

March Spud Stocks Down Over 1947—South Suffers Damage To Early Crops

Government March 1 potato stocks report, issued this week, puts total merchantable holdings at 60.9 million bushels. This is 15.3 million or about 20 per cent under last year but just slightly larger than the March 1, 1946 stocks. Most of these are in the 18 late surplus states (58.5 million) and 45 per cent (26.4 million) are held in Maine. Most nearly comparable stocks figure of recent years was in 1946, from the not-very-large 1945 late crop. Then, however, Maine held only 18.8 million bushels or 30 per cent of the 62.7 million bushel stocks in the 18 surplus states. In addition stocks elsewhere that year were more evenly distributed over the country. This year, picking out areas geographically and comparing with two years ago, we have in the East 31.4 million and 54 per cent against 22.6 million and 36 per cent; in the Midwest, 14.9 million and 26 per cent against 16.5 million and 29 per cent; and in the West, 11.9 million and 20 per cent against 18.6 million and 32 per cent. There is the pattern and it spells continued strong markets in the West unless growers hold too long, as it continued heavy buying by DOA in Maine.

Early crop prospects have been dampened by much—very much—water in Southeastern Gulf area. Damage in Alabama, Mississippi and Louisiana probably is considerable but as yet cannot be measured accurately. Crops farther north mostly are delayed, but seed rotting and poor stands may yet develop. This is not a prediction—merely a possibility. California prospects are about unchanged unless the recent cold snap caused trouble, which we doubt. Digging should get under way by April 1 and reach enough volume to count by April 10. Dragged-out planting period in much of the south will mean lower peak marketings but more overlapping. Heavy rains may cause leaching of fertilizer and smaller sizes unless side-dressed with additional fertilizer.

Movement
Based on this week's stocks estimates, February total disappearance was very good. In January, stocks declined by 28.1 million bushels, but in February, a shorter month, the decline was 29.4 million. With shipments in the first two weeks in March 8.5 per cent ahead of the first half of February, and using this figure as a measure of all sales, disappearance in March should be around 32 million bushels. That would leave about 29 million to market in April and May which is less than enough even if evenly distributed. Total shipments turned to 5991 cars the last week in February. The first week in March saw a sharp decline to 5016 cars, but last week recovered part of the loss by climbing to 5679. In examining shipment figures, we have to remember that Idaho has been holding back, and that the Red River valley has been bothered continually with snow and cold.

Demand and Markets
Markets have shown no life during the past two weeks. Maine reports a slow demand, a dull and weakening market, and prices off a nickel to a dime at support level to a dime under floor. Upstate New York reports slow and mostly dull with some weakness, and prices down about 15 cents at 20 to 25 cents under the floor. North Dakota ruled mostly very slow and dull, with a wide range in prices averaging 10 to 15 cents over the floor for Reds, and 10 to 20 cents under floor for Cobblers. Colorado ruled slow and mostly steady, with prices unchanged at 90 cents over the floor. Idaho reports slow and mostly dull with some unsettled feeling, and prices about unchanged basically, but higher on account of larger sizes at \$1.80 over the floor for

washed stock. Washington closed this reporting season with sales at \$2.00 to \$2.05 over the floor for washed offerings for very few sales. Michigan ruled about unchanged with the demand light and the market about steady, with prices up a nickel on Hurons.

Terminals report only routine trading. Only even slightly interesting point is that there are some signs of strength for new stock in some markets, but no really aggressive pressure even on these. Old stock is mostly dull, with a flicker of strength in Detroit and Philadelphia. Arrivals and trackholdings both tapered off slightly from the previous week.

More on Price Support

DOA announcement of March 1 needs some interpretation. DOA may make additional statements later, but we'll try to clear up some points without waiting. Growers are not compelled, as some think, to make ALL sales to DOA or give contracting dealers. That requirement means only LOW grades—U. S. two's, B-size, and culls—and field run. Since field-run is what most growers have to sell, it will tend to channel more to contracting dealers than otherwise. DOA itself will not be in the market for field-run except under exceptional circumstances. A grower with his own grading equipment could sell grades of stuff above the minimum in commercial channels, but would still have to go to DOA or contracting dealers with the bottom grades. Incidentally, DOA will not be taking culls except in a field-run mixture, and will not pay for them because they are not eligible for support. Exceptions to this general rule are that DOA may give growers specific permission to sell the low grades and culls in certain outlets—manufacture into starch, flour, alcohol; for livestock feed; and for export. Growers will have to decide whether they want to operate under this set-up and be eligible, or do as they please and be ineligible.

Miscellany

Purchases by DOA now amount to 21.1 million bushels from the 1947 crop, and are continuing at a fairly rapid rate, mostly in the East. The 1948 crop already has furnished 5 surplus cars. . . . Rumor has it that DOA is considering a few more shipments for Europe with no trouble in getting additional export orders. DOA men say under no circumstances will they deliberately risk the criticism heaped on them when dumping got out of hand in 1946-47. So they take a star at a time. . . . More than 3.8 million bushels of 1947 surplus have gone into commercial export trade. This is in addition to the heavy government movement to Europe and except for a little to China and India has been to South America. Cut-price sales of Red River valley stock in West coast markets created a furor for awhile last week, with strong objections from western producing areas. We have heard of no objections from consumers. Actually, we doubt if many cars have rolled under the plan because of continued bad weather in the Red River valley. There really is not

Consignors Approve Show Poster



Approving the poster for the Aberdeen Angus show and sale slated for April 18 and 19, are two of the consignors, Gerald West and C. V. Barton, Klamath basin Angus breeders. Charles and Alvin Cheyne, Angus breeders of Spring Lake are also local consignors for the event. Jim Ellings, assistant county agent, shown with the two men, is assisting with the show.

Spud Seed Improvement Needed Here

Need for potato seed improvement locally is basin growers is never so apparent as at this time of year, the county agent's office advises. A 1948 planting of perhaps 20,000 acres cleans up a 350 acre supply of good local certified seed and as much outside as there is reason to guess might be suitable.

The production from over 1000 acres of good certified seed could be used for this year's commercial planting.

A thousand to 1500 acres annually should be planted for certification. It is for such plantings that the demand for top quality seed exists. Prospective certified seed growers are never content with the best available seed.

Producers of certified seed here are largely increase rather than improvers. Rounding of seed fields is a practice that decreases spread of virus diseases but in most cases this practice does not maintain seed quality. The crop turns out from a little to a lot worse than the seed used. Ordinarily, there is no improvement.

enough time to do a lot of business, since it obviously will stop when California gets under way with its harvest.

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tion for 34 years, he made it world-famous, left it owning 45,000 acres, 100 buildings and Two Million Dollars endowment. "Up From Slavery" his most famous book. Died: Tuskegee, Ala., Nov. 14, 1915

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Wheat Problems To Be Talked

PENDLETON, Ore., March 25 (AP)—Wheat problems will be discussed here April 1 with Northwest cereal chemists, millers and wheat producers by Dr. G. E. Hilbert, director of the U. S. department of agriculture's regional research laboratory at Peoria, Ill.

Administrator E. J. Bell of the Oregon wheat commission said Dr. Hilbert will stop in Pendleton en route to the western regional research laboratory at Albany, Calif.

He will meet with millers, chemists, members of the Eastern Oregon Wheat League executive board and other representative wheat farmers that night.

Dr. Hilbert is expected to discuss the application of research at the Peoria Laboratory to Northwest wheat problems, Bell said.

Highest temperature recorded for the western Sahara desert is 132.8 degrees Fahrenheit, according to the Encyclopedia Britannica.

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Spruce Budworms Infest 62,000 Acres Of Idaho's Umatilla Forest Timber

PENDLETON, Ore., March 25 (AP)—Infestation of some 370,000 acres of timber in and adjacent to the Umatilla national forest by spruce budworm was reported today by Umatilla Supervisor Carl Ewing.

Most serious damage by the budworm anywhere in the Northwest has occurred in 62,000 acres of valuable timber near Dale on the Umatilla forest in the Meadows creek-reservation creek area. Largest infested area is 160,000 acres in the Hopper ranger district extending from Swale creek west to the Spray-Hopper highway, Ewing reported.

A small area of heavy infestation along U. S. highway 395 at Battle Mountain state park attracted considerable attention last year. Contamination of this attack may result in the death of many trees, according to forest insect laboratory entomologists. About 67,000 acres in the vicinity of the Umatilla river headwaters and the Phillips and Willow creek drainages also are infested, he said.

The budworm, a pale green caterpillar about half an inch long, eats the needle buds of fir, pine, spruce and other trees when they begin to swell in the spring. This stops the tree from "breathing." The tree dies if most of its needles are destroyed.

The worm later changes into a small moth with mottled brown wings.

A majority of trees attacked in the infested areas have been fir, Ewing said. Some trees already have been killed and the infestation was believed to have reached a critical stage.

No means have been found to control the budworm and all that can be done is to wait developments and initiate salvage logging operations if the need arises, Ewing explained.

At the same time, he reported that Tussock moth control methods had proven highly effective.

An outbreak of the Douglas fir Tussock moth was discovered in 1946 in the national forest near Troy, Ore. An aerial survey disclosed 67,000 acres of merchantable timber in that area were infested. Planes sprayed 14,000 acres with DDT. Results were nearly perfect, Ewing reported.

Late last year a polyhedral virus disease and parasites came to the rescue and helped kill the Tussock moth in major areas of infestation. However, the moths laid many eggs last fall and some damage from the pests is expected again this year. However, entomologists believe the moth outbreak is declining naturally and that no artificial controls will be necessary this year.

Ranchers Demand Cattle Inspection

LA GRANDE, March 25 (AP)—The Union County Livestock association wants dourly-suffering California cattle rigorously inspected for disease before they are allowed on Oregon's lush pastures.

The association's executive committee suggested that such precaution should be taken to prevent spread of anthrax and other deadly diseases.

About 150 head of California cattle are in the county. They were purchased by a North Powder stockman. About 700 head more will be brought to Union and Wallawa counties, purchased by ranchers.

Unknown Author, But He Knows What He Wants

Who's got a sheep? Dear Mr. Sheep Company: I have your literature concerning your sheep company and I am quite interested, inasmuch as I am thinking I would like to get a sheep and go into the sheep industry this summer. I wonder if you would have any sample sheep you give away.

Even a small one would be all right as I have to keep it in my office until I can get some pasture for it, where I can put it out and have it pastured.

I would like a nice medium weight, all-wool sheep in stripes if you have them—one I can skin and make a Pendleton jacket out of later on. When you skin a sheep once, is that the end of it or can they be skinned regularly like a human being? I have an old sheepskin in my office I have been living off of for 27 years, and I thought if I had a whole sheep I might do better.

And another thing, don't send me a U sheep because they have signs on the chest here that say you can't make a U turn and I couldn't get one to the office very well if I couldn't make it turn.—Author unknown.

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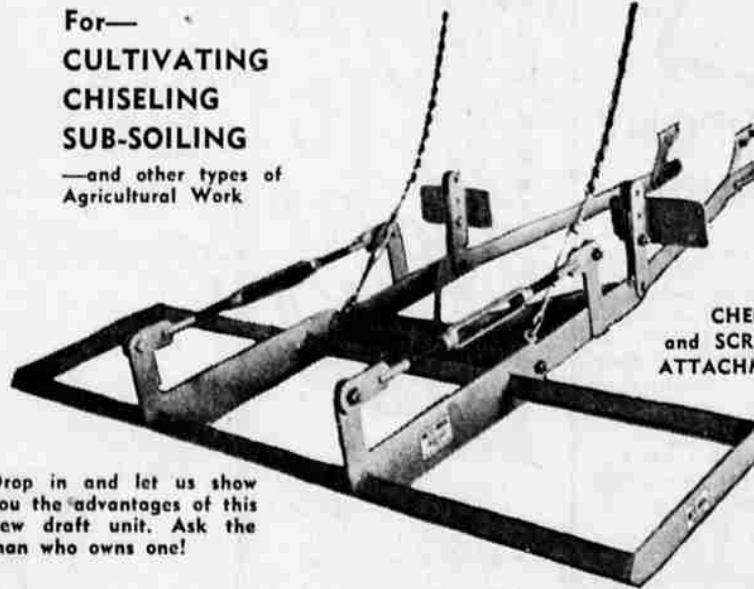
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