

Herald and News FARM NEWS

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National Potato Letter

Canada, US Spud Estimates Show Big Surplus Crop

By A. L. FITZSIMMONDS
Maine potato crop gossip is still highly variable but indicate now that the crop there has not been underestimated. Much Maine storage space appears empty and close observers concede that the crop has been figured about right or even a little over actual production.

Canada must be figured along with Maine. Canada's potato surplus, about 12 to 16 million bushels, all exportable, is mostly in the Maritime area. This is right at Maine's back door with easy access by water to Maine's normal markets.

Even when Canadian quotas are filled probably in early December, and duties return to the 75-cent level, the rise in our support prices will make our markets attractive. There appears to be no chance for a repeat on last year's special bilateral agreement to control the importation of Canadian potatoes. In Idaho, fears that the already short crop had been cut further by freezing weather when considerable acreage remained to be harvested, have proven groundless. The snow gave adequate protection and warm dry weather allowed digging to be finished with no more than slight losses.

Practically all consuming areas now are relying mainly on shipped-in stock, now that homegrown supplies have declined to a mere trickle.

An official department of agriculture announcement on the 1950 potato acreage plans is expected soon. Announcement of the acreage goal likely will give some idea as to support plans for the 1950 crop even though the new law is so "fuzzy" in some respects that its requirements are not yet fully clarified.

Reports
On the Kern county (California early crop) situation are conflicting. One group there held a meeting recently, voting by a narrow margin to not ask for a new vote on the proposed marketing agreement. Another and different group met last week, voting just the opposite. We do not know which group really represents grower sentiment, or if either does. It appears assured, however, that a new vote is unlikely without new hearing.

As the California situation stands at this time, California growers will not be entitled to support on their 1950 early crop. At the same time, the department of agriculture will support potatoes in other areas during the marketing season for the California early crop. If so, this buying in other areas would fully support the California crop even though that crop is not legally eligible for direct support.

Only way so far devised to avoid supporting the California harvest would be, (1) for the Commodity Credit corporation to permit potato markets to seek their own levels, (2) and then make subsidy payments to shippers who have paid the full support price to eligible growers in eligible areas. So far, the department of agriculture will not admit that it has given this plan any consideration.

Maine has been considering raising the marketing regulation to last year's 2 1/2 to 4-inch standard. Apparently now such change will be made for the present despite recent

news reports stating that the regulation would be put into effect this month.

Department of agriculture is winning convictions against violators of the diversion programs in wide-separated areas from Idaho to Wisconsin, with a recent indictment in Maine. Department of agriculture officials say they are not particularly eager to send anybody to jail but they will insist on clean programs. The programs have been bad enough without the additional stigma of unpunished violations.

Colorado has been having potato inspection trouble because of insufficient revenue to carry on the work at the present \$5.00 per-car rate. Plans are in the making to keep the service operating with all the sections of the fruit and vegetable industry cooperating to find ways and means. Loss of the Colorado service would be a serious setback for traders and make operation of support and agreement programs practically impossible.

The national potato council will hold its annual meeting in late November. The session likely will put much emphasis on legislative matters. It will provide the opportunity for a display of real leadership. If local and regional differences can be compromised this action can go a long way toward unifying an industry in which disunity has been its biggest drawback.

Compliments to the Red River valley for its marketing clinic. The subject matter presented was timely and important. The "Valley" shows no disposition to wait for the results of new research. Instead it has found a place to begin and has started on its task.

Potato parity went down again in October, losing one cent to \$1.75 per-bushel. National average price received dropped to \$1.30, or 74 per cent of parity. This percentage should rise with seasonal increases in support prices.

Unverified rumors report that some Canadian shippers are packing fancy large certified seed in 15-pound bags for export to the United



THANKSGIVING DINNERS BY THE HUNDREDS—Roy Miller, left, and Stan Soran examine part of the Thanksgiving turkey crop which is being killed and prepared for market this week. Miller is raising the birds on the Modoc turkey farm and Soran is dressing them at the Klamath Poultry Farms.

States. Planters do not specify large seed or consumer bags. Such packaging of so called Canadian seed potatoes would be a rank imposition on our support program, and the taxpayers who foot the bill for it. Department of agriculture price support purchases to date are only 98 million bushels, about 17 per cent as much tonnage as had been bought for price support this time last year.

In New York City, wholesale prices of Idaho recently have shown a premium over local supplies of \$2.00 per hundred weight.

This premium is more than some sections are receiving for their potatoes.

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Dinner Menu

For Tender, Juicy Turkey Try These Tips Next Time

Cook your Thanksgiving turkey by ear. If fat sputters or drippings burn, the oven is too hot.

That is a timely Thanksgiving cooking reminder from an OSG extension nutrition specialist, Miss Agnes Kolshorn, who adds that long cooking in a comparatively low oven—300 to 325 degrees—will lend added flavor to the bird.

Cook the turkey in a shallow, uncovered pan without adding water, the specialist suggests. Place it on a rack breast down, and turn it from one side to the other on the hour. To finish cooking, turn the turkey breast up for the final 20 minutes or so. When the joints move easily under slight pressure, or a pinch of flesh feels soft, the bird is ready for carving.

Error
A common turkey cooking error, the specialist points out is cooking the fowl breast up. This method causes the juices to filter down out of the white meat causing this favorite portion of the bird to become dry and without flavor.

Slow cooking gives more servings. In Chicago the premium has been about \$1.70 over local round whites, and \$1.25 over Reds. The amended California-Oregon potato marketing agreement and order became effective November 7.

Los Angeles Once Had Penguins

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Penguin-like birds which could not fly swam around the Los Angeles area 3,000,000 years ago, says Dr. Loye Miller of the University of Los Angeles. Enough fossil remains have been found to give a good picture of the Los Angeles penguins. Today, the only wild penguins are in the Antarctic.

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Grass Seeds Move Fast

The movement of six important legume and grass seeds from farms in Oregon has been faster this year than usual, the crop reporting service of the department of agriculture reports. The movement of all except bromegrass has been faster than last year.

Prices received by growers on October 15, for these seeds except Sudan grass, were higher than usual. Timothy and bromegrass prices were the highest on record. Prices for alfalfa, red clover, and Sudan grass were lower this year than last.

BEST OF ALL WORLDS

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