

# --- CHIT CHAT ---

By JOE COWLEY  
Mail Tribune Farm Editor

We drove out into the hinterlands last week to visit a farmer friend. Both the trip and visit impressed us.

It was the kind of day which makes the blood sing through the arteries. With our daughter, Little Miss Mischief, standing up on the car seat beside us we rolled out Colver rd. past fields with cows grazing contentedly, trim white farmhouses and iron red barns. Our's was the only car on Pioneer rd. as we started to climb up toward the hills. Every country cottage or farmhouse we passed on the way had its colorful flowerbeds. We noticed varieties of yellow, white, blue and deep purple iris standing flagpole straight.

After talking with our farmer friend, listening to his experiences, plans and general comments punctuated by his wife's remarks we thought Pioneer rd. was well-named judging by the type of people living along its borders. Our farmer friend and his family are members of the ever-widening group of small, independent farmers—the same pioneer type which fought in the American Revolution and settled the west.

Unfortunately, our friend is getting out of farming. He's looking for a job in town—a full-time one. He's been hit by too many fruit freezes. He belongs to a cooperative shipping organization which may help him price-wise for his crop. However, this same cooperative won't lend him the equipment and materials he needs. He has to buy those himself. And that's what mounts up, equipment costs. So, he's selling his farm "up on the mountain" and figuring on subdividing some other farm acreage he has down on the valley floor.

This latter remark is what concerns us. More farmers may find they have to subdivide their property later on, but very few are attending the Jackson County Planning commission meetings on zoning. Regardless of how they may think about zoning now, it would pay all farmers in the Rogue valley to obtain copies of the proposed interim zoning ordinances. They're all the same except for the description of the land—and study them thoroughly. Also, it may cost a little money, but it would pay to consult an attorney before these zoning ordinances come up for public hearings. It will save considerable sweat and money later on.

The land down under has been shipping considerable sheep to the U.S. posing a serious threat to markets in this country. Now, American land developers are moving into Australia. A California paper announces development of the 1.3 million acre Esperance Plains in western Australia. This project is planned by American Factors Association of Honolulu and Chase International Investment Corporation of New York.

Esperance Plains is located about 450 miles southeast of the city of Perth and consists mostly of virgin lands. These will be cleared for pasture and farming over a five-year period. As it is developed, the land will be sold to individual farmers in blocks of a thousand acres or more. Chase International will help arrange the financing and will invest some of its own funds in the development, according to the news story. Wonder if they have zoning there?

Syndicated financial expert Sylvia Porter fired a shot for the farmers recently in a column which appears in many of the nation's papers. She sums up her observations after a shopping trip that "the cost of living rises of this era are coming mostly in services—not in food, not in clothing, not much in housing, either."

She reports startling variations in price trends from food to food compared to earlier postwar years when all food prices were climbing rapidly. She noted "sensational differences from neighborhood to neighborhood and from store to store. Because of the abundance of foods wise shoppers can save money now on a much larger scale. Another point, (made before the break down in summit talks) there is nothing in the outlook suggesting another takeoff in the price of food.

All of this points out that today food is your biggest bargain. How much you want to pay depends on how much processing you expect. For instance, do you want your fryers all cut and wrapped in an attractive cellophane package ready for frying or are you willing to take the chicken and prepare it yourself. Do you want tomatoes all uniform size in cellophane cartons or are you willing to buy them from a roadside stand and do the selecting plus scrubbing yourself?

County Extension Agent Don Berry is striving diligently to better the lot of the fruit and vegetable growers. One frozen foods processor is trying some vegetable processing for local farmers on a limited basis. However, this is a promising step.

The sour cherry outlook seems good. Valley trees came through the frost season in good shape. (It is over, according to all expert predictions, but not officially over until June 1.) A number of new plantings have been made. And Bagley Canning company in Ashland promises a good outlet. Nobody will get rich on this deal but it will expand the agricultural income some by adding another variety of fruit well adapted to the Rogue valley, according to the agricultural experts.

We talked to perhaps the largest operator of a year-round fruit and vegetable stands in this area last week on Rogue valley fruit and vegetable prospects. He played on the old, old local theme that growers expect too high prices and the merchants won't pay a decent price. Our fruit stand operator said he buys almost all of his produce in Sacramento since he can get it cheaper even though the farmer must include transportation and jobber costs.

Farmers here, including poultrymen, demand Portland prices, but aren't willing to deduct the transportation and jobber costs, he pointed out. "Then, when you get a bunch of 'em to agree on price everything is fine until one of 'em is offered 10 cents a box more, then off they go. They're hurting themselves, is what they're doin' because they destroy a potential good steady market here." Perhaps the frozen foods processor will help here.

High Dollar Farming suggests fertilization and irrigation to help farmers turn their pasture forage into good solid profit. Fertilized range paid off with an extra 125 pounds of beef per acre in California. Profit after cost of fertilizer was \$7.38 an acre. Irrigation in Tennessee increased milk production 4,341 pounds for a \$99 per acre profit. In North Carolina, carrying capacity went up by 42 cows days per acre. Usually pasture returns alone aren't high enough to cover cost of installing irrigation, but it is a good way to boost profits where irrigation is used for other crops, too, this farm newsletter points out.

Local agriculture experts seem to agree that the Rogue valley puts out top quality sweet corn for the dinner table. Only trouble is that it comes on when sweet corn production in the U.S. is at its peak. The Southern Oregon Branch Experiment Station on Hanley rd. near Jacksonville is experimenting with earlier varieties of corn and tomatoes.

Atrazine will be available for corn growers for the first time this year. It has been recommended already by many college weed specialists. Like Simazine, Atrazine has been very effective against both broad-leaved and grassy weeds. Research men say it has a little advantage on Simazine because it is more soluble in water and may be more effective in dry soil. But, for Pete's sake read the label and follow directions before using it and any other chemicals!

High Dollar Farming also predicts egg prices "could zoom skyward next fall" if producers don't buy more chicks than they have been. Early hatch is only two-thirds what it was in 1959. Besides that, flocks were already down 3 per cent at the first of the year. Even a 10 per cent production cutback has been known to cause a 30 per cent price gain since demand for eggs is not very flexible.

Last summer, an experiment with rootplowing brush was tried on the Applegate. The first experiment, the one closed to the general public because it was a trial run, was by far the most effective one. Mainly, because the experienced operator on the huge cat could make it just about dance a jig on the steep hillside. For some reason, the Caterpillar company changed operators for the large public demonstration on much less rugged terrain. This demonstration was not nearly as effective. In the near future we want to go out and check the grass planted.

We mentioned this because we understood another rootplow demonstration would be conducted in another section of the valley this spring. Also, we noticed the San Francisco Chronicle carried a story about another system of brush eradication. The Dow Chemical company has developed a form of 2,4-D that, when sprayed from the air, will do a quick effective job of killing sagebrush, according to Henry Schlacht, farm reporter. Schlacht recently inspected the spraying results on 8,000 acres of sagebrush in the Sierra Valley. This is located from 5,500 to 7,500 feet elevation on the eastern slope of the mountain in Plumas and Sierra counties.

Schlacht points out that the valley's 200,000 acres raise mainly cattle. Since the growing season is short ranchers must get the most from the rangeland. Brush, which covers about a fourth of the valley floor is the big handicap.

Cost runs about \$5 an acre of which the federal government, in its conservation program, pays half. Ranchers of the area estimate that the productive capacity of the range is doubled and tripled within five years of spraying, the San Francisco farm reporter reported. One application seems to kill the sage for about 10 years, he reported.

## Ragweed Control Off To Start Early

Salem - The state's ragweed spraying got off to an unusually early start this year, with the first work done May 13 in Josephine county with pre-emergence spray on corn fields. Before this work is completed, about 50 acres of corn will be treated.

On the corn fields, the state is using the new chemical, atrazine, which has been cleared by federal food and drug administration for pre-emergence use only on corn. The application used on this is 1.6 pounds actual atrazine per acre - or a low rate so other crops may be planted on the land next year.

Ragweed plants in the Willamette valley are showing decidedly uneven germination this year, with the first ones appearing about 20 days earlier than any time since the state control measures started in 1957. In some valley areas, plants were 2 to 3 inches high by May 13.

Spraying in the Willamette valley will not start immediately, as the irregular germination would mean a second coverage over the same grounds.

"Ragweed pollen, the culprit which causes human allergies and suffering, will not show for many weeks. By the time it does, spraying will be complete on all known infestations so that Oregon may retain its zero pollen count," states George Moose, assistant plant division chief, state department of agriculture.

In most of the spraying operations, the department will continue to use 2,4-D which is the same material successfully used in prior years of the control program.



SCRUBBING—Mrs. Dora Dorich, assisted by her grandson, 17-year-old Eddie McGrew, scrubs down a Landrace boar in a squeeze chute. Eddie's hand and arm are seen holding a long metal pole. The pole has a loop of wire at the end which goes around the hog's snout. This holds him still and his head up. Last Thursday, Mrs. Dorich shipped nine purebred Landrace hogs by boat to Hawaii where they will be used for breeding purposes. This is a repeat on a previous order.



HEY! MOVE ALONG!—Seventeen-year-old Eddie Dorich worked a hog down the chute to the truck where it was loaded into a crate for shipping to Hawaii. Five boars and four sows were shipped by freighter Thursday. The picture was taken on the farm of Eddie's grandmother, on Hanley rd. across from the Southern Oregon Branch Experiment station last week.



UP SHE GOES—Eddie's persistence paid off as he moved this Landrace hog from the chute into a crate ready for shipping to Hawaii. The Landrace hog, originating in Scandinavian countries is well known for its meat and bacon type. It provides a lean type of meat to fit in with today's fatter diets.

## Home Gardeners Save on Budget

Corvallis - If your family budget balks when it comes to savings, take a tip from an Oregon State college horticulture specialist who says a home garden can be an enjoyable savings plan.

R. Ralph Clark estimates a one-acre garden can produce \$800 worth of fruits and vegetables for a farm or suburban family. Cost of seed, fertilizer, sprays and water normally will run less than 10 per cent of the income from a garden, he added.

A city family with a smaller yard will find the income from a garden proportionate to rural garden plots.

Added benefits of home gardens are outdoor exercise for the whole family and better flavored fresh fruits and vegetables, with higher vitamin content than found in processed products.

Clark pointed out that it is late now to plant early crops like radishes, spinach and peas, but excellent results can be obtained from many other vegetables.

# Farm and Garden



INTO CRATE—Eddie gives the Landrace hog a final shove from behind as it moved protestingly into the crate for shipment to Hawaii. Eddie's father, E. E. (Pink) McGrew, took the afternoon off from the lumbermill to assist in the loading operation. McGrew held the top of the gate to the crate, ready to ease it down as the hog goes in. S. L. Shanklin, Jacksonville, a hired hand on the Dorich farm, looks on. The truckdriver is in the background.

## Bright Future Predicted For Oregon Beef Cattle

Corvallis—Oregon has the right combination of resources and market potential to make the future bright for the state's beef cattle industry, forecasts Marion Thomas, Oregon State college extension agricultural economist.

But, he emphasized, to make the best eating, Oregon cattle need to spend some time in feedlots.

Six factors prompting the agricultural economist to predict further growth in the beef cattle industry include:

1. Oregon cattle and feed raisers are near the fastest-growing group of highly-paid beef eaters in the world. He pointed out that the West Coast population has grown by more than one-third in the past 10 years and is expected to gain nearly as fast in the next 10 years.

2. Oregon has cattle to feed—more than 600,000 calves are born in Oregon each year. This is 50 per cent more than 10 years ago. More than two-thirds of these are beef calves. Besides calves and yearlings, Oregon cattle herds yield about 75,000 cows each year. These numbers can be improved by rangeland improvement, shifting land and feed from other uses, supplemental feeding, and other methods as economic conditions warrant.

3. Supply of grain available has been a record large, and will continue to be.

4. Feeding of hay could be increased, for pelleting and wafering make it more feasible to move hay into production areas.

5. Wheat could be available for feeding in substantial amounts if federal legislation were changed to permit pricing at feed levels.

6. Oregon has the marketing facilities to move cattle to feedlots and beef products to consumers.

On the other side of the picture, Thomas pointed out that a feedlot needs to operate on a year-round basis and handle relatively large amounts of livestock and feed to be efficient and successful.

This takes people with know-how and relatively large amounts of capital. The know-how can be learned from county extension agents, feed

**CHILDREN HEAR ALL**  
Salisbury, Vt. —(AP)— Mrs. Shirley Noble, who drives a school bus for 42 children, says she's learned at least one thing from her job: "Don't talk too much in front of youngsters. It's amazing how much they overhear family matters. They're quick to discuss all sorts of things."

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