

Klamath Basin Outlook Good For Spud Planting During Year, Says Agent

By WALT JENDRZEJEWSKI

Four primary factors are influencing potato grower decisions in the Klamath Basin this year. As usual a few are soured on spuds. But production of good quality potatoes has usually managed to net a few nickels. The basin spud crop grossed over \$8,500,000 last year. Advent of spring tends to mellow soured dispositions. It is expected that most growers will plant up to acreage allotments despite shortage of good quality seed and despite short fertilizer supplies. The four factors are, land, allotments, seed and fertilizer. A fifth factor is financing. If all costs included, an acre of potatoes represents an investment of from \$250 to \$400 by the time Great Northern or Southern Pacific start wheeling out the production.

Apparently not very many growers will over-plant allotments because government price support is to be denied in such cases. Notice of final potato acreage allotment has finally been settled at 13,443 acres. As things look now about that acreage will be planted next year. Perhaps an additional 9000 acres will be grown in the Tulelake section of Blakely and Modoc counties.

According to best records available in the county agent's office basin potato acreage was 24,500 in 1946, 28,098 in 1945, 25,900 in 1944, 24,200 in 1943 and 16,510 in 1942.

In pre-war years basin acreage figures show 17,215 acres in 1941, 19,500 in 1940, 18,890 in 1939, 20,038 in 1938, 20,559 in 1937 and less than 15,000 acres for any previous year. In 1939 potato acreage was 5742 acres.

Cost figures worked out by Klamath growers indicate that last year No. 1's and 2's could be put on cars for \$1.30 per cwt. in cases of 300 sacks per acre total yield of good quality potatoes. Lower yields of poorer quality ran costs up to over \$2.00 in some cases. In 1935 300 sack yields resulted in f.o.b. costs of 70¢ per cwt.

Land Ready
Land has to be ready for potatoes if they are to be grown profitably. In general, the well drained, well leveled sandy type soils in which fertility has been maintained produce the better yields of quality spuds which result in greatest profits.

In 1946 land of this kind rented for \$100 per acre. Reports this year indicate that such lands are renting considerably lower. In 1940 quite a lot of such land cash rented for \$25. Share crop rents ordinarily

bring land owners one-fourth of the crop. Fertilizer is practically a must. Fertilizer trials on six Klamath farms in 1946 show increases ranging from 50 to 180 sacks per acre. Trials in 1938 showed approximately the same increases.

The six 1946 trials show that a complete fertilizer including potash can be profitably used on many farms in preference to the cheaper 16-20 which is the standard fertilizer in this area. Complete fertilizers out-yielded 16-20 in all 1946 trials except one.

Complete fertilizers which showed up well were Klamath Special (10-16-8) 10-10-5 and 13-16-8. The latter was a home mix of 16-20 and potassium sulfate. It did not have a uniform texture and would be difficult to use on a large scale.

Rates of application vary. Usually growers apply fertilizer to furnish 50 to 90 pounds of nitrogen per acre on second year land. This requires 300 to 600 lbs. of 16-20 or 500 to 900 pounds of 10-16-8 or 10-10-5. Application rates are lower when spuds follow clover or alfalfa. Application of 16-20 on such lands rarely exceeds 300 lbs. while 10-16-8 or 10-10-5 are applied at 500 lbs. or less.

Fertilizer Use
There is considerable information to indicate that best use of fertilizer can be made by applying part at planting time and the balance of the application later as a side dressing. More experimental work must be carried in respect to this before definite recommendations can be made. One mistake made in side dressing is damage to young plants by application of fertilizer too close to the plants. Apparently the side dressing application can be well out from the hill.

A 230 sack yield of potatoes draws on the soil to the amount of 143 lbs. of nitrogen, 26 pounds of P2O5 (phosphoric acid), and 222 lbs. of K2O (potash). Twenty per cent of this is used in the first 60 days after planting. About 60 per cent is used in the next 30 days.

By June 30 potatoes planted May 10 will have used about 20 per cent of the total nutrients used during the season. During the month of July 60 per cent of the total use will occur. During July tuber initiation occurs. In the period 10 days prior to tuber initiation and 20 days following the heaviest rate of nutrient absorption occurs.

All this would seem to indicate that if side dressing is planned, it should be done before July 1. In any case not later than 30 days after planting and about 10 days before tubers start forming.

200,000 Sacks of Seed
Around 200,000 sacks of seed are needed to plant the county allotment this year. The county produced around 80,000 sacks of reasonably good certified seed. Some of it is better than reasonably good. Your guess is as good as anyone's in regard to what will be used to fill the remaining need of 120,000 sacks.

Of 800 acres of russets entered for certification in 1946, about 350 came through with less than 3 per cent leafroll. The planting stock was quite good. Most of it was Montana seed. But leafroll spread ran up to 14 per cent in some lots. Can you guess what happened in ordinary commercial fields? Brother, it doesn't mean a thing that

seed is one year away from certification if that is all that is known about it.

Experience has shown that the last minute scramble for seed gets a lot of junk planted which in a lot of cases turns out to be pretty hard to look at while it is growing and very often furnishes material for the weak side of a poor argument with the inspector while it is being loaded for market.

Some people still think net necrosis is a happenstance. But Maine has had a bulletin on leafroll for years. Our pathologists get leafroll every time when they plant "browned" spuds. A hundred or so plants now showing leafroll in the Klamath Experiment Station green house came up from seed pieces cut from locally grown spuds which showed "browning". Why try to kid yourself?

Spud Shipping Season Wanes
The potato shipping season of 1946-47 is rapidly drawing to a close. To date approximately 30 cars remain to be diverted for livestock feed making the total of such diversion for the year somewhat above 1250 cars. A few commercial lots are still on hand but the next few days should see them pretty well cleaned out. While shipment totals for the season are not available, it is believed that the total will be somewhat less than last year. It is interesting to note that while the dumping of potatoes was general throughout many potato districts of the United States, very few were dumped in the Klamath basin. The few lots that were dumped were deteriorating pretty badly due to wet rot, making dumping absolutely necessary. No potatoes have been accepted for dumping by the county committee unless deterioration was pretty severe.

Salem Consolidation Moves Started
SALEM, April 17 (AP)—The Salem city council made its first move toward consolidation of Salem and West Salem last night when a committee was appointed to consult with West Salem officials.

The consolidation was made possible by the recent legislature, which passed an enabling act. Salem is in Marion county, while West Salem is across the Willamette river in Polk county.

Mayor R. L. Elfrstrom also appointed the council as a committee to study whether the city should adopt a business and occupation tax.

The commissioner of internal revenue has decided that the first \$1500 of pay received for drills, flight, and other training duty by members of the naval reserve may be excluded from gross income for tax purposes.

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Weekly News Events
Noticed a lot of Klamath Falls people at the annual meeting. We like that! The board of directors is holding the next meeting at the Willard Hotel the 19th. Like that also! Means good eats. (Should rate a cup of coffee for that plug.) The board is planning on better service for Klamath Falls. That's good for the entire basin. Every day someone asks, "Do you like this part of the country?" Yes, this is a great country! Great people, and a grand group of business men... and a future for everyone! Far beyond everything we might expect. We will be an ardent booster for the Klamath Basin.

CO-OP
Watch for this News Service Column Each Thursday.
Homer M. Smith, Gen. Manager

Klamath Basin Cooperative

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Herald and News FARM PAGE

Basin Spud Acreage Drops; Big Wheat Crop Looked For

Prospective national potato acreage in 1947 totals 2,309,000 acres as compared with 2,624,700 acres in 1946, according to information brought out at a state USDA council meeting in the county agent's office last week-end.

While the Klamath basin potato acreage seems to be considerably decreased from last year, prospective planting in the western states in general is 81 per cent of 1946.

Entomologist To Visit Here

TULELAKE, April 17—A. W. Larson, entomologist for the Pacific Guano company will be at the Tulelake Machinery company Thursday and Friday to confer with farmers on the infestation of lygus bugs that has developed in this area. The infestation has been found to be heavy and Larson will make a survey of fields.

The bug, a sucking insect, similar to thrips wintered here can be controlled by dusting either from the air or by ground machinery. Larson will give details of control. The insect attacks flower heads at the time the flowers are pollinated and this injury prevents seeds from developing.

Larson plans to return in May and an announcement will be made through the columns of this newspaper on the date of his second visit.

Machine Shop To Open In Tulelake

TULELAKE, April 17—The Tulelake Machinery company announces opening of a machine shop, blacksmith shop and repair garage in the building adjacent to the company headquarters, with J. D. "Doug" Walden in charge.

Walden has been with the Harris Machine shop at Merrill for 19 months. He will have several assistants and is prepared to do all types of repair work with no job being too large or too small.

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Seed Plane Cracks Up

TULELAKE, April 17—H. C. Bergman, flying a rebuilt navy trainer plane for the Interstate Commercial Flying company, Davis, who is one of two pilots spreading sulphate ammonia fertilizer for the Winema Farms, pancaked his plane Monday afternoon on sand dunes near the Lava Beds and escaped without a scratch.

The plane, carrying 800 pounds of fertilizer, developed engine trouble and Bergman was forced to land. The plane came to rest upright after making several long jumps through sage brush and mesquite, without serious damage.

Spreading fertilizer by plane is an experiment here this year that is proving successful and 5200 acres of grain land that will be seeded later in the month is being prepared in this way. The land that will be seeded to barley is being disked with tractors pulling three 14-foot drills following the plane operations. Night and day operations will require a 12-day period to complete preparation of the ground.

The planes fly 30 feet above ground while dusting and fertilizer is spread through a propeller duster. Seeding will begin about April 20. Winema Farms are operated by Lee Dixon, Steve Takacs and Lewis Kandra.

FOR SALE

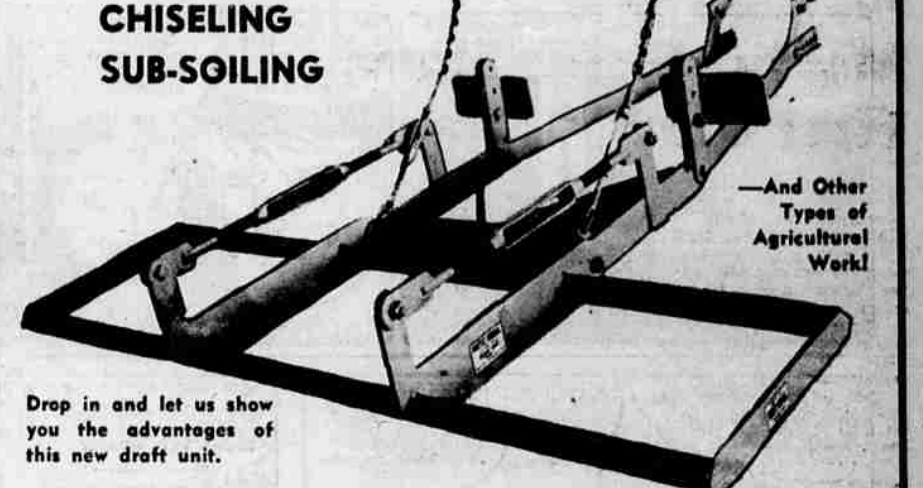
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