

### First Horticultural Society Meetings Centered On Naming Fruit Varieties

While gold miners swarmed across the Sierras in 1849, a handful of pioneers of a different type pressed toward Oregon with a strange cargo.

Farmers, doctors, clergymen, small businessmen and settlers came bringing the source of their unexpected wealth—ox-drawn wagons of nursery stock for planting in "the salubrious climate" of western Oregon.

Fortunes seemed assured when boxes of apples sold for between \$80 and \$100 each in San Francisco. Like gold strikes, the boom and bust days made history rather than lasting fortunes. But unlike the 49ers, fruit grow-

ers lived to see better times. A core of the more fortunate growers built the foundation of today's multi-million dollar fruit and vegetable industry, which holds its 70th annual meeting at Oregon State college today and tomorrow.

**Scant Similarity**

There will be scant similarity between Oregon State Horticultural society's 70th meeting and those earlier days. Chemical warfare against weeds and insects, use of hormone sprays to increase fruit size, and mechanical harvesting of beans will be discussed with other horticultural problems.

Early gatherings were primarily "fruit shows" and the occasion for naming new varieties. According to 1887 records, Seth Lewelling "exhibited two varieties of cherries, both fine. The State Horticultural society named one of them Lewelling, and the other Lewelling named the 'Bing' after his favorite Chinaman."

Lewelling also had pioneered the Willamette valley apple industry when he and Ralph Geer traveled the plains in 1847 with a "traveling nursery"—a wagon-bed of 700 apple trees and a half-bushel of apple seeds. Lewelling sold the first box of apples on the streets of Portland for \$1.

**Market Problems**

The big problem in 1887 was finding markets and getting to them. And at this year's session for apple and pear growers, two topics stand out, reminiscent of the past—"The Export Market—What are the Potentials?" and "Fruit Packaging."

History shows that early growers were not completely devoid of profitable local markets. W. K. Smith, a Salem settler, reported paying \$15 a bushel for apples in 1855-56 and was sufficiently impressed "to go into the business." From his first crop, a single apple was sold to a Salem sawmill man for \$5.

But apples were not destined to profit the valley in the long run. Other nearby areas—Hood River, Wenatchee, Yakima and in Idaho's Snake river valley—grew them with better finish and growers were better organized to pack and market a quality product.

The apple reversal did not save

off the limb for growers who were willing and able to shift plans. Western Oregon had their fruits better suited, and their sales today represent new wealth to the state each year.

Pears top the list with 19,600 acres and annual sales of \$13,000,000. Both counts are based on 1954 figures, with Jackson county having more than half Oregon's total acreage.

Strawberries, a fast-growing second dollar-wide crop with 17,000 acres bringing \$8,500,000, are expected to post an all-time high of 19,000 acres by 1956. Washington county has 3,700 of the total acreage.

Cherries and apples each contribute about \$7,000,000 in yearly sales. Of Oregon's 17,200 cherry acres, Lane county has most of the sour varieties and Wasco county leads in sweet cherry acreage. The Hood River valley grows the bulk of Oregon's 13,300 acres of apples.

**"Purple Plums"**

Prunes brought fortunes, then disaster, when dried prunes lost export markets and were pushed to the back of the grocer's shelves by year-round supplies of fresh and frozen fruits. Recent promotion of canned "purple plums" has enhanced Oregon's 19,400 acres with \$2,500,000 sales in 1954. Polk county leads with 3,600 acres.

Peaches, like apples, go back far into Oregon's fruit history. In 1844, the Rev. Edward Evans Parrish came from Ohio with a sack of peach pits which thrived and multiplied in the valley. Last year the state grew 8,300 acres valued at \$1,000,000. Jackson county has 1,700 acres, leading the state's production.

A stimulating chapter in Ore-

gon's horticultural growth is recorded in a vegetable industry which gains strength each year with new techniques in processing. Green beans hit a new high of \$10,000,000 in sales last year from 9,500 acres; 56,400 acres of green peas yielded low and still brought \$3,500,000; and sweet corn from 14,200 acres sold for \$1,500,000.

Early members of the State Horticultural society attached aesthetic values to productive soil and climate.

**Rose Exhibit**

The first rose exhibit in Oregon—fore-runner of the present Rose Show—was held in Portland in June, 1893, by women of the society. "It attracted much attention but did not fully pay its way," according to the record. The women in charge, appointed by society president J. R. Cardwell, were Mrs. George Lamberson, Mrs. Henry E. Jones, Mrs. M. E. Shafford, and Mrs. Ella Lehigh.

Dr. Cardwell was a Portland dentist and first president of the organization. He served continuously from the society's founding in 1885 until 1907. For many years he cultivated 80 acres of mixed fruit four miles south of Portland courthouse.

Dr. Cardwell came to Oregon from Decatur, Ill., in 1852 with a wagonload of nursery stock. His uncle, who was to follow later, was financing the 50-50 enterprise in exchange for Cardwell's labor.

**Hauled by Oxen**

The nursery stock "planted in the black dirt of the Illinois prairie" was drawn by four yoke of oxen on the six-month, eight-day journey. As it neared Oregon, the wagon skidded and rolled on a sharp bank of the Snake river, dumping the cargo into the current. Dr. Cardwell retrieved only one rose cutting.

Actually, Oregon's first horticultural group was formed in 1858 at the suggestion of Amos Harvey, Polk county grower, and had its first meeting in Salem. It later joined the Oregon State Agricultural society, but emerged again as a separate group with spasmodic meetings. Since 1885, it had had official stature with regular annual meetings, and solidified its position in 1889 by bringing about creation of the Oregon state board of horticulture.

Key speakers for the morning general assemblies at the 70th annual meeting are Dr. Irving Krick, meteorologist, who will review "weather control," and Dr. Edward Vaughn, OSC botanist and recent visitor in Europe, who will give an illustrated report of agriculture in six European countries.

The assembly each day will divide into four production groups—small fruits, stone fruits, apples and pears, and vegetables—to hear reports by experts, who will conduct more than 50 special sessions.

Experiments with wood wastes in heating orchards, introduction of new "Siletz" strawberry, fertilizer and irrigation research

findings, fumigation of fresh market cherries for shipment into quarantine areas, and promotion of canned purple plums are among topics to be discussed.

**A SLIGHT HINT**

Bismarck, N.D.—(U.P.)—Two Dickinson, N.D., men escaped injury here recently when a Soo Line train nudged their auto off the tracks while they were deciding where to have lunch. The men said they heard the train

but were unable to get their car off the tracks in time. The engineer slowed the train sufficiently so as to just bump the car to one side.

Dead line for Sunday Classified is at noon Saturday.

**ROGUE VALLEY HANDWEAVERS GUILD**

ANNUAL EXHIBIT and SALE

Girls Community Club

Dec. 2nd and 3rd  
2-9 p.m.

**OAKDALE MARKET** 11th and Oakdale

**Cauliflower 17¢ Head**

**Emperor Grapes 2 LBS. 19¢**

**Grapefruit Arizona White 6 for 39¢**

**Avocados 2 for 29¢**

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USDA CHOICE

**CHILI MEAT or GROUND BEEF 3 lbs. 98¢**

**FRYER RABBITS 2 1/4 to 2 1/2 average Cut Up lb. 59¢**

**END CUT PORK CHOPS lb. 39¢**

**GREATER Grocery BUYS**

**Borden's STARLAC 3 gal. size 79¢**

**Standby PEAS 3oz can 2 FOR 37¢**

**Durkee's MAYONNAISE Freezer Jar 53¢**

**WESSON OIL Quart 59¢**

**Cloverleaf brand TUNA 4 Cans \$1.00**

**SHOTS GIVEN**

Dunsmuir—About 55 second and third grade children were given Salk polio vaccine inoculations at Dunsmuir elementary school recently, it was announced here. They were youngsters who failed to get shots last spring when the program was temporarily discontinued.

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