

Co-operative Fruit Organizations

By C. E. Whisler

It has come to be recognized that co-operation is the basis of good business, and the more centralized is the effort the greater is the measure of success attained.

But to obtain this result good business principles must be the basis of organization. Organized effort may be as futile of desired results, as is individual effort, and will be unless the principles of the organization are followed, and the better the understanding of those principles, together with the knowledge of the difficulties encountered, both within as well as without the organization, on the part of those who are attempting to co-operate, the more is the assurance that those principles will be followed.

To help to a better understanding of the principles of co-operation, as well as to show the need for the same, is the purpose of this article. It has been long understood that "In union there is strength," but why? How does union promote strength? This is the day of big business. The larger the accumulation of business under one head, the more cheaply it can be done, as well as being done with more efficiency, provided always that good methods are followed.

In the matter of fruit producers' organizations, it is believed that as many, if not more, difficulties present themselves for adjustment than in an organization for the handling of any other product. The complications arising, owing to the nature of the product handled, are much more acute. For instance, the values of the product are more varied, as well as being subject to more rapid changes in quality. Also subject to more rapid changes of market values than almost any other product. This being true, it is essential that provision be made to meet these varying conditions, which, of course, become

the basis of organization. Let us therefore, notice the needs of organization. Without it each grower must act as agent for himself, both in buying his supplies and in selling his product. In the buying of his supplies it has long been established that purchases on a large scale can be made much more cheaply than on a small scale.

First, because it enables the large concerns from whom supplies are obtained, to handle the same amount of goods much more cheaply. Thus by purchasing box material, wrapping paper, nails, spray material, etc., in car lot shipments the price of the supplies are greatly reduced.

Secondly, because by handling in large quantities it enables them to handle a greater amount of goods with the same labor. That makes it possible, by co-operation, to purchase supplies in large quantities at reduced prices and by dealing those out to one consumer it is possible, with a small fee, to cover handling and expense charges, for him to obtain his supplies at a greatly reduced price from what he would have to pay were he purchasing direct.

In the selling of his product he is still at much worse disadvantage, again the large concerns handling his product prefer to deal with large concerns, for the same reason that the dealer in his supplies offers "big business."

Again, the individual shipper cannot so readily obtain that information needed, both with regard to prices and the supply on the markets of that food product with which his fruit comes the most directly into competition, all of which entails much labor and expense and is essential to successful operation. The same requirements enter into both sides of his transaction, namely "big business."

It is, therefore, evident that the smaller the grower the more he feels

the need of organization and a co-operative organization can only justify its existence by securing for him his supplies at the best minimum price and returning to him for his product the best possible maximum price. This is the "milk in the cocoanut." And to obtain this result requires the application of good business principles on the part of the operators as well as patience and forbearance on the part of the producers.

As the purchase of supplies is a simple matter and of minor importance compared to the handling of the product, this article will waste no time with that question, but will attempt to deal at some length with the question of the marketing of the product.

Let it be remembered that every specimen of fruit going into the market does so in competition with every other specimen of the same kind of fruit, and not only so but it goes in competition to a greater or less degree with every other food product.

To regulate competition among fruits of the same kind and to overcome competition of food products of other kinds is within the realm of good business, and to obtain that price for your fruit which truly measures its relative value as compared to all products with which it comes in competition is the right measure of successful effort. This brings us to a consideration of the nature of the product handled. Let us consider especially pears and apples.

First, it is of a very perishable nature, extending in its life from but a few weeks to a few months at best. All of it must be consumed or decay within one year (unlike many

manufactured food products which can be held almost indefinitely.) This makes the regulation of competition very difficult.

Second, it is necessarily gathered within a period of approximately eight weeks, and must be dealt out to the consuming public through a period of less than 10 weeks.

Third, the quality of the fruits is varied from year to year by the varying climatic conditions under which it is produced, even on the same soil, while on different soils and different climates the variations become very acute. Successful co-operation demands, therefore,

First: That every participant be treated as every other participant in the organization.

Second: That provision be made for protecting the equities of the individual.

This protection should be embodied in a formula of working rules governing the action of both individual and official; these should be accepted as the by-laws of the organization, and should be considered by every one as being as sacred and as inviolable as the "moral code."

Third: Full knowledge of all proceedings should be within easy accessibility of all participants. These should be sufficiently broad and wise in their provisions as to establish full confidence in their efficiency to obtain better results under co-operation than by individual effort because confidence is the bulwark of successful action.

Let us now look at the proposition of marketing. From 1895 to 1900 the average annual production of apples in the United States was 51,619,000 barrels or 154,857,000 boxes; from 1905 to 1910 the average annual production in the United States was 26,844,000 barrels or 70,532,000 boxes. All of these apples are gathered at practically the same time, consequently must be taken care of from the time of gathering until they have gone into consumption. This necessitates the consideration of loss in decay, of interest on capital invested in products, and of expense in handling and holding of products. All this must be met somewhere.

Competition among products lowers the price of the product. To regulate the price is to first regulate the competition. This is accomplished by regulating the offerings at any one time to meet the consumptive demand for the product. But to do this necessitates the consideration of the questions of decay. Of interest on capital invested in the product, and of handling and holding expense, and in co-operation this questions must be considered as relating to the holdings of the individual in proportion as his equities are

to the total product handled by the organization, and in this way only can "every participant be treated as every other participant" and "full protection be given to the equities of the individual." Otherwise it necessarily follows that some would profit by better prices than others, which is not equal; while others would suffer loss in decay, interest on capital invested, and expense of handling and holding product. This also is inequality. Therefore, to accomplish the best results under co-operation it is necessary that the product handled be considered as the property of the whole organization, but here comes the difficulty of adjusting the equities of the individual to the equities of the whole. Values of fruit are governed by the relative merit of the fruit of the same variety, as well as by the relative merits as to other varieties, and, as said before, the merits are so varying that it is impossible to be exact, consequently some concessions must be made in the hope that the benefits derived by co-operation on the whole will overcome any losses by reason of the concessions made. This requires careful consideration, patience and forbearance, and further requires that there be strong continuity on the part of those endeavoring to co-operate. Shattered confidence invites disintegration, and strict integrity on the part of all concerned, coupled with full publicity is the best known preventative. Every member is fully entitled to a knowledge of the proceedings because he is a part of the organization itself, and the officers are but his servants to carry out his will.

Therefore, he should consider the interest of the organization as the interest of himself, and should protect, and promote, and faster the interests of the organization through the principle of self defense.

C. E. WHISLER.

JOHNSON TO MEET LANGFORD IN FRISCO

EL PASO, Texas, March 25.—San Francisco, according to James W. Coffroth, will be the scene of the Johnson-Langford fight when it is pulled off. Coffroth said today that Johnson already has promised to fight in San Francisco.

"The Britishers," said Coffroth "cannot raise a purse large enough to land the fight. San Francisco is the city where the crowds turn out and if the fight is ever staged it will be at my arena."

Merely to find a bargain once in a while is not what makes it pay a housewife to read the ads. She becomes educated as a buyer—which is the sort of education a housewife most needs.

DANIELS HAS TO GO SOME TO SAVE RECORD

NEW YORK, March 25.—C. M. Daniels admitted today that he was forced to extend himself to the limit last night to successfully defend his title as the 100-yard amateur swimming champion. Daniels finished only two inches in front of McGivally of Chicago.

A broiler for use on any stove that a Virginian has invented holds the meat to be cooked in a vertical position within a casing that catches every drop of juice that falls from it.

To prevent explosions of coal dust in some German mines water is forced into fissures under pressure and, after it is pumped out, the coal can be broken down with picks without blasting.

FOUR DEAD; FIFTEEN HURT MILWAUKEE FIRE

MILWAUKEE, Wis., March 25.—A revised list of the casualties here in the Middleton Manufacturing company's fire today shows four firemen dead and fifteen injured one fatally. Careful search of the ruins, completed today, makes it certain that no more bodies are among the debris.

A store that does not advertise does not seek the attention or patronage of progressive people—and should not have them!

The ad-reading housewife gives her allegiance to the store that offers her the most value for her money day after day, consistently.

A REAL SALE OF OUR COMPLETE LINE OF LADIES' WAISTS

LOOKING OVER OUR STOCK WE FIND WE HAVE TOO MANY LADIES' WAISTS. THE NEWEST STYLES, ALL PURCHASED THIS SPRING, WILL BE SOLD AT THE REMARKABLY LOW PRICES GIVEN BELOW. YOU KNOW WHAT WE MEAN WHEN WE SAY OUR ENTIRE STOCK OF TAILORED, FANCY, ETC., ETC., LADIES' WAISTS WILL GO ON SALE. OUR RECORD IS CLEAR, AND THE VALUES AND PRICES WE GIVE BELOW ARE

Just What We Say They Are

For One Week Only---Monday March 27th to Saturday April 1st

- All Ladies Waists from 98c to \$1.19 go at 89c
- All Ladies Waists from \$1.29 to \$1.59 go at \$1.19
- All Ladies Waists from \$1.68 to \$2.19 go at \$1.59

Hutchison & Lumsden