Willamette Valley Farmer

News and Views of Farm and Garden —BY LILLIE L. MADSEN

Irrigation Aids Development Of Bean Crop

Impetus Arose From Stayton Area in 1910; Outcome Gratifying

By Lillie L. Madsen
Farm and Garden Editor

Because way back in 1910 one farmer wanted irrigated pasture for his cows in the Stayton area, now in 1944 approximately 6600 tons of beans are being harvested from 1100 acres of irrigated land.

The farmer, now a prominent resident of Salem, owned some 200 acres not so far from Stayton. His land, like all adjoining land, had been "grain farmed to death." There was no reason, he thought, why some of the water from the river or from the pioneer ditch—or even from the tailrace, which furnished water for the Stayton woolen mill, the grist mill and the sawmill—couldn't be converted to the betterment of the farm land. He spoke to neighboring farmers, who also became interested, and the group, a small one, tried to create an irrigation company.

Backing Provided

A little financial backing was needed and this was furnished by a Salem business man, now also prominent in Salem circles. In order to stretch the funds as far as possible, the farmers obtained J. W. Culver, then county engineer, to make the surveys for the district in the slack winter period. His services were cheaper then than during the busier spring and summer months. The farmers themselves assisted him in every capacity.

Even so, progress was slow. People hesitated putting money into a project unless they were absolutely positive returns would more than pay. Many farmers themselves hung back. What was good enough for pioneer granddad was good enough for grandson. Irrigating and growing untried crops seemed not only risky but like an awful lot of bother.

Company Organized

But the farmer who originated the thought still believed in it. He believed in it so much that he was able to implant his enthusiasm into a group of Portland's hard-headed business men and the Willamette Valley Irrigation company resulted.

While these Portland men agreed to advance financial support, their first question was "What to grow to make it pay?"

At that time, irrigated pasture land seemed sort of like whipped cream on ice cream. Oregon always had grazing land—irrigated grazing land was just an extra topping to something that seemed good enough as it was. At least it seemed so to those who were not trying to pasture high producing dairy cows.

It was at this time that the small group of progressive farmers sat down and thought some more.

Acreage Contracted

The old Oregon Packing company at that time was importing its green beans for canning from Utah. Edward C. Quinn, manager, was known to be interested in new ventures. He was approached. Yes, he would be willing to try Willamette valley grown beans. He personally would resume responsibility for the contract of an acreage—three acres to be exact.

Almost 10 years after the first move toward irrigation, the first crop was harvested on irrigated land in the Stayton-West Stayton area. Those three acres of beans proved so successful, and brought such nice returns to the venturesome farmers, that less venturesome folk signed a few more contracts on the dotted line for the next season.

Today, besides the 100 acres of beans, approximately half that much more is irrigated for other purposes. Irrigation now costs the farmer between $1.50 and $3 an acre.

Originators Happy

The farmer who started the move for irrigation, while he still owns his farm and spends part of each year there, sits back in his beautifully appointed government office in Salem and smiles at the first irrigation hurles. Beans do well, but he doesn't grow beans. He has his irrigated pasture.

The second Salem man, so involved in the financial beginning of the east Marion county irrigation, also sits back in his office chair in Salem and smiles. He, too, got what he wanted out of the project. This was neither beans nor irrigated pasture. A good return on money invested, yes, but above all else advancement for the county in which he makes his home.

Clover Seeds Probably Will Be Scarce in 1944

Clover seeds are of very good quality but will be short this year, according to H. O. White. Red clover will be very short. Alsike will average about a 20 per cent normal crop.

OREGON PEACH TREE 65 YEARS OLD

Age of a peach tree and the care it receives are somewhat related, says Clyde M. LaFollette. Here is Charles LaFollette, a brother, and a 65-year-old peach tree still going strong on the LaFollette peach ranch.

Fruit Output Has Big Gain In Argentina

By J. J. Inskeep
Clackamas County Agent

Analysis of a report by the United States department of agriculture on the fruit industry in Argentina brings out a number of facts of interest to fruit growers and consumers in this country.

In 1931, Argentina did not grow enough apples for its own use and imported three-fourths of a million bushels from the United States. Argentina now has approximately 660,000 tons of fruit, including a million and a half bushels of apples.

Development of the fruit industry has been along a sound scientific basis with plantings of the best varieties, including largely delicious apples and Bartlett pears. Best fruit experts educated in the United States have guided this development.

British Own Rails

This phenomenal development parallels railroad development in Argentina. Eighty percent of the railroads, reported to be excellent, are owned and operated by British Capital.

As soon as Argentina produced an exportable surplus in 1935, measures were taken to restrict imports, reducing them by 75 per cent.

Argetina apples and pears are harvested in the spring months. Its Bartlett pears must be consumed within 60 days after being placed in storage.

Argetina pickers received 75 to 90 cents a day, sunrise to sunset; packing house labor 20 to 30 dollars a week. Total cost of growing and packing a box of apples is about 83 cents.

Argentina fruit in normal times finds a market mostly in Europe and naturally expects to receive imports from Europe in exchange. The industry hopes for a greater outlet in the United States, but even at best could import little fruit from this country as practically all the buying power is found only in Buenos Aires.

Some off-season fruit might be welcome in the United States, but what products might be exported in payment?

Corn Provides Problem

Study of world corn production also presents trade problems of particular interest to Oregon, with Argentina again occupying the center of attention.

The United States by far is the world's largest producer of corn, about 2,500,000,000 bushels annually, while Argentina produces only about 450,000,000.

We feed practically all of our corn at home and import corn in addition.

Argentina is the only large corn producing country with a large exportable surplus, 80 per cent. Cattle and sheep in Argentina are fattened mostly on alfalfa.

Oregon falls far short of producing enough corn for needs of our dairymen, stockmen and poultrymen. Exports of Argentina corn to the United States averaged about 1,500,000, 1925-1929; 42,000,000 bushels in 1937, with no late figures.

Question is: does Oregon want cheaper corn from Argentina or higher priced corn, largely because of freight haul, from the midwest corn belt?

Total Lamb Crop Estimated Slightly Lower Than 1943

The total 1944 lamb crop of the United States is estimated at 29,603,000 head, or about 5½ per cent less than the 1943 crop, and 3 per cent below the 1933-1944 average. The marketing situation and the unsatisfactory cost of production has lessened the number of ewes.

The Oregon lamb crop is estimated at 1,007,000 head, compared with 1,131,000 in 1943.

Farm Output To Be Larger Than for 1943

A summary of the general United States farm production situation indicates the total volume of crop and animal products, especially of food items, considerably greater than last year. This is according to a survey made and prepared by the agricultural extension service of Oregon to assist farmers in planning their production and marketing operations for the year ahead.

Crops used directly for food will show large increases, although the gross output of crops probably will be only slightly larger than last year. A huge crop of wheat is being harvested and prospects are for large fruit, nuts and truck crops. Other food products are generally abundant, but the supply of feed grains and hay will be smaller.

Owing to reduction in hogs and chickens, it is not expected that the total number of grain-consuming animals and poultry will be so great next January as last, but the reduction of hay-consuming animals is not expected to be marked.

On January 1, 1944, the total number of animals and poultry on hand was at a high level. The nation had 132 per cent as many chickens per 1000 persons as the 1935-1930 average, milk cows 104 per cent, all cattle combined 115, stock sheep 94, and hogs 178.

Valley Counties Prime Area for Peach Growing

Approximately 4500 acres of peaches are grown in Oregon. Estimates show that Marion, Yamhill and Washington counties are the heaviest yielders. Marion and Yamhill counties run about even with around 900 acres each. Over 500 acres are grown in Washington county. Clackamas has around 300 acres. Polk county also produces quite a few and some is grown in the southern part of the state as well as along the Columbia river.

First Hops Under New Law

A portion of the 160 bales of hops that form the first carload of Willamette valley hops sent out this year under the new federal-state hop inspection service required by the OPA. In foreground are the Leslie Eppers family of Hubbard and the Ben Eppers family of Aurora who grew these hops.

Peaches Win Favor With Cannerymen

Flavor Passes Test; Production Becomes LaFollette Tradition

Peach growing isn't all peaches and cream—but almost, Clyde M. LaFollette contends.

Peach growing is almost a LaFollette tradition. It began about 65 years ago when Sen. Alexander M. LaFollette and H. B. Hendricks started their first peach orchard on the original Willamette valley LaFollette ranch near Wheatland ferry. Incidently, this site also happens to be the first site of the Jason Lee mission.

Some of the trees set out these 65 years ago are still bearing fruit on the old home place, now owned by three great grandsons of Senator LaFollette: Alexander LaFollette, 7; Byron, 5; and Francis 3. Their father, also Alexander LaFollette, died two years ago, shortly after he had returned to manage the ol dhomestead. His widow is carrying on, managing the 225 acres of peaches.

Regarded As Experts

Clyde and his brother, Charles LaFollette, are credited with having as much, if not more, peach knowledge than anyone in the state. Charles managed the original LaFollette home for many years, relinquishing it to his nephew two years ago. Now he isn't doing much peach growing, but he still has a finger in the marketing end.

Mr. and Mrs. Clyde LaFollette, at present harvesting 125 acres of the luscious fruit, work almost day and night in the orchards. The orchards now being picked are along the Willamette on the west side of Wheatland ferry. Mrs. LaFollette supervises the packing station near the home. LaFollette is in charge of the adjoining one at the Dayton-Salem highway.

Ten Tons to Acre

Approximately five tons are being harvested to the acre, although 10 ton were averaged on three acres just harvested. About 300 ton of the Clyde LaFollette peaches are contracted to canneries this year.

"There was a time," Clyde LaFollette smilingly admitted, while assorting super from extra-super peaches, "that canneries wouldn't can our Willamette valley peaches. This time was not long ago. Not more than 10 years. But they have found that our valley peaches have the flavor."

LaFollette explained that the canneries had contended that the valley peaches were not as firm as those from many other sections. In a year when harvest was heavy and local market not too good, they consented to try "just a few." One taste and these were sold, with clamor for more. Since then, there always has been a peach market at the valley canneries, according to LaFollette.

Albertas Popular

Improved Elbertas, of which the Clyde LaFollettes have 50 acres, are the most popular canning peach both commercially and in the private home. Golden Hale, which the LaFollettes themselves developed, is next in popularity. The old J. H. Hale is always a good standby. The Mayflower is the earliest peach on the LaFollette ranch. First of these ripened this season on June 29. Picking in the orchards has been continuous since. It will end around October 1, but early in September it will "taper," LaFollette said.

Peach trees, as a rule, are set out in February. Their time of usefulness is somewhat a measure of the folk who care for them, according to LaFollette. With good care, the life-period is greatly lengthened. While 20 years is considered the average lifetime of a peach tree, many on the Clyde LaFollette rance already are over 35 years old and still bearing well.

Breaks Will Heal

Diseases must be combatted faithfully. "Carpentry" must be resorted to frequently during the harvest period. Shortly after overloaded limbs break, they must be nailed into place. The break will nearly always heal if this is done early enough.

As soon as the last peach is removed, the first spray goes on. This must be on before the wet season arrives and the leaves fall. Usually, some of the trees are being sprayed in September with the later bearing ones getting their spray in early October. A 5-5-50 bordeaux is used.

Around February 1, or a little before, another spray of the same make-up is put on. In early February a 1-10 lime sulphur spray is used, and in early March the final 5-5-50 bordeaux.

So far Clyde LaFollette has used no fertilizer to speak of, nor has he used a cover crop.

"A lot of weeds come up in this loose, river bottom soil," he explains. "We plough these under and they furnish all the humus this soil needs. Soil and growing conditions are a lit different here than on the higher levels of the valley."

Peach trees come into bearing in their third year.

The black-eyed Susan is the state flower of Maryland.

Midwest Has No Monopoly On Good Corn

Developments South Of Monmouth Help Disprove a Legend

Willamette valley grows good enough corn; the stalks are tall; the ears are well filled out; but there's this valley dampness; corn won't quite mature; the autumns are too damp for proper ripening; now take a real corn state, say Iowa, Minnesota, or Wisconsin—this is the corn legend Willamette valley ranchers have been reared on.

Then along comes A. F. Elkins & Sons with modern American expression of "Oh, yeah, says who?" And in 1943, 45 tons of ripe corn were dried as good as any corn state could dry them. In 1944, approximately twice that much will be dried at hte Elkin place south of Monmouth.

The "and Sons" of the ranch name refers to Melvin M. and H. P. Elkins. Together, they are farming 600 acres.

Minnesota 13 Favored

Of this, 125 acres are corn. Part of it is Hybrid, 525, which sets two ears to the stalk. Part of it is Hybrid 100, which is new and being tried out at the Elkin ranch for the first time. The remainder of the acreage is Minnesota 13. This is the favorite on the Elkins farm where one large ear is valued above two smaller ones. Corn, not cobs, is their object, they explain.

The harvest of mature corn will begin somewhere between October 1 and 15. Something like from 10 to 15 acres can be finished a day. A corn-row picker is used with one man on the picker, one as hauler and one at the crib.

Too Moist for Storage

When corn is picked in the Willamette valley, it has a moisture content of 30 to 40 per cent. While this is in good husking condition, the moisture is too high for good storage. It must be brought down to 15 per cent to keep the corn from moulding.

By planning and experimenting a bit, the Elkins conceived the idea of a corn dehydrater. In the summer of 1943, it was put into use for the first time. It proved so successful that, with a few improvements now being completed, it will be put into bigger use this season.

Dehydration is accomplished by controlled heat under fan pressure. Truckloads of ears of corn are brought into the building and by a clever elevator system, evenly distributed in four cribs. An oil furnace furnishes the heat, and warm air moves about 20,000 cubic feet a minute through the corn which is arranged in each crib around a ventilation space. From 40 to 60 hours are needed, depending on the moisture content, to dry the corn properly.

More Storage Space

The Elkins also are completing additional storage space in their private grain storage plant. There are now something like 150 tons of oats stored there.

Cost of the dehydration plant and corn harvest equipment was estimated at $3500. The storage plant and its equipment have taken another $10,000. In all, Mr. Elkins estimates his farm equipment and machinery at something over $15,000.

"It costs something to farm," says A. E. Elkins & Sons, "but if you have proper equipment to work with, it pays for itself."

New Interest Boosts Cover Crop Acreage

Interest in sowing cover crops early has increased considerably this year and more cover crops have been seeded by this date this year than has ever been done before, observes W. C. Leth, Polk county agent.

This is a most desirable practice, says Leth, as the earlier sown cover crop produces a greater tonnage of green material to be worked in as a green manure in the spring than those sown later, and at no extra cost.

This year, many growers lost considerable moisture from their orchards by waiting too long to get the desired growth on their cover crops and many of those orchards are now suffering for want of moisture.

Leth also recommends using heavier rates of seeding. The few cents worth of seed saved would result in several tons more per acre of green material to be ploughed under in the spring. Seventy-five to 100 pounds of seed per acre is not excessive.

FOOD USE INCREASES

During the 35-year period 1909-1943, civilian per capita consumption of fresh truck crops increased over 25 per cent, reaching an all-time high of 251 pounds in 1942. During the same period, per capita consumption of commercially-packed vegetables more than doubled, reaching a high of 38.7 pounds in 1942.

MILK FINEST FOOD

Milk as it comes from healthy cows is clean and wholesome. When once contaminated it can never be restored by any method of processing to its original high standard of purity and quality. There is no better food than milk obtained from clean, healthy cows and handled in a sanitary manner.

Corn Dehydration Successful

A. F. Elkins & Sons built this dehydrating crib on their Monmouth farm with an idea of breaking Oregon's mis-legend of inability to mature corn in the Willamette valley.

Ranch Ramblings

By Rural Reporter

While rambling along the countrysides these days, one sort of wonders whether some of the farmers have found commercial uses for "Queen Anne's Lace" and Canada thistle.

The crops seems to be very good—in fact, the best crop on some ranches. Seemingly, no effort has been made to control them. The roadsides are full, the grain fields are full, the pastures are full. Only the walnut orchards and the hopyards are comparatively free. This is in most instances.

People passing over the Silverton-Salem road slow down a bit to marvel at the clean, well-kept roadside about a mile and a half out of Silverton. They note the beautiful roadside starts with the William Maurer ranch boundary on the east and ends with it on the west. There are a few such weed-free roadsides—but they are very few.

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Over in Yamhill county, Rex Warren is starting a little war all of his own with Canada thistle and morning glory as the enemy. Both, he says, can be controlled by the use of sodium clorate. This chemical is available through local stores and is the practical chemical treatment for small patches. Warren adds that for best results growers should plan to apply the chemical about the time of the first fall rains or between September 15 and October 1.

The recommended rate of treatment is 3½ to 4 pounds of chemical per square rod. For satisfactory control the users must thoroughly cover the weed-infested area. Dusting the chemical dry has proved as effective and safer than using it as a spray.

Normally treated, plots show that the weeds in the center of the area are killed while many of the weeds on the outside were missed when treated and are a source of reinfestation. Users of the chemical should plan to watch the progress during the coming season. Warren states that 95 to 99 per cent control should be had and that 1 to 5 per cent of unkilled weeds will reseed the area. The unkilled weeds can be destroyed the following season by retreating the infested area or by destroying with a hoe.

For larger areas infested with noxious weeds, other methods of control are more practical. Cultivation is one of the common methods, but in using this growers must expect to keep the weeds from making more than 10 days green growth during the period when they are under control by cultivation.

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Smother crops have proved satisfactory in control of many weeds. In smother methods, the infested area is heavily seeded during the early fall, preferably in common vetch and oats, using at least 50 pounds of vetch and 75 pounds of oats per acre. This crop is harvested at the regular hay time. The field is then ploughed and cultivated for the remainder of the season. During the early fall the land again is seeded to vetch and oats.

Chewing fescue is a valuable control for both morning glory and thistle. The fescue is harvested prior to the maturity of the weed seeds. Trials have not been run for a sufficient length of time to determine whether they will be eradicated completely by the fescue, but definitely can be controlled.

AAA Leader Says Protein Staying in US

Reports to the effect that large supplies of protein meal and feed grains have been shipped out of the country during the last year or so are entirely without foundation, says R. B. Taylor, chairman of the Oregon AAA committee.

These "exports", he adds, have been blamed for shortages of feed supplies here at home.

Exports of protein meal have totaled less than one-third of one per cent of the amount used here at home. Imports of protein during the past year have been more than seven times the quantity exported. Fish scrap and meal, and vegetable proteins have come from South America. No corn or wheat has been exported for use as feed, and only very small amounts for food or industrial uses. Large quantities of wheat and some corn to augment domestic feed supplies have been imported.

Mechanical Spud Harvesters Help Meet Labor Need

Potato harvesting operations have been rapidly mechanized in Oregon to the point where equipment has been developed which completely eliminates both picking up and sacking potatoes before they are put into storage bins. This bulk handling method of potato harvesting, as well as other types of digging and sacking, are described and compared in an experiment station circular of information, No. 345, "Potato Harvesting Methods in Oregon," just published by the OSC experiment station.

Although wartime labor shortages have hastened the development of so-called potato combines and trailer sackers, the conventional method of digging and picking up potatoes by hand will probably continue to be the most common method for several years, the authors of the circular believe. One reason is the inability to manufacture enough of the combine units ot meet present demand.

The bulk potato handler used for the first time in the Klamath region last fall is believed to be the first of its kind in the country. This digger-bulker has the advantage that the potatoes are loaded directly into the transporting vehicle without the need for filling and setting off sacks, or for picking up and loading the sacks later on, the authors state.

This machine not only eliminates four men from the crew but also avoids lifting the sacked potatoes from hte field onto trucks. This type of machine completes the mechanization of the harvest operation from the field to the storage cellar, with the exception of removing vines, clods, etc, on the sorting conveyor.

Bonemeal, Iodized Salt Are Advised for Cows

If your cow develops an appetite for wood, add a heaping tablespoonful of bonemeal to ground oats, and give iodized salt as a salt lick. If the dairyman is unable to obtain these, he can get his veterinarian to mix up a powder for him.

Root Borer Is Serious Pest In Cane Fruit

Trouble Is Reported Quite General Over Western Oregon

The raspberry root borer is one of the more serious pests of cane fruit this year, according to Ben A. Newell, assistant Marion county agent. Growers are finding these borers in large numbers where the old canes are being removed. The pest occurs generally over western Oregon on most all cane berries.

The adult of the root borer is a showy, clear winged, wasp-like, day-flying moth. The body is fuzzy, of yellowish tinge, and is decorated with black rings. At first sight, it looks very much like a yellow jacket or wasp. The grub is about one inch long when full grown and is white except for the brown head.

Mature moths are coming out now and will continue until mid-September. The eggs, which are oval and reddish-brown, are deposited singley on the undersides of the leaves near the edge. They hatch during September and October and the young larvae crawl down the canes and gnaw their way into the crowns just below the ground. They winter there and start work again in the spring.

Highly refined white oil emulsion containing 83 per cent actual oil in a spray have given good results. The emulsion is used at the rate of one part to 150 parts of water. This spray should be put on two weeks after the first eggs are noticed and the second spray two weeks after the first.

Removal and burning of injured canes by the first of September will give some degree of control.

WFA Says No. 1 Pears Are to Be Worth $75 Ton

Number 1 pears are worth $75 a ton, according to recent announcement of the war food administration, which made known the ceiling prices on processed pears. Grade No. 2 should bring $43. Processors must pay at least these prices or they will be denied government support prices for the finished product. They may pay as much more as necessary in event of market competition.