

FRENCH ARMY SELLS HORSES TO THE FARMERS



Big horse sale in the principal street of a town in southern France. The French government is now disposing of a great number of army horses, thus eliminating a big item of expense and at the same time providing the farmers with animals to aid in the reconstruction.

Big Increase in Acreage Unwise, Says Houston

Secretary of Agriculture Declares Large Fluctuations Are Not Desirable.

CALLS FOR CAREFUL THOUGHT

Expansion of Nation's Agriculture Limited by Supply of Labor and Capital Available for Farming Purposes Rather Than Scarcity of Undeveloped Lands.

Washington.—It probably would be unwise to stimulate a large sudden increase in farm land acreage at the present time, especially where such an increase would have to be effected by utilizing land which is inferior or which would be made available at a heavy outlay for drainage, irrigation or clearing. This opinion is expressed by David F. Houston, secretary of agriculture, in his annual report for 1919. Since the nation now retains but little land of ready availability, agricultural expansion will result mainly from the efforts to utilize and to increase the productivity of farm lands now owned by individuals, corporations and states. Careful thought should be given, the secretary says, to questions pertaining to the use of additional lands. "The best experts of the federal department and of the agricultural colleges should make a detailed study of the possibilities of utilizing land not now devoted to agriculture." In respect to the 200,000,000 acres of cut-over land, the 60,000,000 acres requiring drainage, and the 30,000,000 acres which may be irrigated, there is a great variation from district to district as to the possibilities of economic use.

Study Distinctive Regions. Distinctive regions should be fully studied with the view to assemble all existing data on productivity, cost of making land available, present tenure and prices, type of agriculture best adapted to the conditions, possible returns, minimum size of farms capable of supporting families in reasonable comfort, minimum equipment needed at the beginning of settlement, sources of credit, and marketing and transportation facilities.

The secretary refers to the fact that various private agencies are engaged in promoting land settlement and says that while many of them are honest in intention, promise and practice, others keep within the letter of the law, but through exaggeration and indirection of statement create false impressions in the minds of the settlers. Only a few, he states, have made careful studies of the conditions of successful settlement, and practically all are seeking to realize the highest possible price for their undeveloped holdings. As the intending settler of small means is rarely able to distinguish between the good and bad methods of selling lands in new regions, he thinks it would be desirable for government agencies through their agricultural machinery to furnish reliable information to those seeking farms, to give new settlers very special assistance and guidance and, where conditions are favorable, aid in developing well-considered settlement.

The matter of land utilization comes in for a large measure of attention in the secretary's report.

"The expansion of the nation's agriculture," says Secretary Houston, "is limited by the supply of labor and capital available for farming purposes rather than by the scarcity of undeveloped lands. It is true that, in general, the best land is already in cultivation, but without question much of the remainder can be tilled when the country reaches the economic stage which would justify its utilization.

"There are numerous fallacious opinions with respect to the need of extending the farm area. Many people, noting the prevailing prices of agricultural products, demand increased

lies in immediate and rapid expansion of the acreage in farms. Others, observing large tracts of unused land, deplore the great waste of our resources. Still others explain the movement of population from rural districts to cities by the nonavailability of land, which they attribute to land monopoly, speculation and other evils. The demand for farm products, unlike the demand for manufactured articles, does not expand rapidly to meet a large increase in supply. There is a tendency toward an equilibrium between urban and agricultural industry. If too much labor and capital are diverted from farming, the relative prices, and consequently the relative profits, of agricultural activity will increase, and there will be a tendency toward expansion. If this is excessive, however, relative prices and profits will tend to decrease and the industry may suffer depression. The inelasticity of demand for farm products sets a very decided limit at a given time to the increase of population and capital profitably employed in agriculture.

Large Fluctuations Not Desirable. "It is not in the interest of producers or consumers to have large fluctuations in agricultural production. There is always danger of glutting the market and of serious loss. The aim rather should be to secure a steady flow of commodities of sufficient volume to supply an increasing demand at prices which will yield the farmer a decent wage and a fair profit on his investment. It seems difficult to get it into the minds of some people that farming is a business and must pay; that under modern conditions there cannot be an unlimited number of farmers. There could be a larger proportion of farmers to total population if each farm were self-sufficient and produced no surplus of consequence, but today the average farmer produces many times what he consumes of some things and is dependent for his prosperity upon their profitable exchange for other articles which he uses. There should be, and in the long run there will tend to be, no more farmers in the nation than are needed to produce the quantity of products which can be disposed of at a profit. There will be farmers enough if the business of farming is made profitable and if rural life is made attractive and healthful. The consumers must be willing to pay prices for farm products which will enable the farmers to produce them and to maintain a satisfactory standard of individual and community life. The nation also must be prepared to omit nothing to improve the countryside. It is of the first importance that satisfactory schools, with courses of study related to the problems of rural life, be provided, that good roads be constructed, and that adequate provision be made to give rural communities the requisite sanitary and medical services, including hospital facilities. When these requirements are met, we shall not have to concern ourselves as to the number of farmers and the adequacy of our agricultural production. There will then be no difficulty in retaining in the rural districts a sufficient number of contented and efficient people. What we need is not a 'back to the land' propaganda, but an acceleration of the movement for the improvement of the countryside which will render the abandonment of farms unnecessary and the expansion of farming inevitable.

Expansion During War. "There is reason to believe that a considerable expansion in farm-land area occurred during the war. The acreage devoted to the 19 principal crops increased 10.1 per cent from 1914 to 1918. Accordingly, the crop area per capita increased from 3.22 acres in 1914 to 3.33 in 1918, or 3.4 per cent. This expansion probably resulted in part from the use for crops of land normally devoted to other purposes, especially to pasture. However, it seems to indicate that the farming industry has more than held its own during the period. This conclusion is supported by an increase not only in

Needle in His Body For Half a Century

Elyria, O.—From mumps to measles and chronic indigestion to neuritis, Robert Myers, fifty-two, had run the gamut of human illness. Recently a lump appeared between his shoulder blades. It did not heal, and when the family physician was called he hurried the patient to a hospital. There a tarnished needle with 24 inches of thread attached was removed. Physicians believe Myers swallowed the needle when a child and that perhaps half a century it has been wandering through his body seeking an outlet. His various ailments are charged to the needle's peregrinations.

the per capita production of nearly all the important crops, but also, according to a recent report, in the number of cattle and swine per capita. Moreover, estimates for milk, eggs, and poultry indicate an increase in per capita production during the war. In view of these facts, it probably would be unwise to stimulate a large increase in the per capita farm acreage at the present time, especially where such an increase would have to be effected by utilizing land which is inferior or which would be made available at a heavy outlay for drainage, irrigation or clearing.

Land Settlement Problems. "At present various private agencies are engaged in promoting land settlement. Many of them are honest in intention, promise and practice; others keep within the letter of the law but, through exaggeration and indirection of statement, create false impressions in the mind of the settler. Many violate no canon of fair business practice, but their interest is in profits, and they do not pursue a policy calculated to develop a profitable and wholesome community life. Only a few have made careful studies of the conditions of successful settlement and developed their business with a view to the settlers' progress and success. Practically all are seeking to realize the highest possible price for their undeveloped holdings, and the settler is compelled to face the problem of adjustment to pioneer conditions while carrying a burden of land value which often represents, in part, the capitalization of a future increase in earning power.

"The intending settler of small means is rarely able to distinguish between the good and bad methods of selling land in new regions. The more unscrupulous the land company the more lurid its advertisement and the more extravagant its promises. Settlers often are induced to invest all their savings in land not suitable for successful farming, to purchase more land in relation to the capital available for development than they should, or to undertake projects the cost of clearing or reclamation of which will prove to be prohibitive. The results in many instances have been tragic failures after years of incredible hardships, waste of capital and of human lives, discouragement of intending settlers and injury to the business of legitimate and well-meaning land concerns.

"It would be desirable if governmental agencies, by systematic aid, should furnish reliable information to those seeking farms, should take particular pains, through their agricultural machinery, to give new settlers very special assistance and guidance, and, where conditions are favorable, should aid in the development of well-considered settlement plans."

Tiny Engine.

Hillsboro, N. D.—A young jeweler of Hillsboro has made a tiny engine, run by compressed air, which is only three-quarters of an inch long and weighs only two and one-quarter grains. The diameter of the cylinder bore is 28-1,000 of an inch; the diameter of the flywheel is 9-64 of an inch and its stroke is 30-1,000 of an inch. Contrasted with this is a valve used by the Ontario Power company of Niagara Falls, which is 31 feet high, weighs 85 tons and has a water opening nine feet across.

American Musicians Are Returning to Old Haunts After World War Strain

From the music of cannon and the rhythm of marching feet, back to the quiet harmony of studio and concert hall.

Hundreds of musicians in America threw down their bow and their baton to enter the war. To some the idea was just a bit ludicrous—the emotional musician engaged in the brutal, uncomfortable business of fighting. To those who knew the patriotic fervor and adaptability of these inspired music makers, there was more than a little anxiety for the peace future of warrior musicians. How would the delicate mechanism of their psychology be affected by an activity so powerful and so far from their normal desires?

Some musicians like David Hochstein, the young violinist who lost his life in the Argonne, will never return. But unassuming numbers of them have taken their places again in the ranks of players. One may hear them in the theater orchestra. They are playing in the cabaret jazz band, content to return to the humdrum of the life which was so enthralling to them before the war. It may be a bit stale to them now. But the reaction will soon set in, has already come to many who have lost the first restless craving for excitement that they felt on their return from the front.

Percy Grainger, Australian pianist, has returned to his old job of composing and concertizing. Irving Berlin, king of popular music, has stopped inspiring the soldier and has set his brilliant talents to inspiring the soldier in civilian life. Albert Spalding, one of the greatest of America's violinists, is on his way home from the front. His old job of fiddling and making the world safe for culture is waiting for him, and he will take it gladly. Pianists, tenors, trombonists are all slipping back into the old paths—and are glad to be there.

The Kitchen Cabinet.

Persons who are conscious of a necessity for "killing time" can hardly be said to be living. For life is such a wonderful thing, such a fascinating thing, such an all-absorbing joyous experience, that it is impossible to tolerate the suggestion of killing even a second of time in which we have the privilege of living.

Almond Cakes.

Use any good white cookie recipe, roll and cut the cookies, then spread with maple fondant and sprinkle with chopped almonds while they are still warm from the oven.

A box of cakes and a glass of jelly or a bottle of grape juice makes a most acceptable gift. It eliminates the unessential, for they are soon gone.

Ways With Grape Juice.

The thrifty housewife who has bottled enough grape juice to supply her family with many tasty dishes and drinks is fortunate. Grape juice is so popular with everybody that it is becoming the universal drink. But grape juice may be used for various dishes besides, of which the following are a few:

Grape Juice Sherbet.

Boll together one quart of water and two cupsful of sugar (strained honey may be used) for 20 minutes; add a teaspoonful of gelatin which has been softened in three tablespoonfuls of cold water. When cold add two cupsful of grape juice and the juice of one lemon. Freeze. Serve in sherbet glasses with a cherry for garnish.

Breakfast grapefruit is delicious served with a spoonful or two of grape juice poured into the center of the prepared halves of grapefruit.

Grape Juice Parfait.

Beat until stiff one and one-half cupsful of heavy cream, add one-half cupful of grape juice and the juice of half a lemon. Cook together to the soft ball stage three-fourths of a cupful of sugar and one-half cupful of grape juice, then pour boiling hot water over the stiffly beaten egg white; beat until cold. Fold the two mixtures together and pour into a quart mold, filled to overflowing. Lay a waxed paper over the mixture and press the cover in place over the paper. Pack in equal measures of ice and salt. Let stand three hours.

Grape Juice Sponge.

Soften one-fourth of a package of gelatin in cold water, using one-fourth of a cupful, dissolve by heating over hot water; add two-thirds of a cupful of grape juice, the same amount of sugar, and the juice of half a lemon; stir over ice water until the mixture begins to thicken, then gradually beat in the whites of three eggs; when the mixture holds its shape, fold in one-fourth pound of marshmallows cut in quarters. Turn into a mold or individual molds. Serve with cream.

For tinting cake frostings as well as adding flavoring, use the grape juice instead of water.

Hot grape juice with the addition of sugar makes a delicious sauce for puddings.

Nellie Maxwell

Doing Things Wrong Way.

The man who does things the wrong way and does not know it will not stop at failure, he is foredoomed to disaster unless some one comes to his rescue. And the rescue brigade is

BIG AMOUNT OF BARRELED APPLES REACH MARKET EACH FALL IMPAIRED IN QUALITY



An Apple Sizer and Grader in Operation.

Prepared by the United States Department of Agriculture.)

With a view to meeting the needs of apple growers in the East, middle West and elsewhere who have not placed their business on the most profitable basis, the bureau of markets has just published Farmers' Bulletin No. 1080, "Preparation of Barreled Apples for the Market." The apple crop in a majority of the states is shipped in barrels.

A large amount of the barreled fruit reaching the market each season is impaired in quality by being picked at the wrong stage of maturity, either too early or too late. The grower must realize that fruit is not ready to be picked when it clings to the spurs so tightly that the spurs are pulled out or broken. Furthermore, the color of fruit, which eventually turns red, is not always a reliable index, the intensity of the color being dependent upon the prevailing cloudiness or brightness of the weather. Whether or not the red color develops normally, a reliable indication of maturity is a ground color which, when the fruit is ready for picking, should be turning from clear green to a whitish green or greenish yellow. Yellow, green and russet varieties of apples are generally ready to pick when they have attained the proper size and the stems separate readily from the spurs. In picking apples, the stem should be separated from the spur either by giving the fruit a slight rotating motion combined with a sharp upward twist or by exerting a slight pressure with the thumb or forefinger at the joint of the stem and spur just as the fruit is pulled.

A variety of picking utensils are mentioned in the bulletin, some of which are mentioned for special approval. In removing the crop it is generally advantageous to use both sacks and baskets, as the latter are especially convenient for gathering fruit near the ground, while the sacks can be used to advantage for ladder work, as the pickers have both hands free. The chief disadvantage of sacks is that their use involves a greater possibility of bruising the fruit. In emptying either the basket or the sack, care should be taken to avoid dropping the fruit. If a basket is used, it should be lowered to the bottom of the lug box or other receptacle and inverted gently. A certain type of sack is constructed with a drop bottom, so that the fruit can be emptied without bruising it.

Ladders Make or Mar.

Much efficiency in picking depends on the use of ladders of the proper type. Several varieties are in common use. Step-ladders are especially satisfactory for work in small trees and in picking from the lower branches of larger trees. The most desirable types are wide and flaring at the bottom, narrow at the top and supported with but one prop. As a rule, not enough consideration is given to the selection of ladders.

Where the crop is packed over tables that are moved about the orchard the packers usually carry the fruit in the picking utensil to the packing table. While it is common practice for the pickers to do this, it should be avoided by assigning certain members of the crew to this task. They should also furnish the pickers with empty receptacles as needed.

Use of Sorting Tables.

Two types of grading or sorting tables are used almost exclusively where the fruit is graded in the orchard, and they are used to a large extent in packing houses. These are the apron table and the canvas or burlap table. The apron table or a variation of this type is commonly used in all sections. The bed, which is slatted, so that trash falls through it, is inclined, causing the fruit as it is graded to roll to the lower end, where on opening a stop or drop it is lowered by means of an apron into the barrel. While work can be done rather rapidly with this table, it is not altogether satisfactory, as the fruit frequently crowds past the sorters and permits carelessness on their part. The canvas or burlap table is made with a piece of this material stretched over a rectangular

frame, and is not fitted for running the fruit from the apron into the barrel. The apples must be sorted by hand into baskets in which they are lowered into barrels. The advantage of this is that all apples are subject to careful inspection.

Sizing machines for barrel apples are gaining popularity. They have been used in the Northwest for several years for sizing boxed apples, but operate on a different principle than that employed in barreled apple-sizing machines. At present sizing machines are being used quite extensively for barrel packing in all sections to meet the demand for apples of uniform size. The most common practice throughout the barrel apple sections is to separate the fruit into two standard sizes, 2 1/4 to 2 1/2 inches and 2 1/2 inches and larger. There are a variety of machines employed to do this work, each featuring some distinctive mechanical device or sorting process. In general, any of these will size apples satisfactorily for barrel packing. In making a selection, the apple grower must determine which machine has a capacity proportionate to the size of his orchard and can be operated most economically. He should also look for one of simple design and free from features requiring too much adjustment, and should make sure that it will not bruise the fruit. The durability of the machine should also be considered. The various methods of feeding the fruit to the sizing machine should also be studied carefully, as it influences directly the total daily output and consequently the cost of operation. Only small machines can be operated by hand power. Some of the simplest types having a capacity of perhaps 100 barrels a day can be run in this way, but in most cases the gasoline engine or electric motor is preferable.

The apple grower raising any considerable quantity of fruit should give careful attention to the advantages of mechanical conveyors, which save much labor both in handling loose fruit and light packages.

Operation of Grading Laws.

The enactment of grading laws for apples is a comparatively recent development. The present federal law, known as the Sulzer law, took effect July 1, 1913, and at about the same time a number of states also passed laws. For several seasons the state laws have not been entirely successful in obtaining results desired. Many were enacted hurriedly, and most of them contained provisions not consistent with commercial practices. The degree of enforcement in different states has varied markedly. Furthermore, fruit from many of the states having these state laws frequently appears in the same markets and the use of identical grade terms having different meanings in different states has in a way defeated the purpose of the law. In spite of these objections, however, a state law that is practical in its specifications and intelligently enforced will carry with it many advantages.

The grower who feels the need of a packing house will find suggestions in the section of the bulletin devoted to designs of such buildings. Floor plans of various types are suggested. One provides for an output of 200 barrels a day, and a second plan shows a house equipped with three grading machines having a total capacity of 1,200 barrels a day. A third plan provides for an output from two machines with a total capacity of 100 barrels a day.

Partial suggestions relating to hauling concludes the bulletin. As a large part of the barrel crop of the country is packed in the orchard, it is necessary to haul the packed fruit from two to fifteen miles. Under many conditions, especially where roads are favorable, motortrucks are best suited for this work. The farm wagon most commonly used is equipped with either an ordinary wagon bed or a three-pole frame, and has a capacity of 15 barrels. Both types of wagon should be equipped with springs, preferably bolster springs, for careful handling of the packed fruit is quite as important as care in the packing operations.