

--- CHIT CHAT ---

By JOE COWLEY
Mail Tribune Farm Editor

Water, taxes and land seems to be the triple threat generally facing Rogue Valley farmers currently—and other farmers, too.

Somehow, these three factors are all wrapped up together and taxes seem to arise out of land problems here.

During this year's reclamation meetings authorities on water development have indicated the public is gaining more control over water development, but it took a Californian to frankly come out and say so.

"The degree of public control over water development is almost inevitably going to increase," B. Abbott Goldberg, deputy director, California Department of Water Resources, told the San Francisco Barristers' club Thursday. (In case you didn't know, Webster says a barrister is a lawyer admitted to plead at the bar in superior courts of law. We didn't know either. This comes from the English practice of maintaining two classes of lawyers; barristers and solicitors. The latter handle the more routine legal matters which never reach the high court status.)

Anyway, he explained, "The magnitude of the investment (in water development) is so large, the time needed to repay the investment so long, and the evaluation of the purposes which should be repaid . . . is so difficult, that private capital cannot assume the burden," he said.

The problem of competition between agricultural and municipal use of water illustrates the difficulties, he said.

"Since the cost of water is a very small part of the cost of domestic living and of most industrial processes, it follows that the rates that a municipal or city water-user can pay are very high . . . (He should live in our little town. The water rates we pay are almost as high, proportionately, as Coppo's power rates.)

"But in the case of agricultural water, the situation is much more grim. Here the water is a substantial part of the cost of production."

Goldberg said that if the farmers could not pay the actual cost of water, the Congress might be encouraged to pass legislation tailored to achieve more joint federal-state participation "in this peculiar California (and Oregon) situation."

Goldberg said the water dispute would echo repeatedly during the current session of the legislature.

"You will hear a lot about water rights, cost allocation, subsidies, acreage limitations, the grasping inequity of southern California and the dog-in-the-manger attitude of the north," he said.

Although California seems far removed from Oregon, Californians have the habit of moving up here and bringing their problems with them. As this state becomes more populated there will be more pressure on the water supply. In spite of heavy rains recently, the water outlook here is still poor, so while people are worrying about possible lack of water it might pay to worry a little more and do some constructive planning on water use.

Medford has announced already that it isn't adding any more outside areas to its water system. Some small towns already are relying on irrigation districts to boost their supplies. As more new subdivisions come on irrigated lands, people will want to tap the ditches for lawns and gardens.

The question remains, how much of the water from projects farmers paid for should be used for non-farm uses? As the suburbanites demand their share of the water should rates to non-farm users be increased to discourage too great a use of the farmer's water? And should the farmers' rates be lower since they use a larger quantity of water than the residential users? (One acre minimum rates are in effect now for each lot.)

This ties in with the land problems since promoters are selling considerable farm land in the valley for home sites. Unless the subdivider makes arrangements (it's his obligation) to tap onto the irrigation water for people in his subdivision, all the new homeowners can do is watch the water go by in the ditches. They grumble when they have to pay irrigation district taxes for water they cannot use. Yet the law says they must.

Yet, under the present rate system, if all non-users under a ditch were exempted the burden on the remaining water-users would be either too great or the irrigation district couldn't afford to operate. This pertains to districts serving the more populated areas of the valley.

As this valley becomes more settled, more people will start howling to their state legislators to change the law and exempt them. A change in the rate structure seems inevitable. The mechanics should be worked out now while the pressure of the problem is off.

So much for water, now for taxes . . . This is something that gives the taxpayer a feeling of emptiness in his wallet and a headache about now. Our conscientious county assessor no doubt smokes those big black cigars to keep both the 'sketeers and taxpayers from getting too close. And Jackson county is getting increasing numbers of both.

Elsewhere on this page we will throw some problems in real property appraisal at you. If you come close to the answer in the assessor's handbook you will be entitled to call yourself Assessor Junior Grade and designate yourself target of the month. Then, if you still feel like bellyaching' I will refer you to the current issue of the California Farmer headlined, "Huge Tax Increases are Running Ranchers off the Land."

You will notice the table at the bottom of the page which reportedly gives the actual tax bills from Sacramento county for 1959 and 1960. Read this and be glad you live in Jackson county. The percentages of tax increases in two years range from 139 per cent to 2,446 per cent, according to this report. The highest percentage of increase was on five acres of land with a veteran's exemption. In 1959 his tax bill was \$7.04, in 1960, \$179.22, for an increase of \$172.18. The next highest, 659 per cent, was \$269.28 in 1959 to \$2,045.08 in 1960, for a difference or raise of \$1,775.80.

The article comments that since the Sacramento county farmers got their tax bills in November "there's talk of hanging the assessor and shooting up the board of supervisors; and no one smiles when these suggestions are made." So, we don't have to worry about such increases here. There aren't enough deputies to protect either the county court or assessor against such mayhem.

But, many of these Californians are moving up here, buying land sight unseen and paying \$300 an acre for land worth only \$10 an acre. So what? So that's their worry? So, the appraisers check these land sales and if your land is next door, whoosh goes your property's true cash value and up go your taxes. The assessor's office is making such a study now. The local farmers have the brains, but where's the organization? Something should be done about it. And don't blame the assessor and his crew. They are merely carrying out the law and doing their job.

Sleep on this! And pleasant dreams!

Last week we noted the thin line of deputies which would stand against any possible violence if it should erupt during AWOC organizing attempts here among pear pickers. And we were thinking either the growers or strikers could be the offenders. However, according to reports from the California lettuce fields it has come from the strikers. Some pear growers read our comments and met with Sheriff Joe Walsh last week. He has sent letters to sheriffs of California counties affected by the AWOC organizing to get their experience and advice. Further plans to prevent any such trouble here are in the making.

When President John F. Kennedy was making his cabinet appointments we wrote to Washington, D.C. for some information of Stewart L. Udall, Tucson, Ariz., and new secretary of the interior. We received the requested biographical sketch by "small mail" last week. Of course the best thing he has done has been to keep Floyd A. Dornay as commissioner of reclamation. People working in the water development field

Garden Tips

By JOHN W. McLOUGHLIN
County Extension Agent
GRAPES

Grapes are pruned during February to hold bleeding to a minimum. The fruit of the grape forms on one year old shoots. Train the Thompson seedless, golden muscat, concord, Niagara and other American types to the trellis system. Place the lower wire 30 to 36 inches above ground and the upper wire 54 to 60 inches above ground. Train the permanent trunk to the upper wire.

Select one or two fruiting shoots at the wire levels from this trunk to train along each side of the plant. This amounts to from four to eight shoots for each plant.

Prune these shoots back to a length of eight or ten buds. An equal amount of shoots are pruned back to two bud spurs at wire level. Train these shoots along the wires as they grow. These shoots will bear next year's fruit. Remove all other growth.

When vines are used in an arbor the same pruning principles are followed but more shoots may be left to establish the desired coverage.

Muscat, Tokay and other California type grapes may be trained to the trellis system or the spur system. In the spur system, select the best ten to 12 canes on the stump and prune back to three buds. Remove all other growth.

GRAPE MILDEW
For control of grape mildew, apply a dormant spray of one quart liquid lime sulfur or one pound dry lime sulfur in three gallons water.

Also, spray or dust with wettable sulfur when new shoots are eight inches long and three more times at two week intervals. Another application should be made Sept. 1.

BERRY SPRAY
Spray should be applied before the end of the month to control the leaf and cane spot disease. This fungus affects trailing blackberries such as loganberry, youngberry, boysenberry, wild dewberry and cultivated selections of trailing blackberries.

This first of two sprays should be applied between November and February. The second spray is applied when the shoots are two inches long. Use one quart of liquid lime sulfur or one-half pound of polysulfide to three gallons of water.

4-H CLUB
Boys and girls interested in participating in this year's 4-H vegetable garden club should register at the county extension office (Spring 3-6211). The particular project this year will be to carry out tomato trials in connection with Oregon State college.

Adults interested in being leaders for such groups are invited to register. For further information contact the county extension office.

Improved Rodent Controls Sought

Studies which may lead to control of rodents—an ever-present national economic and health problem—are under way at the Oregon State college agricultural experiment station.

The study is being carried out by Edward L. Hanson, OSC biologist, under an \$11,237 grant from the U.S. Public Health Service. He is studying habits of Oregon's pesky meadow mice on a ranch near Klamath Falls.

Agriculture in that part of the state was hit especially hard in 1957 when a heavy infestation of mice caused millions of dollars of damage. During peak population cycles, meadow mice can damage a great percentage of crops and range vegetation, as well as carry diseases such as tularemia.

Population levels of many rodents are subject to violent fluctuation, some of which occur regularly. If scientists learn what causes these fluctuations, they can predict, and possibly control them.

Hanson is especially interested in finding what effect density of meadow mice has on their reproduction, mortality and population movements.

His studies of meadow mice also could lead to a better understanding of population changes of other rodent and mammal populations, pointed out R. E. Dimick, head of fish and game management at OSC.

here all know and like Dornay so were jubilant over his re-appointment.

We received a nice letter from the commissioner last month thanking us for our inadequate praise in this column on Jan. 3. "I hope I may continue to carry out the program in such a way that I may justify your continued endorsement," he wrote.

Getting back to Udall—Like the former secretary of agriculture, Ezra Taft Benson, Udall is an active official in the Mormon church. He is also a lawyer, former Congressman, former Air Force aerial gunner and all-conference basketball player.

Appraisal Problem Presented For Figuring

The following is a problem taken from a pamphlet, "101 Rural Appraisal Problems With Suggested Solutions." The pamphlet was published by the American Institute of Real Estate Appraisers. How good an appraiser are you? Check your answers against those in the pamphlet. You are appraising a 100-

acre almond orchard in an area subject to frost which causes intermittent production. Production, however, has averaged 1,000 pounds per year for 10 years. However, the orchard will produce 2,000 pounds in favorable years.

The neighborhood is characterized by soils of similar conditions. There are no improvements on the subject property other than the orchard.

Most of the land in the immediate neighborhood is utilized for growing beans. Production is level at 30 sacks, price on a five year average basis is \$8 per hundred pounds, rents for bean land are 25 per cent of production and typical lesser expenses are \$6 per acre. The capitalization rate is 8 per cent net and the market data approach indicates that bean land of 30 sacks production is selling for \$675 per acre. Average Prices

Five year average prices on almonds are 25 cents per pound and the landlord receives 30 per cent of the crop as rent, net before taxes. Lessor's cash expenses on the orchard are \$8 per acre.

The trees are 20 years and have a remaining economic life of 20 years. From an adjoining orchard area subject to similar hazards it is indicated buyers are interested in an 8 per cent net return.

Based on this information determine what is the highest and best use of the property, the highest and best use of the land, the important appraisal subject involved.

Answer: Highest and best use of the property is an orchard since net return is \$13 more than bare land. To cut down the trees and to convert to bean land would mean a net loss of \$13 per acre.

Most profitable use of land is for utilization as bean land. The principle is one of conformity. Beans at 30 sacks at \$8 per sack would be \$240, rent 25 per cent, \$60; typical expenses \$6, net to land, \$54.

Capitalization rate 8 per cent equals \$675 per acre. The almond orchard production is figured at 1,000 pounds per 25 cents per pound, \$250; rent at 30 per cent, \$75; lessor's expenses, \$8; so net income to land and trees is \$67. By deducting net to land as shown above, \$54. Net to trees is \$13. Capitalization at 13 per cent equals \$100.

Chemical Control Told For Winter Weeds on Farm

Corvallis—Use of chemicals to control weeds on wheat fallow land during winter months is now practical, according to an announcement from the Oregon State college agricultural experiment station.

A chemical called amitrole, applied along with the ester form of 2, 4-D, will give excellent control of most winter-growing weeds, reports Dr. W. R. Furtick, weed control specialist at OSC. The new winter fallow program consists of applying two pounds of 50 per cent amitrole and two pounds of 2, 4-D ester per acre as a spray.

Use of amitrole on wheat fields has now been approved by the U.S. Department of Agriculture if it's applied eight months before wheat is seeded, Furtick said.

Cost of the chemicals used in the new spray program will average about \$6.50 per acre at present prices, Furtick estimated. Cost of application will have to be added to this.

The chemical winter fallow program will eliminate several of the early spring cultivations now needed to control cheat grass, rye, and other weeds and volunteer grains that spring up rapidly in wheat fields after fall rains, Furtick said. At present, these weeds often form dense mats that are difficult to control.

Went Control Summer Weeds
However, the winter program won't control weeds that grow during the summer months, and several tillage operations will still be needed during this time. Other new chemicals, such as atrazine, may solve the summer weed problem in the future, Furtick observed, but several years of research on residue problems are still needed before permission can be obtained from federal authorities for their use.

The new chemical winter fallow program will make stubble mulch farming practical again in many areas, Furtick noted. Many wheat ranchers have had to abandon the soil-conserving stubble mulch system and resort to plowing in order to control winter weeds.

More information on the chemical winter fallow program, along with specific recommendations for individual problems, can be obtained from county extension agents.

OSC Seeks Stop To Granary Mite, Small, but Mighty

Corvallis—Ever wish you could ignore changes in the weather? Not bothered by temperature highs and lows, persistent rain or hot sun? Would you like to get by without eating for a year or two—perhaps wait till times get better?

Humans can't. But during one stage of its life, a tiny mite can. And Dr. G. W. Krantz, entomologist at the Oregon State college agricultural experiment station, is trying to find out how the mite does it.

The answer to this puzzle will help scientists find better ways to control the mite, especially during this highly-resistant period.

Recent research grants received by OSC will enable Krantz to continue studying the small—but mighty—mite. During the past two years, he has received grants totaling \$24,000 from the U.S. Public Health Service.

Krantz currently is doing a series of protein analyses on the various life stages of certain mites. This work will form the basis for future studies to see if the resistant stage could be caused genetically, rather than environmentally, as has long been supposed. Krantz is assisted by Dr. Heinrich F. Holtmann, Munster, Germany, who has a post-doctoral fellowship at OSC.

The highly-resistant (hypopus) stage of the mite is just one phase of the study. During the past year, Krantz perfected a way to rear mites in his laboratory to study their life history, and lay groundwork for future work on the pest-both at OSC and other research centers.

The entomologist has found 65 kinds of mites in grain throughout the Pacific Northwest. Although granary mites are small, they can cause big problems for grain growers, handlers and users. Some mites feed on the whole grain. They eat the kernel so it's no good for seed.

If there are enough of them, mites cause heating in grain. They can spread mold fungi in grain. Some mites are found in livestock and poultry feed. They're a contamination problem in food grains, too, where they're as bad as insects, but are harder to remove because they're smaller. People who work with grain find mites can cause "grocer's itch," much like hives.

Sheep Shearing Schools Slated Across Oregon

Corvallis—Gradual disappearance of old-time commercial sheep shearers is prompting Oregon State college livestock specialists to train a new generation of clipper-wielders to harvest Oregon's \$3 to \$4 million annual wool "crop."

Six two-day schools on shearing will be offered this spring to both adults and youths, announces John Landers, OSC animal husbandry specialist.

Commercial shearers who once worked the great range sheep bands of Oregon are fading out with the shift from large bands to numerous small flocks, Landers explained.

Total volume of wool—nearly 3 million pounds in Oregon last year—is holding its own through the years but it's too scattered to attract commercial shearers. This puts pressure on small flock owners to clip their own.

Schools are scheduled March 20 and 21, 22 and 23, and 24 and 25 at OSC barns, Corvallis; March 29 and 30 at Cave Junction; April 5 and 6 at OSC's branch experiment station at Union; and May 5 and 6 at the Phil Farrell Ranch, Gateway. Dates for a school in Lincoln county will be set later.

Applications are available from county extension agents, high school vocational agriculture instructors, or from Landers. Completed applications should be returned to Landers not later than March 1.

Instruction is open to anyone at least 15 years old or who weighs 150 pounds or more. Each two-day class will be limited to 16 persons. Landers says the school is designed primarily for folks with farm flocks rather than as training for commercial shearers.

Landers and Dean Frischknecht, OSC animal husbandry specialist, will conduct the demonstration classes on shearing, preparation of wool for market, and care of shearing equipment. Each student will shear about 10 sheep during the two days. Equipment will be furnished by the school.

Own or Hire Farm Equipment Aired?

Corvallis—Since most special farm equipment comes high these days, wise farmers—before buying—compare cost of rental or custom work with cost of ownership.

A form has been worked out by Oregon State college agricultural experiment station to help farmers figure which machinery they should own, and which is cheaper to hire.

In some cases, farmers may find it economical to sell machines they already have and make other arrangements for getting the work done, note Emery Castle, OSC agricultural economist, and Frank Conklin, extension farm management specialist. In a Jefferson county study, they found at least one-third of farm operators who owned certain farm machines were over-invested.

A circular which contains the fill-it-out-yourself form is free on request to Oregon residents. Copies are available from local county extension offices or from OSC bulletin clerk, Corvallis. Ask for "Farm Machinery—Own or Hire."

With charts and examples, the circular explains how farmers can figure for themselves whether to buy, rent, share with someone else, or hire the work done.

4-H Club Members Enroll In New Gun Safety Project

Corvallis—A new 4-H gun safety project offers Oregon youngsters experiences more exciting and challenging than those depicted in popular TV westerns.

This is the opinion by Cal Giesler, hunter safety supervisor with the State Game Commission, Andy Landforce, Oregon State college extension wildlife specialist, and 4-H leaders and parents around the state who helped develop the new program.

The 4-H gun safety project objectives are to teach safe use of firearms, prevent hunting accidents, create an inter-

New Tomato Type Released Here By Local Station

By H. H. WHITE
Experiment Station
Superintendent

A new tomato for home gardeners is being released by the Southern Oregon branch experiment station.

It is a selection developed by Dr. A. W. Frazier of the Oregon State college Horticultural department and is known as OSC 395.

It has been included in the local station variety trials for the past three years and has been outstanding each year because of high yield of smooth, dark red, meaty fruits of excellent flavor. The fruits are firm with noticeably smaller seed cavities as compared with most commercial varieties. Vine growth is vigorous but not excessive.

The abundance of leaves and rather compact nature of the growth provides adequate protection of the fruit from sunburn. It has a rather delicate skin hence is not being recommended at this time for commercial use.

Seed supplies are limited and not available to the public. Plants for transplanting in May will be available at local greenhouses and stores selling plants. The Southern Oregon experiment station would appreciate having local home gardeners plant OSC 395 along with their favorite variety and then report their opinion in the fall of 1961.

In the station variety trial last year (1960) OSC 395 yielded 20 per cent more marketable fruits than did Ace, a prominent commercial variety. The fruits averaged a little smaller than Ace but were smoother and more uniform in size. It is an early-maturing variety. In the 1960 Station trial plants were set in the field on June 1 and ripe tomatoes were available by Aug. 15.

Stray Stock Count High in January

Salem—Highest in months is the number of strays reported for January to the state department of agriculture.

Only cattle and horses were lost this month according to report. About 165 animals in all were said to be gone. This included 41 heifers or calves, 20 steers, 88 cows and 16 horses.

Reports of loss came from areas near Lookout Mountain, Harper, Sutherland, Rye valley basin, Rieth, Ontario, Junipers, McNinnville, Willowcreek, Silver Lake and the Umpqua National forest.

OSC Conference Covers Wide Field

By KEITH HOCKERSMITH
Grange Cooperative

A wide range of subjects, from beef feeding to poultry feeding, to Food Drug Administration regulations was covered during the recent Animal Industry conference in Oregon State college.

Keith Hockersmith and Carl Hoover, both of the Grange Co-op here attended the session.

Dr. James H. Meyer of the University of California, discussed forage evaluation. He suggested that alfalfa be cut at 10 per cent bloom or less to get a crop low in lignin and higher in digestibility. He thinks it is better to produce forage low in lignin than to try to use lignin in overmature plants. One trial indicated that 1,800 pounds of overmature hay was required to get 100 pounds gain while it took 1,440 pounds of hay cut at tenth bloom to get the same amount of gain.

Dr. J. E. Oldfield, Oregon State college, talked of the work done with selenium in relation to white muscle disease and other livestock problems.

Egg Shells Discussed
Dr. George Arscott, of Oregon State college, indicated that environment, disease load, rate of production, strain

and brooding of birds, body size and nutrition have an effect on egg shell thickness. He said he could get no response from Vitamin C added in the ration.

Dr. H. M. Scott, of the University of Illinois, talked about amino acids in poultry rations. This is not a new field but a different approach to the protein level in rations.

Several members of the staff at Oregon State college gave research briefs emphasizing some of the work being done at the college.

Dr. W. E. Babcock reported on Coccidiosis (9) immunization with the hope that under proper supervision this could be of great value to the poultry industry.

J. R. Haag discussed copper deficiency in range cattle which is a problem in some areas but the prevention is not a matter of giving quantities of copper since this can be a toxic material, he said. Treatment should be restricted to areas of demonstrated need.

Discusses Swine
L. M. Larsen presented a paper on Barley Improvement for swine. Barley is a high fiber grain that can be improved physically by pelletizing, however, there is no chemical change.

Dr. H. S. Wilgus, the Ray Ewing company, Pasadena, Calif., talked to the feed dealers concerning the Food and Drug Administration regulations covering the various additives used in the feed industry. There is considerable confusion and misunderstanding presently but the situation seems to be clearing.

Care and supervision by the feed manufacturer is needed, but the whole thing is not hopeless.

S. E. Knapp, Oregon State college, reported on parasite problems in livestock feeding. Some of the parasite problems can be handled easiest if the farmer understands the life cycle of the parasite and attempts to control it when it is most vulnerable. The various parasite problems should be identified and appropriate action taken against them.

Progressiveness Featured
The 4-H gun safety project fosters "progressive" education, notes Cal Monroe, acting state 4-H extension leader. Youths advance at their own rate and ability to various stages of the project. Beginners, 11 year olds, study and practice to become "4-H Safe Shooters." Their first requirement is to pass the Oregon hunter safety training course offered by the State Game Commission. During the two years this training has been offered, 6,300 youngsters have completed this course. Not one has been involved in a gun accident, Giesler reports.

Chemicals Boost Farm Earnings In This State

Salem—At least \$15 million was added to Oregon's farm economy last year through the use of agricultural chemicals, the state department of agriculture said today.

The department based its figure on the first statewide survey of its 253 licensed spray chemical applicators, 130 of whom submitted replies for a 51.4 per cent return.

The 130 applicators estimated grower benefits from sprays applied on more than one-half million acres at \$8 million. S. R. Kelso, herbicide control supervisor for the department, says he believes the returns represent close to half the total picture. He places the overall state benefits at the \$15 million figure.

The benefits stem from the use of herbicides (chemical weed killers) and other sprays used to control plant pests and diseases. The value to crop production was split fairly evenly between weed and other controls.

The added value to crops is after the costs of spraying were deducted. On the 130 returns, payment to applicators was \$964,728.71 which leads Kelso to conclude a conservative figure statewide for costs to growers is \$1.5 million or one-tenth of the total benefits.

The 130 applicators said they sprayed 401,882 acres for weed control at an average cost of \$1.79 an acre and 99,336 acres for pest and disease control at an average cost of \$2.47. Roughly three-fifths of the weed control was on grain lands.

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