

Potatoes For California

THAT OREGON and Washington supply one potato producing district of California approximately 700 cars of seed potatoes in a year, comes as quite a surprising announcement. The authority for this statement is no less a personage than W. E. Shear, Assistant Horticulturist of the United States Department of Agriculture, who is now in charge of the Experimental Station in the Delta Section of the San Joaquin and Sacramento Rivers.

Mr. Shear has been making an investigating trip throughout Oregon to study the conditions surrounding the raising of potatoes. The section from which Mr. Shear comes furnishes California with about two-thirds of her entire potato crop. Potatoes from Oregon and Washington being later than those below, come at a time which makes them valuable for seed. It has been stated that a great many potatoes received from the Northwestern states are inoculated with fungus trouble. Rhizoctonia, commonly called "Rhizoe" for short, is not the least of these troubles. It is a form of fungus which, in the potato, shows in small black spots. When these potatoes are used as seed, it is transferred to the plant, which it attacks below ground.

Attacking Disease.

"The eradication of these difficulties are what I am investigating at this time," said Mr. Shear. "The grower cannot be too particular in his work. A simple means of treatment for potatoes affected in this way is before

seeding. By a solution of corrosive sublimate dissolved in hot water, 5 ounces to 30 gallons of water, a preventative is supplied. In this mixture seed potatoes should be soaked for two hours.

"Seed potatoes are not as well selected as they should be. If chosen from a hill in the field, a much better result will be achieved. Nothing should be selected which is not known by name and true to type. Professor Baker has said that the grower in three years of careful seeding and planting can double his crop.

"The grower of potatoes can well hope to get 50 cents a sack more from the planter for seed purposes if he will use better judgment in growing and selecting same. This means a better profit to the grower and not a very great increase in cost to the planter, in planting 9 or 10 sacks to the acre. Storage of potatoes for seed should be at a temperature of about 33 to 38 degrees.

A potato convention was held at Moorland, California, September 25th and 26th. It was called by the California State Horticulturist Commissioners and was dedicated to the discussion of potato improvement. Representatives from the neighboring states were invited to attend and their cooperation asked.

E. C. Roberts, president of the Oregon State Board of Horticulture, has been made familiar with Mr. Shear's visit to the Northwest and its purpose, and heartily endorses the movement for the betterment of potato growing.

ADVOCATING IRRIGATION

Secretary Lane Proposes Commission.

SECRETARY LANE of the Department of the Interior has proposed an Interstate Irrigation Commission to convene in Helena, Mont., on October 1. From there a train load of delegates and visitors will go to Calgary, Alberta, to attend the first international Irrigation Congress, Oct. 5-9.

Indications point to an excellent attendance and one of the best agricultural and horticultural exhibitions. The official call went out the early part of August and certificates of appointment issued at the same time have been heartily responded to both in the United States and Canada. The program promises many interesting and valuable discussions of an international character, subjects having a bearing on the climatic and development questions relative to both the United States and Canada, and these subjects will be handled by men who have had considerable experience in the problems of irrigation, among them Hon. A. A. Jones, assistant secretary of the Department of the Interior of the United States, who has taken a leading part in the satisfactory adjustment of the many serious problems confronting the settlers on irrigated lands in the Western states. Many of the leading irrigationists of Canada will also have a place on the program.

Members of Congress, of Parliament, of chambers of commerce, of boards of trade and other institutions have intimated their intention of being present from all parts of both countries. Presidents of agricultural and irrigation associations welcome the opportunity to discuss the problems relative to both irrigation and dry farming. The need of correct solutions of farming problems is more than ever emphasized on account of the agricultural products in Europe. It is predicted that America must prepare now to demonstrate the truth of her claim that she "feeds the

world." Irrigation and intensive farming are to be encouraged as never before.

Those attending the Calgary Congress will be given an opportunity to inspect the largest single irrigation project in America, as they will find themselves practically on the site of the Canadian Pacific irrigation block. Here nearly a million acres have been brought under ditch, and the total length of canals and ditches of this vast undertaking exceeds 5,100 miles.

The City of Calgary is preparing a royal welcome for the visitors and delegates, and the railways are arranging a number of interesting side trips. The one of most interest to irrigationists will be over the Bassano irrigation project which was completed last April. Another attractive trip will be to Banff, some eighty miles from Calgary, where mountain drives and climbing, fishing, boating and bathing are strong inducements to the pleasure seeker. To those making a longer stay a trip across the Rocky Mountains will appeal.

Drought of 1883 Still Holds Good

WEATHER RECORDS are disputed by the Polk County Itemizer. "A. V. R. Snyder, whose memory of what has transpired in these parts is about as clear as any of the early day settlers, disagrees with the Oregonian's statement that the dry spell of 1914, which has just been broken, is the longest in the history of Oregon. 1883, Mr. Snyder says, no rain fell in this part of the Willamette Valley from April 15th till October 1st. The ground got so dry, he said, that in places it cracked open wide enough to admit a man's foot. While crops generally suffered from drought that year, they did not burn up as much as one would naturally expect under the circum-

stances. Heavy forest fires in the Cascades and in Washington obscured the sun so much of the time that it was comparatively cool. At times, he says, the pall of smoke was so dense that it would be necessary to have a lamp lit during the noonday meal.

The drought this year was of 73 days' duration, which would seem a short period as compared with the 168 days without rain in 1883, if Mr. Snyder is correct in his recollection, and it seems likely that he is, as Rev. Joseph Ho-

berg, of McMinnville, and Hon. Thos. Brunk, of Eola, bear him out in his assertion.

"Anyway, we are glad it rained this week, even if it did cause some inconvenience to hop pickers."

Professor H. T. French, state leader of county field work, has spent considerable time recently in making an investigation of the work of the Agricultural College farm advisors.



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