

Willamette Valley Farmer

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

State Poultry Outlook Good Says Cockell

Outlook for Oregon poultry industry is good over the long-time pull, especially since the state has swung from a large exporting to an importing area within recent years.

This prediction was made by Fred Cockell, poultry representative on the state department of agriculture, before 150 persons attending the annual meeting of the Oregon Poultry Improvement association in Corvallis early this week.

The program featured labor saving devices, flock improvement program, fertility in breeding flocks, trends in poultry production, report of the National Poultry Improvement Plan conference and the regular association business meeting.

G. T. Klein, Massachusetts extension poultryman, was a featured speaker on the program. His topics included labor saving devices and breeding for meat and egg production. Klein's suggestion for labor saving included brooding chicks in larger units, radiant heat

and hot water brooding systems, feeding scratch grains and pellets on the ground from a truck while the birds are on range, larger laying houses with larger pens and more birds per unit, and mechanical equipment for unloading feed, feeding and poultry house cleaning.

About 65 were authorized as official pulorum testing and flock selecting age under the Oregon Poultry Improvement program as a result of tests which closed a two-day school following the association meeting.

Officers elected by the Poultry Improvement organization for next year were Dr. C. E. Holmes, Millwaukie, president; and Noel Ben-nion, OSC extension poultryman, secretary-treasurer. Re-elected directors are Lloyd A. Lee, Salem; V. A. Parker, Blachly; and William T. Smith, McMinnville. New directors are George Gilmore, Junction City; G. A. Boyington, Hood River; and Don Anchors, Grants Pass.

SPRAY POISON OAK

Poison oak may be killed by the use of 22-4-D as a spray if it is applied in the spring just after the leaves appear and before the plant blossoms. Later in the season it is more difficult to kill.

Oregon's Flax History Dates Back Century

By Lillie L. Madsen
Farm Editor, The Statesman

While Oregon City celebrated her Centennial last week, Oregon's flax industry smiled, for it was already four years old when Oregon became a territory.

It was in 1844 when a pioneer woman, Mrs. John Kirkwood, successfully raised a field of flax near Tualatin, in Washington county, from the little bag of seed she had brought across the plains. The crop harvested, she processed the flax by hand, spun and wove it into clothing and household linen, and at the same time demonstrated that flax could be grown in Oregon.

But it was not until 1876 that there was any general recognition of the fine quality of Oregon flax. It was then that flax grown near Jefferson was entered in the Centennial exposition at Philadelphia and won a bronze medal and a certificate of merit for its superior length, fine gloss and general quality.

Irish Were Interested

Interested in this recognition, an Irish linen manufacturer sent two experts to Oregon to raise flax. The first year's results were fine, but the second year fire destroyed the harvested crop while it awaited shipment. The Irishmen discontinued their interest.

The year following the Philadelphia exposition a flax mill was established at Albany, which became the history of Oregon. Published in 1888, records "manufactured 5,000 pounds of linen twines and thread per month. The flax grown in Linn county by tenant farmers, who worked on shares for one-third of the crop at 12 cents a pound for the linen fiber and market price of the seed. The seed produced was worth \$45 an acre."

Albany Plant in 1882

John S. Hittell, writing in 1882 in The Commerce and Industries of the Pacific Coast, records that the Albany mill employed five men at \$3 a day and 20 girls at \$3 and \$5 a week, and "connected with the establishment is a scutch mill, where the flax is broken and separated from the woody substance, giving work to eight Chinamen at \$1.10 a day. The payroll of the factory is \$11,500 a year and the consumption of material about 80,000 pounds of flax per annum, worth at 12 cents a pound, \$9,600."

Mrs. William P. Lord then interested herself in flax. In 1894 she organized the Oregon Women's Flax Fiber association. Helped by merchants and others of Port-

land, the association had seed planted, machinery for a scutching mill installed and flax fiber produced. In 1900, fiber processed through this experiment was sent to Belgium to be spun and woven into choice linen, and fiber samples were awarded a bronze medal. Europeans sent in orders for more of the same flax, but limited processing facilities prevented these from being filled, reports show.

In 1915 the state of Oregon appropriated \$50,000 for the building of a retting and scutching plant at the penitentiary, giving flax its first real start and making the growing of flax on a larger scale possible. Flax was harvested and processed by hand labor. Pulling, binding, deseeding, retting and scutching were manual activities. This fact tended to discourage extensive culture. The introduction in 1924 of flax harvesting machinery again awakened wider interest.

In October, 1935, the WPA earmarked money for building three flax processing plants in Oregon. On January 17, 1936, the allocation of funds for the three retting tanks and scutching mills to the Willamette valley was made and the plants built at Mt. Angel, Springfield and Canby.

But competition against the cheaper flax from Europe proved too strong and the plants had difficulty going up to the war, when things became better for a brief period.

Newer Methods Needed

"But," declares Father Alcuin, former pastor of Mt. Angel parish and a long valley flax booster, "for some years we have known that if the flax industry in Oregon was to become permanent and profitable newer methods of processing and harvesting would have to be found. With the progress made in this direction during the past 10 years we have every reason to believe that the flax in-

dustry can be mechanized to the point where it can compete against the cheap labor of Europe.

Saturday morning at the 10th annual Oregon Flax festival at Mt. Angel visitors are going to be shown three new machines which, when perfected for general use, will, it is estimated, cut processing from one-third to one-half of its present cost.

The new desceder, with a capacity of two tons of desceded straw an hour, will save the work of two men, besides working so much more rapidly and producing much more even bundles.

New Binder Shown

The second new device is an improved field binder, which will cut the crew down at least three from the present binder in use. The third machine is the scutcher, which has three new features, a breaker which breaks the straw in its entirety instead of leaving six to eight inches straw in center unbroken; a new gripping device which holds the flax so securely that the beater cannot pull it out, and combs on the blades, which save both flax and labor.

"Much, too, has been done by the Oregon co-operatives to improve the system of grading flax," the "Flax Priest," as Father Alcuin is frequently called, relates. "This has long been the request of eastern mills, who repeatedly have stated that the higher grades of Oregon flax are equal to the best from Europe."

Some Soils Need

Leucine Plantings

Short summer grass is not always due to dry weather, as farmers are sometimes inclined to think, but to absence of enough nitrogen in the soil, says John J. Inskeep, agent in Clackamas county, adding that he could point to many non-irrigated fields which are producing abundant summer pasture.

Many a field is found in the rolling valley soils from Molalla, Yoder and Monitor south to the Scotts Mills, which are too wet for growing grain crops in most seasons, but which will grow abundant crops of big trefoil or lotus major hay. This perennial legume thrives on wet land, takes care of itself under conditions of tough competition, prevents erosion and makes excellent hay and pasture. It won't be long, Inskeep believes, before Clackamas county will have 15,000 acres or so of big trefoil on poorly drained fields.

Farm Calendar

Aug. 20-22—Oregon Flax Festival, Mt. Angel.

Aug. 21—Silverton Flower Show.

Aug. 22-28—Multnomah County fair, Gresham.

Aug. 25—Walnut tour, Phil Black orchard, Keizer, 9:30 a. m.

Aug. 26—Filbert tour, Harry Pearce orchard north of Salem, 9:30 a. m.

Aug. 26-28—Yamhill County 4-H and FFA fair, McMinnville.

Aug. 26-28—Polk County fair, Monmouth.

Aug. 29-31—Third annual meeting of Oregon Flying farmers, Prineville.

Aug. 29—Scio chamber of commerce second annual barbecue, Leffer farm, 12 noon.

Aug. 29—Marion-Polk County Guernsey Breeders' picnic, Dallas.

Sept. 1-4—Clackamas County fair, Canby.

Sept. 14—Linn County 4-H and FFA fair, Albany.

Sept. 1-4—Independence Hop festival.

Sept. 6-12—Oregon State fair, Salem.

Sept. 18—Southern Oregon ram sale, Lakeview fairgrounds, 10 a. m.

Sept. 24—Cal.-Ore. Hereford bull sale, Lakeview.

Sept. 24-25—North Marion County fair, Woodburn.

Sept. 25-4-H and FFA fat stock sale and show, Pendleton, 8 p. m.

Sept. 25-26—Linn-Benton Flower show, Scio.

Sept. 27—Polled Hereford heifer sale, State fairgrounds.

Oct. 1-9—Pacific International Livestock exposition.

Tomorrow's Chicken

To Take on Width

The Chicken of Tomorrow is today a Red Cornish-New Hampshire cross. At any rate, that's the breeding of the birds which won the 1948 national contest in Georgetown, Del., early this summer. They were bred by the Vantress hatchery at Marysville, Cal.

However, type rather than breed will characterize the chickens of tomorrow sold on the market, and if poultry men are selling meat birds rather than eggs, they had better breed toward the broad-breasting type if they don't want to take a price penalty, say market experts.

ADDITIONAL FARM NEWS ON PAGE 9.

The Statesman, Salem, Oregon, Thursday, August 19, 1948—7

Tiling Practices About Due, Says Tate

As soon as crops are off the land and machinery can be arranged for, farmers in Marion county will be going ahead with tiling and ditching conservation practices, says W. M. Tate, chairman of the county agricultural conservation committee.

Tate advises farmers of the county to making arrangements for carrying out these practices if they haven't already done so. To be eligible for assistance under the agricultural conservation program, these practices must meet program specifications, he warns, and suggests farmers planning to carry out these practices call at the county ACP office.

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