

Lambs to Slaughter

Meat Buyer Discusses Lamb, Sheep Situation in Willamette Valley

By LILLIE L. MADSEN
Garden and Farm Editor

They may be all wool and a yard wide, these stories of the world being chock full of fleeces. But, says Claude Steusloff, Willamette valley shouldn't worry too much. After all, for every dollar of wool there is three dollars of mutton in a lamb. In other words mutton value is three-fourths of the lamb value. Mr. Steusloff is an authority. As president of the Valley Packing plant, he handles as many as 100,000 lambs each year as anyone else in the valley. Already this season, thousands of head of sheep have gone through his hands.

There has been some restlessness among farmers who have brought their lambs to the markets and have had to return home with them again. While he can't make a beauty parlor appointment for lamb market day, the farmer should know his lambs are sold before he brings them to market. That's where a telephone comes in handy. Appointments for hog delivery may be made somewhat in advance, but buyers for fat lambs do not dare risk this. There is too much danger from shrinkage.

May Be Rejected

There are at least two reasons, Mr. Steusloff says, why lambs cannot always be taken at the time they are brought in. One reason belongs to the farmer's end of the job. The other is controlled by slaughterhouse conditions.

The farmer must have his lambs in condition for slaughtering. The packing plants are not going to fatten lambs. Before the war and the government's heavy buying, fat lambs had to be from 80 to 100 pounds undressed, with the preference weight at 90. There was a deduction for lambs over 100 pounds or if they were too light. Government orders have let down the bars to some extent. The army takes undressed lambs up to 115 pounds. Lambs dress down about 50 per cent. Lambs must be fat. "Skinny" ones are sent home again to be fattened.

As to the packing plants' reason for the return of the lambs: lack of help covers it. Slaughterers are in the army, the shipyards, and the harvest fields. While the local plants are handling many more lambs than usual, it is being done by strenuous overtime work. The buyers at packing plants cannot take on lots of lambs and hold them until the slaughterers have time to take care of them. Grazing and feeding facilities just are not at the plants, and lambs shrink rapidly when neglected even for a few days.

If Stock Is Good

Having good mutton lambs is something that can be arranged for, if breeding stock is good. Mr. Steusloff just doesn't talk of breeders whose stock isn't good. That type of stock is a loss every day it is kept.

So far this season, buyers state, lambs have been in excellent condition. Weather has been just right. Too frequently heavy rains leach out the protein of lush spring grass growths. Weather this spring has been such that grass has had a tendency to go to seed. When this happens the grass retains its protein content. Therefore, feed conditions have been excellent.

Shrinkage of lambs, which is beginning now, is due to grasses and other green forage crops being gone. Most of this shrinkage, in Mr. Steusloff's opinion, can be avoided. Those who can turn their late lambs into a clover aftermath, or who have rape or sudan grass, will do all right. The others will have to use grain as a conditioner.

There is at present, quite a bit of trade in feeder lambs. Farmers with ladino clover, sudan grass or rape are buying up the early spring "skinny" and feeding them for autumn markets. This is done at the present lull between the heavy spring and autumn market periods.

Winter Lambs Heavy

Early lambs in the Willamette valley market come from the heavy clay soils, with a big share coming from Polk and Yamhill counties and the lower sections of Marion. The lambs are born in late December, January and February. They feed on early sown fall grains and some of the new fall grasses. The long wool and bigger breeds, with such as Lincoln and Cotswolds form the basis. They are, if properly cared for, ready for the market at Easter time—90 to 100 days after dropped.

On the edges of the valley and the hill sections the short wool breeds, which are better rustlers, form the basis of the stock. The late lambs are a well established industry, buyers say, in the Turner, Silverton and Waldo Hills areas. From these sections they go to market in September and October after fattening on stubble fields.

The so-called early spring lambs, killed in February and early March, are like strawberries at Christmas time: very much out of season. They are autumn born lambs and in no true sense, spring lambs.

At present, lambs are quoted by local buyers at 10 1/2 to 11 cents for tops. This is admittedly a good time, from the sheepman's point of view, to clean up the flock, and while the old ewes bring only three cents, more are being marketed than commonly. More ewe lambs are also being sold.

Buyers Are Optimistic

But stock buyers, we found, were very optimistic about the sheep business. In their minds, the future of the fat lamb indus-

try in the Willamette valley is anything but dark. Meat rationing has taught lots of folks who used to say "I can't eat mutton" not only to eat it but to like it. Surveys show that lamb has always been THE MEAT for people in the higher wage brackets. There are more of these now.

The better hotels and restaurants are the chief purchasers. San Francisco has the highest consumption of mutton of any city in the United States, and even our local buyers state that the southern purchasers claim they can get no better leg of lamb than that which has first walked in the Willamette valley rape fields.

Weevil Damage to Be at Minimum If Care Is Taken

Since it is nearly impossible to fumigate weevil in the average farm grain bin, a few precautionary warnings may save serious damage later on, according to J. J. Inskoop, Clackamas county agent.

A thorough cleanup prior to harvest is very important. All old grain should be swept up and removed for immediate feeding. Old sacks and other debris harboring weevil should be removed and destroyed. Uninfested grain, placed in small piles on the clean floor, attract remaining weevil, which may then be swept up and burned.

Several spray materials may be used to destroy weevil in the nooks and crannies, but all present more or less of a fire hazard and it has been found that a dash of hot water does the trick. Grain thoroughly dried before placing in the bin will not support grain insects.

Ram Sale, Albany To Attract Out Of State Buyers

Mail bids will be accepted by the committee in charge of the fourth annual valley purebred ram sale to be held at Albany on August 5, when sheepmen from Oregon, northern California and southern Washington will gather. The mail bids should be sent to H. A. Lindgren, at Oregon State college or to O. E. Mikesell, sale secretary, at Albany. The sale is scheduled to start at 9:30 a.m. at Bryant park.

Buyers will have 125 head of registered stud and range rams from which to choose. Breeds offered are Romney, Lincoln, Oxford, Corridale, Shropshire, Southdown, Suffolk and Hampshire. The rams are being consigned by 31 different breeders, many of whom have been breeding purebred sheep for more than 25 years.

Lunch will be served on the grounds by the women of the Riverside Community club.

Good Clover Stand To Be Expected

Good stand of ladino clover on suitable land and properly handled should produce well for four to eight years although it is almost impossible to keep the stands from getting grassy as they get older. As soon as the percentage of grass gets larger than that of clover it may be advisable to break up the sod and plant to other crops unless the quality and quantity of the remaining combination is such that it can be profitably utilized for forage.

The use of ladino clover instead of white clover in pasture mixtures on land reasonably well supplied with summer moisture usually results in increased amounts of pasture. This is especially true in the coast districts or where irrigation is practiced. Common white clover probably will be more productive on poor, dry soils because little forage can be expected from the ladino plant under such conditions.

Cultivation to destroy weeds and grass is not successful because of the heavy loss of stems and plants due to the shallow rooting system. Stands of ladino clover on sour soils frequently are stimulated by applications of one to two tons of lime per acre. Many good stands have been obtained however, without the use of lime because ladino appears better suited to slightly acid soil conditions than some other clovers.

Ranch Ramblings

By Rural Reporter

How green is my valley? Pretty green in June; very golden now. Some of the country's largest seed grass fields are in Marion county. There are other counties that produce more of all the fescues and rye grasses, than does Marion county, but Marion county is by far the leading one in the production of Highland bent grass seed.

W. G. Nibler told us that there was a big demand for an increase of subterranean clover seed. He hopes the acreage will increase in Marion county. The farmers want the seed for seeding down pastures.

Oscar Lee, Silverton, who began raising grass seed about ten years ago, has 600 acres of grass seed this year. He has a great variety of grasses, including chewing fescue, creeping fescue, tall oat grass and other experimental plots. But his largest acreage is of Alta fescue.

We found other growers with rather large fields of the Alta fescue also, including Clay Porter, Silverton; George Doran, on route 3; Zeno Schwab at Gervais and N. A. Reiling of Hubbard.

Chewing fescue fields looked good this year, both in the green stage and now in the ripe stage. The largest fields were at the Floyd Fox and Robert Riches farms in the Waldo Hills; the H. H. Peters and Stanley Hitchcock at Sublimity, and W. F. Emery on a Salem route. We also found some nice fields at the Hellick Furner and Elmer Lorence farms at Silverton; Henry Hanson at Sublimity; Robert Harper, Gervais, and Henry Zorn and Smith Brothers in the Aurora mailing district.

Oscar Might Double As a Garter Snake

ALEXANDRIA ARMY AIR FIELD, La. (AP)—Cpl. Johnny Stillman of Normal, Okla., doesn't worry about mates borrowing his jewelry or his shoes while "Os-

car" stands guard by his bunk. "Oscar" is a pet three-foot southern King snake, sometimes worn by Cpl. Stillman as a necklace or a bracelet. "Oscar" has a fancy for sleeping in GI shoes.

We found more perennial rye grass than we had expected to, with larger plantings of very good stands at the ranches of Elmer Lorence, Clay Porter, Roy Brown, H. E. DuVal and J. H. Maulding at Silverton; Andy King at Gervais; Kaufman Brothers at St. Paul; Edwin Keech at Salem. Smaller plantings were noted at ranches of Joe Wilmes and J. A. Brown of Hubbard; E. C. Hunsacker, Louise Hennes and John Peterson at Turner, and Fred Hensch at Salem.

Just in case someone might think we had gone all to grass this week, we will mention that we found some very early tomatoes already ripe out at the George Asher farm in the Grand Island district. The family reported that they had gathered their first crop on July 13. We thought this was awfully early until we heard from relatives in Brown county, Wis., that they, too, were picking ripe tomatoes, and we recall they were having snow flurries in late April or early May. They certainly have speed in the Midwest, anyway.

Serious thrip damage to the loganberry and boysenberry crop in the southern part of Clackamas county west of Hubbard was noted. Many infested berries have been entirely destroyed and hang mummified on the vines, while others are mutilated and malformed. J. J. Inskoop, county agent up there, is busy issuing directions for spray control.

Down around Albany we found the second cutting of alfalfa in progress and pastures drying rapidly. Rye grass and fescue seed were being threshed. Binders were just beginning to run also with a few combines out in Polk county. Prospects were good, but it was still too early to give out any definite yields, ranchers reported.

Women Have Unusual Reasons and Excuses In Wearing Helmets

SOUTH PORTLAND, Me. (AP)—One lady shipbuilder said she always wore her protective helmet in stormy weather because she "loves to hear the sound of rain on a tin roof."

A campaign at the big New England Shipbuilding Corp. plant to get workers to wear the sturdy hard hats on the job also brought a promise from another woman to wear hers regularly as soon as she found another clothespin container at home.

Insecticide May Prove Great Boon

If it is half as good as reported, the new D.D.T. insecticide, at present used mostly by the army for control of cotes on our soldiers and civilians in foreign countries, may be the solution to control of many farm pests which have been very difficult to overcome in the past.

Nobody knows much about this new material, but many are talking about it because of its sensational performance in a few cases.

Experiment stations are trying it on almost every conceivable type of pest, and will be prepared to make recommendations for its use on the ranch as soon as it is available.

D.D.T. is made from crude oil. Incidentally, the government released enough of this material to care for the raspberry fruit worm in the Gresham area this spring. Remember how picking was stopped there a year ago because of the worm? None of the standard insecticides proved effective, but D.D.T. in either dust or spray, gave perfect control, even when used in minute quantities.

Silage Good for Chicks

Chickens like silage and, while a good quality of green feed is better for them, silage has proved satisfactory for vitamin and suc-

CCC Wheat Purchase Reaction Favorable

Purchased by Commodity Credit Corporation of cash wheat in terminal and subterminal markets which had a favorable reaction on market prices prior to the announcement of the 7 cents-a-bushel advance in government loan rates to farmers was part of CCC's regular livestock feed purchasing program to replenish dwindling reserves.

The CCC points out that the favorable reaction on market prices of their purchases which had the effect of bringing returns at or near the parity directed by the new price control act was an incidental result from their rate. CCC started to buy at 6 cents over the old loan rate, which resulted in heavy buying of futures. CCC purchases totaled only about 1,600,000 bushels.

WFA has boosted the loan rate on 1944 wheat seven cents per bushel to a national average of \$1.55 a bushel on the farm, which represents 80 per cent of parity instead of the 85% level of the last three years. With government loans available through the county AAA office, there is no reason why farmers need to dispose of their wheat at less than parity at this time.

Farm Cleanliness, Sunlight, Important

Importance of ordinary cleanliness in the care of farm animals cannot be overemphasized. Proper cleaning removes most of the germs and the remaining germs are often so weakened or so few in number that they are incapable of producing disease under ordinary conditions. When animals are kept clean and the surroundings are clean there is ordinarily little use for disinfectants.

If, however, disease breaks out there is need for disinfectants and agents used in cleaning. Sick animals are the usual source of disease germs, hence they should always be kept away from the well animals. To prevent the spread of infection, the disinfectants should be used freely about the vicinity in which the sick animal is being housed or harbored.

Sunlight is a good disinfectant as is also a drying temperature. When possible to use, heat is very effective; burning, baking, boiling or steaming are best means. Except against germs of tuberculosis, lime and lye are effective and very cheap.

Lye is caustic, keep it away from the eyes or skin. Solutions should be disposed of to prevent injury to livestock.

Fireblight Attacks Fruit Trees, Occasionally Fireborn

Fireblight attacks fruit trees, occasionally fireborn. This should be cut out well below the point of the injury during August. Burn all diseased branches.

To some of you the woodchuck may be the groundhog. To me, at the present time, it is St. Johnswort. This is a rather attractive plant when it stays within bounds. But it doesn't. Some of you who have been worrying about not getting a groundcover to grow, might try this.

Nicotine sulphate is one of the best controls for plant aphids and is used in the ratio of two teaspoonful to one gallon of warm soapy water. A 3 per cent nicotine dust may be used in place of the spray.

Thrips will be attacking the gladiolus. They are small black insects 1/18 of an inch long. Check during the season by spraying with nicotine, pyrethrum, rotenone, or what you can get. There are some sprays under trade names which will also control thrips.

San Jose scale may be appearing on your lilacs and cotoneaster. Best control, dormant winter spray of oil, but summer nicotine spray may kill some of the several summer hatchings.

Culcenes supply when green feed is not accessible. It is important that no spoiled silage be used.



The girl with the HOE says—

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New Winter Pasture Plantings Made

Plantings of abuzzi rye by August Bernklau of Beavercreek and V. C. Doppleb of Liberal are expected to furnish seed for an entirely new and improved winter pasture, according to Clackamas County Agent J. J. Inskoop, who has arranged for purchase of certified seed of this new pasture grain from D. D. Hill of the Oregon experiment station.

Seed secured by these farmers this fall will be used for reproduction and as a source of pasture seed for 1945 planting.

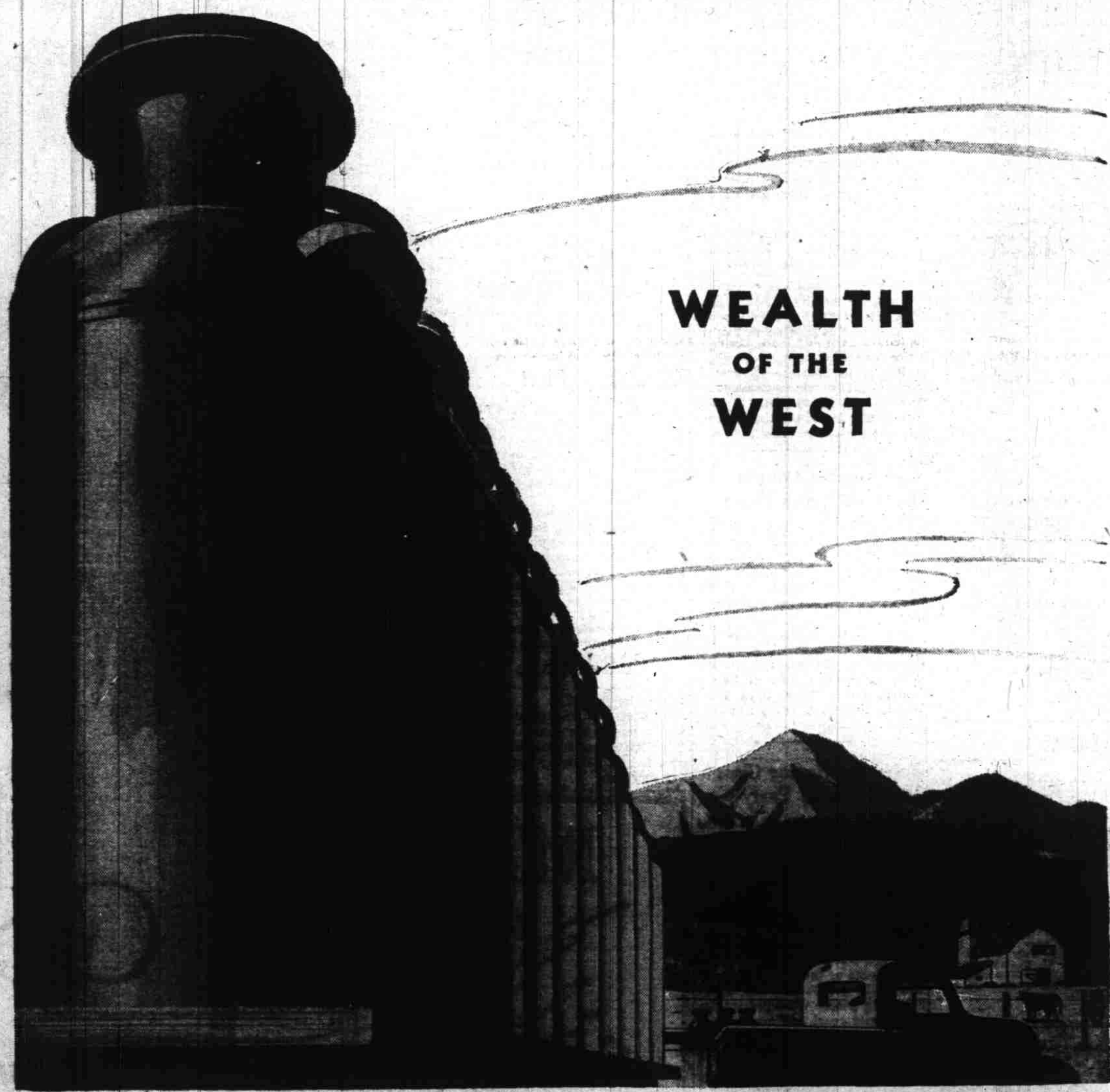
Inskoop reports that experiments with abuzzi rye at the Oregon station indicate abundant pasture during January, February and March, especially when fertilized during cold weather with nitrogen-bearing fertilizers such as ammonium nitrate.

Growers Report on Hop Conditions

The hop market remains very firm. No new transactions in Oregon hops were reported lately as supplies of spot hops are practically depleted.

As the growers have contracted most all of their 1944 prospective crop, contracting of new crop hops also has been generally lacking. Considerable quantities of 1945 and 1946 crop hops have been placed under contract in three-year deals. A few five-year deals have been made in recent weeks.

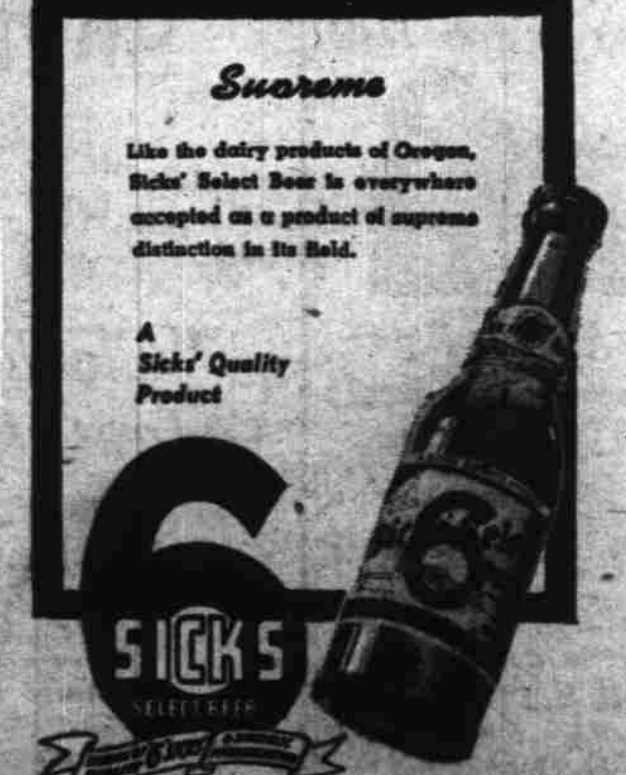
Growers report the recent hot weather has lessened the damage from lice. Some report shortage of dusting material is still causing apprehension regarding damage. Should the lice return after the first "shot" growers are worrying for fear there will be no more spray material. Weather developments during the next few weeks will be important to the growing hop crop in the valley.



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