a superior flavor and texture; that most of our walnuts are perfect as they come from the trees, needing no bleaching, and will never need any; that Oregon is marketing an increasing annual crop of quality walnuts; that our first grade walnuts bring net to the grower 2 to 5 cents a pound more than the California walnuts; that plantings are being made and will be made indefinitely, as fast as good nursery stock can be supplied; that this is one of the most substantial of all our industries here; and that the returns of this district will soon be for our walnut sales, millions of dollars annually?

SKY LINE ORCHARD GREAT SHOW PLACE

The largest individual planting of grafted Vrooman Franquette walnut trees in Oregon is that of the Sky Line orchard, in the Liberty district, about five milse from the Salem city limits. It is owned by Clarence W. Noble, Youngstown, Ohio. It contains 212 acres of walnut trees. At 8 years it had a few sacks of walnuts; a ton and a half at 10 years; 11 years, 8 tons; at 12 years, 11 tons; 13 years, 22; 14 years, 20; 15 years, 1927, 25. The crop of the present year will run beyond 60 tons. It would have been 100 tons but for the long dry summer. Last year, the Slogan editor said that at 25 years it would bear at least 75 tons. The present indications are that it will be 150 tons or more—so the Slogan writer was ultra-conservative.

He told of the Sky Line orchard. After looking about two years, the originator bought the raw land for the present 212 acre planting. It is in a thermal belt that has 40 days longer killing frost immunity than most localities. It is 800 feet higher than Salem. Cultivation lasts till August. Cover crops follow. The orchard was never sprayed. It is of Vrooman Franquettes grafted on the California black.

Mr. Adams predicted that our walnut acreage will double in five years.

RADIO PROGRAM ON WALNUTS-FILBERTS

The farmers hour schedule for the season over the KGW (Portland Oregonian) broadcasting station was opened at 1 Saturday afternoon with a talk by Moses P. Adams of Salem, manager of the Sky Line orchard here ad a leader in the nut industries.

He said that up to 25 years ago any man in this section who would have taken up either filbert or walnut growing seriously would have been railed at by his neighbors as following a folly. Now these are becoming major industries on the land.

M'NARY GROWS FINE WALNUTS

Oregon Senator Joint Owner in What Amounts to Experiment Station

Senator Chas. L. McNary and Walter T. Stolz grow walnuts as well as filberts. Next to George A. Dorris of Springfield and Eugene, Senator McNary is a pioneer in the filbert industry of Oregon. He wrote the first series of articles for the Statesman, when filberts were considered a fad here. He has been a consistent helper in promoting the industry.

McNary and Stolz have 30 acres of walnuts on their farm near the river road paved highway, about five miles below Salem; the ancestral acres of the McNary family. As with filberts, this walnut plantng is something of an experiment station. Like his school mate, Herbert Hoover, Senator McNary is doing something in a major way in practical demonstrations in agriculture. This is extended on the McNary and Stolz farm to prunes and other crops.

This Is Encouraging

McNary and Stolz find much encouragement for the walnut industry here from the fact that trees in the Willamette valley at 10 years become a main stay in farm incorme. And after that age they tend to double ther crops. Their orchard this year doubled its crop over that of 1927, with something to spare—more than doubled.

They have several varieties. They have 100 trees of the Gillette selected Mayettes. Of course they have a large proportion of grafter Franquettes. And they have a number of varieties of seedlings. They believe a seedling will one day take the lead. At the present time, they are having tried out nine of their developed varieties of walnut seedlings, under the direction of the U. S. department of agriculture, to determine their value for propagation. They are following the Burbank principle of trying out many varieties, to get the one best. Of course, as the reader knows, every planted walnut tree from the seed brings a new variety, so the range of selection is beyond calculation for number. McNary and Stolz hope to get a walnut better than the Franquette that will mature slightly earlier than the Franquette.

Beginnings Old Here

Sixty to eighty years ago, our pioneers brought eastern black and California black walnut trees to this valley. And a few brought English walnut trees, as at Aurora, on the Frank Diem farm below Salem, and elsewhere.

About 35 years ago, Phelix Gillette of Nevada City, California, the founder of the nut industry of the Pacific coast, began to sell trees of known quality and variety to the northwest, and the first plantings were made for shade trees and home orchards. The productions from these plantings of seedling trees of many types brought about increased interest in the industry, and two varietes were selected as most adaptable, Franquettes and Mayettes.

The Grafted Trees

State Senator Vrooman of Santa Rosa, Cal., after careful study of the nut industry, selected wood from the best Franquette trees he could find in France and grafted this wood onto fifty acres of black walnut seedlings. When this orchard came into bearing the quality and uniformity of Mr. Vrooman's production brought into favor what is now known as the "Vrooman Franquette," and it was adapted for commercial planting in Oregon.

Ferd Groner of Hillsboro, Oregon, has spent a great part of his life in study and work with walnuts. With his associates he has total plantings that are the largest in Oregon. The Sky Line orchard, near Salem, is one of the large plantings of Vrooman Franquettes, 212, one of the largest if not the largest grafted orchard in the state. The following have orchards of from ten to fifty acres; Fred Blake, R. F. D. No. 8, Louis Lashmund, Wm. Walton, J. J. Roberts, Henry Crawford, Gideon Stolz, and McNary and Stolz. They are increasing their walnut orchard to 60 ocres or more.

Eventual Large Industry

This with the small plantings of from one to five acres will eventually produce a large industry that all Oregon will be proud of.

The past and present of the industry are satisfactory and the future seems bright. The United States is importing nearly half of its walnut supply of shelled and unshelled nuts. There should be no over production for many years.

Mr. Stolz says that planting of five acres of grafted trees fifty feet apart should be made on the best piece of garden land on every good farm in the valley and given the best of care..

DORIS TALKS OF FILBERTS

(Geo. A. Dorris is the dean of the filbert industry of this section, which means the Willamette valley and Clarke county, Washington. He was the first man to grow filberts here on a commercial scale, and he has done more than any other one man in finding and developing the right varieties and pollinizers, and he is still working along these lines. In association with his nephew, Ben F. Dorris, he has developed the largest filbert nursery in this section. They have about 20,000 trees for the present season's planting. Mr. Dorris has been on all the filbert and walnut tours. He has constantly spoken and written about filberts. The Dorris people have exhibited filberts at the fairs and at national gatherings. So the words he writes in the form of a question at the end of the following article are from a man speaking as one having authority, and they are very encouraging.—Ed.)

By GEORGE A. DORRIS

SPRINGFIELD, Ore., Nov. 3.—In the early stages of the filbert industry in Oregon every available tree was planted on the assumption that all came from the same source and that all were alike. Neither of these assumptions was correct. As a result today there are a number of distinct strains of the so called Barcelonas, ranging from small growing trees bearing small nuts to large growing trees bearing large nuts.

This difference is apparent in our own groves, as many people have observed. In one of our early plantings both the trees and the nuts are uniformly small. In another planting, from another source, both the trees and the nuts are uniformly large.

In still another planting several strains occur, ranging from trees and nuts as large as the best to trees and nuts as poor as the poorest.

Under conditions practically identical the 25 year old large strain trees are nearly twice as large as the smaller strain 28 year old trees, and 14 year old trees of the large strain of our own propagation are larger than the small strain trees twice the age.

This season a large strain 25 year old Barcelona tree, having a spread of 35 feet, yielded over 100 pounds, and a large strain 16 year old tree having a spread of 25 feet yielded over 60 pounds. Both trees yielded practically the same two years ago, which was a particularly good crop year.

Best in the World

A ramble through the groves of Oregon will show this same difference, some having only one strain, large or small, and some having several strains. This is a matter worthy of the earnest consideration of planters of new groves. From our observation, all strains when properly pollinated appear to be equally prolific, but not equally profitable, for the larger strain will bear larger crops of higher grades.

Recently, R. E. Colismo, foreign purchasing agent for Bennett, Day & Co., of New York, who has spent twelve years abroad in the service of his firm and claims to have personal knowledge of all the best groves in Europe, after visiting our groves stated that in all his travels he had never seen trees as large or vigorous as our 15 year old trees, and nothing to compare with our 25 year old trees.

EDITORIAL

The Case For Walnuts

WALNUT growing in the Salem district is coming into the stature of a major industry, as it should; by decrees of nature—

For this is one of our important franchise crops—

That is, we can turn off a higher grade and higher priced product than is possible elsewhere in this country; and we can do this with less cost than other sections; and less initial outlay; thus with less "overhead."

The only competitor of this section, including western Oregon and Washington, is California. In the Salem district suitable walnut land is cheaper in price than the same kind of land in California; much cheaper—$75 to $200 an acre here against $500 to $1000 or more there. We need no irrigation for walnuts here, as they do in most sections of California. Here the walnut tree with its deep roots gets its own irrigation; especially when the tree is mature. We turn out a better walnut, because we escape the extreme hot wather in harvest time, which in California melts the oil inside the nut, and tends to give it a rancid taste.

Through the efforts of Senator McNary, we are to get a government farm for experimenting with and improving the conditions of walnut and filbert growing here.

Every farm in our valley should have some walnut trees. Grafted trees. All inferior trees should be grafted over. The same with most black walnut trees here. Eventually one walnut tree will support a family. It will live 1000 years; no telling how much longer.

Our walnut industry should some day bring to us hundreds of millions of dollars annually. We should speed up this increase. We have vastly more walnut land than California.

This is bound to become the English walnut center of the world.

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.
Walnuts, November 11.
Strawberries, November 18.
Apples, Figs, 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.
Silos, etc., April 7.
Legumes, April 14.
Asparagus, etc., April 21.
Grapes, etc., April 28.
Drug Garden, May 5.
Sugar Industry, May 12.
Water Powerr, 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.
Woorworking, etc., Sept. 15.
Automotive Industries Sept. 22.
Paper Mills, Sept. 29.

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