

# Cotton Is King, County Agent Discovers On Southern Tour

HEPPNER GAZETTE-TIMES, Thursday, June 27, 1963

Cotton, cotton, and more cotton. This has been the fare for the past several days for those of us on the Dow study tour. It has been interesting to me to see and hear of the insect, disease, variety, ginning and market problems of the cotton farmer. Although we're told by county agents and others of the area

that there is no surplus of long staple cotton, the type grown through the communities we have visited in Arizona and New Mexico, there have been lots of open shed and steel warehouses, as well as thousands of bales stored in the country we are passing through. Deep wells provide the big percentage of ir-

rigation water and they are as numerous as oil wells in some places. In this Southwest country we frequently hear the statement that "people are our biggest problem." This is easy to see. What brings them all to an area of mosquitos, mesquite, chaparral and cactus evidently is explained by the climate. Surely the 106 degree weather we have encountered doesn't have too much pulling power. Winter, of course, is another thing. Sunday I saw a 20 acre alfalfa field on the outskirts of Phoenix that had only a few dollars before, sold for one million dollars. The county agent at Kingman, Arizona, told us that over three solid townships had been sold for housing developments and more were selling every day. This is as remote an area as I have been to.

An interesting tour of the White Sands Missile Range revealed where a lot of tax money is going. We saw a Hawk missile fired that cost \$7000. Several more were to be fired during the day. This was one of the least expensive missiles, with some costing as much as one million dollars.

**Cattle Yield Below Average**  
Rangeland is looking better as we get into the higher elevations of New Mexico. Predominately Brahma and Brahma-cross, the carrying capacity is from 4 head per section (640 acres) on down. This breed is used as they will stand the heat, walk longer distances to water and are "hustlers." They need to hustle to find any grass on most of the range we have seen in southwestern Utah, Nevada, Arizona, and western New Mexico. Calving percentages are considered good if they reach 50 percent. Weaning weights of calves are about 300 pounds. We have seen thousands of what are referred to as "Mississippi No. 1's" going into feed lots in Arizona and New Mexico. They look like a poor Morrow county Jersey crossed with a Brahma. They go into feed lots weighing 450 lbs. as yearlings.

Wool from the country's 50,000 sheep is marketed in a uni-

que manner. Several local warehouses assemble the wool on a consignment basis with Boston buyers coming into bid on the wool. This year's clip averaged over 60 cents. Roswell fine wool is quoted on the Boston wool market because of its quality and demand. All wool is baled in the sacks of delivery for ease of shipping.

In this Southwestern area industry has moved into all rural communities. Most towns the size of Heppner, and even smaller ones have anything from an electronics, clothing manufacture, chemical to rubber hoses. At the small town of Deming, New Mexico, we toured a rubber and plastic toy factory that manufactures 300 different kinds of toys. Local labor is hired from the surrounding area including part time farmers. None are unionized and it was evident from the age of the workers that this is an outlet for the areas high school graduates.

**Wells Provide Irrigation Water**  
Friday we saw an artesian well that flowed 9100 gallons per minute. This is a lot of water. Natives told us that many years ago it was reduced to a four inch stream that shot 108 feet into the sky. Now it is used for irrigation as one of the hundreds of deep wells that provide water for the irrigated cotton, milo, alfalfa and barley.

Cotton is King, with grain and forage used in the feed lots. Every rancher has a feed lot it seems, all equipped elaborate feed processing mills using the latest in automation for these mills and delivery to the feed lot cattle. All operators are complaining of fat cattle prices now with costs exceeding price they are now receiving. This is curtailing the purchase of cattle to go back in the lots which in turn may affect the price of our calves this fall even though they are buying a completely different grade quality of calves than we have to sell.

We have another week of traveling before returning to Oregon and Morrow county. I am looking forward to the numerous visits in the Santa Fe, Clima-

ron and Raton. New Mexico areas where we will see sheep ranching under fence, plastic pipe systems on desert land. tour of the T.O. cattle ranch to see their cattle and horse management practices. We will then leave New Mexico for southern Colorado, visiting the Rockyford, Pueblo, Colorado Springs, Canon City, Salida, Gunnison, Delta, Grand Junction, Fruito and back to Salt Lake City. There will be many interesting stops during the week. I have recorded my trip with over 200 colored slides to date that I hope to use after my return.

**Livestock Tour Sunday**  
Livestock growers and their families are looking forward to the Range and Pasture Tour which is scheduled to be held in the Ukiah area this Sunday, June 30. The tour meets at Ukiah at 10 a.m. The morning will be spent in seeing some excellent seedings on the Ralph Beamer summer ranch, which includes Ladak alfalfa, smooth meadow foxtail and clover, as well as some farm ponds built in 1961. An event of the morning will be an identification stop where Curt Caribom, OSU botanist, will identify and discuss native plants of the area. A picnic lunch is scheduled for noon at the Ebb Hughes ranch home near Ukiah. Everyone is asked to bring their picnic lunch, but coffee and cold drinks will be provided by the Morrow County Livestock Growers Association. During the afternoon the group will have the opportunity to see an excellent seeding made by Ebb on a forest burn, a unique spring development on the Hughes ranch, as well as stops at a meadow foxtail seeding at Hines Brothers ranch and several seedings made over a number of years at the Jim Nelson ranch in the Ukiah area. We hope that everyone will plan to participate in this outing having a good time and seeing some excellent range improvement work.

Mrs. Jack (Shirley) Loyd has returned to her duties as secretary in the office of the county Pioneer Memorial hospital and a week convalescing at home. She said that she is feeling much better.

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