

County Agent Reports ON Klamath Agriculture

By C. A. HENDERSON — Klamath County Agent

May agricultural situation of the USDA shows a majority of agricultural products selling at prices considerably below parity. Of 26 major commodities listed, six are above and 20 are below parity. The six above are: cotton, potatoes, sweet potatoes, beef cattle, lambs and veal. Four of these six are important commodities in the Klamath Basin. Other major commodities here below parity are butterfat, market milk, barley, wheat, oats, rye, chickens, eggs, and hogs.

It is interesting to note that early potatoes have dropped back close to the former price ceilings. Following the removal of ceilings, potato prices immediately shot up \$2.00 or better. As soon as the market stabilized they dropped back nearly to the price ceiling level. This happened in the face of a short early potato crop.

Potatoes were frozen back in the recent frost throughout the entire Klamath Basin. On late planted potatoes the damage will not be severe, but on the early planted potatoes considerable loss in yield may be expected. As far as the greater part of the crop, however, was planted quite late this year.

It is generally felt that a part of the potato acreage this year was planted to a lower quality of seed potatoes. This may result in considerably more diseases in their fields and some increase in leaf roll and consequent browning may occur. Rotting of tubers and petting of leaf roll plants undoubtedly will help reproduce the quantity of browning in those fields. These plants can be recognized as they are rather small round appearing with a tendency for the leaves to curl upwards. The safest plan is to pull out all small abnormal plants. It is these plants grown from seed affected by leaf roll that cause the late season spread of leaf roll in the plants and consequent browning in the tubers which results in low yields and extremely difficult grading. In some cases it is almost impossible to grade out a sufficient number of these affected tubers in order to have the potatoes make a profit. Severely grading, which is costly, may be necessary.

At this time it looks as though Alsike clover has been rather severely hurt by last year's frost. An excellent early season set of blooms had developed and it is believed that practically all of these blooms were ruined. The early set of Alsike blooms usually will contain around 20 per cent of the season's seed crop.

Land values continue to rise in the majority of the states. The greatest increases are in the Great Plains and Southwestern States. In the Western States grain was limited to certain outstanding farming areas. Rising farm costs have tended to hold down prices and the requirements of greater capital to buy and equip a farm are also a factor in slowing up farm purchases. It is particularly hard at this time for young men who wish to go to farming to buy and equip a farm. Economists report a tightening on the farm mortgage situation with more farm borrowing. The average farm price is now estimated to be between \$17 and \$18 thousand dollars per farm.

It looks at this time as though the cropland acreage in the Klamath Basin shows the following changes: Barley about the same as last year, oats up slightly, wheat about the same, and rye somewhat less. Alfalfa acreage apparently has dropped about 10 per cent from the extremely high acreage last year totaling more than 24,000 acres. Alsike clover is up slightly and the potato increase would seem to be around 20 per cent. There is constant increase in pasture seed. A consequent increase in livestock is in prospect. Total cattle numbers in Klamath county were estimated at 71,000 head as of January 1, an increase of around 4 per cent over the previous year.

It now appears that farmers' net income in 1952 will be somewhat near the \$14.9 billion realized last year. Gross income is still high but may be leveling off as lower average prices tend to offset the increased output. Production costs, on the other hand, have continued to rise, though at a slower rate than last year. Decline in the net from a year ago is not likely to exceed a half billion dollars.

According to our National economists production of beef will exceed a year earlier. Lamb and mutton will show a small gain, and the pork output is expected to drop slightly.

The feed supply for livestock is

OPS-USDA Conspiracy Reported

The American Farm Bureau Federation, in its June 9 edition of the News Letter, reported the Office of Price Stabilization and the United States Department of Agriculture conspired to cut farm prices.

The paper quoted Ben. George Aiken, Vermont, in a speech May 29, in which he charged the conspiracy.

"OPS officials admit," Aiken said, "they are violating the law. They admit they were doing it with full knowledge, consent and approval of the Secretary of Agriculture."

Aiken chose the soy bean as an example, and charged the ceiling there did the following:

"First, it forces prices down to the farmers, and consequently forces income down.

"Secondly, by fixing a ceiling price on soybean oil at twice what it was selling for on the market every encouragement is given to manufacturers . . . of products using the oil . . . to raise their prices to the consumer.

"Lastly, by fixing the selling prices . . . which can be received by . . . producers . . . at a little below the support price fixed by the secretary of agriculture, they are sure that with that condition prevailing the government will be the sole owner of the soybean crop."

"I wish I did not have to point out these things," he continued. "They are all a part of a pattern these days, to scare the daylight out of the farmer with the threat of low prices, and scare the consumer with the threat of high prices so that they will accept all kinds of government domination as a result of their fears. It is a wicked thing to do. But that is what is being done today. I have pointed out a few instances," he said, referring to earlier testimony "using the memoranda of government officials to show what they are up to."

Herald and News FARM NEWS



Lane Farm Harvest Set

EUGENE (AP) — Lane County's cherry harvest is expected to be in full swing next week, Carl Robertson, field representative for the Eugene Fruit Growers Assn., reported Monday.

He said the cannery is now receiving some cherries for processing—mostly the long-stemmed Waterhouse variety used for bringing. Some Royal Anna are coming in also.

Although rains have caused some fruit to split, Robertson said prospects are seen for an excellent crop this year—probably double of last year when an early freeze destroyed many blossoms.

The crop is expected to attract hundreds of students, housewives and other local residents to the job of harvesting the fruit, along with help from migrant laborers.

The local FGA cannery expects a pack of around 15,000 tons. Somewhere around that tonnage will also be sold by Lane growers to canneries in other Oregon cities.

Many wage earners and self-employed individuals became insured and eligible for old-age insurance benefits starting the second quarter of this year, according to J. D. Gayley of the Klamath Falls Social Security field office.

Weevil, Lygus Bugs Set Battle in Clover Fields

Klamath alsike clover plantings have taken enough of a beating from frost, weather and other conditions so far this season, and farmers don't want any insects in their losing things up further.

Two types of insects are ready for eradication from local fields right now, according to the County Agent's office—the clover seed weevil and the lygus bug.

Earlier this year the clover root weevil was hit in most fields in this area.

The seed weevil is a small weevil about a thirty-second of an inch in length. Adults "sting" the seed, and hatch eggs within them. Then the larvae begin eating out the seed and destroy it.

At present, according to County Agent J. D. Vertrees, adults are quite numerous in the county's clover fields. He says dusting is normally timed when approximately 10 per cent of the blossoms are turning brown.

However, Vertrees suggests timing the weevil dusting this time with the lygus bug control, which in turn are proven damagers of alsike and alsike clover.

Lygus are plant bugs about a half inch long familiar to most farmers in this area. Since they fly quite readily, they migrate back and forth between fields, consequently setting lead for control timing.

As alfalfa is cut to hay the bugs migrate into the clover fields. Insecticide applications should be timed to coincide with the hay-cutting.

DDT dust for the control of both these insects should be applied within the next two weeks, Vertrees says, and preferably on a sunny day when they will be active. A

rainy spell may hold up that activity.

Vertrees prescribes: DDT dust, either 10 per cent at 20 pounds per acre or five per cent at 40 pounds for effective control. Dust either with or without sulphur is effective, he says. However, sulphur may give added protection during the growth season from mildew which sometimes builds up in harmful amounts in our irrigated clover fields.

Timing is important, Vertrees reiterated, and growers shouldn't take too long to dust—preferably within the next two weeks.

Weeds Face Eradication

TULELAKE—The Modoc County Agricultural Commissioner's office will spray the roadsides of the state and county roads on the Modoc side of the Tulelake basin to control five hooked Bassia and Kochia, according to Bill Whitaker, District Agriculture Inspector of Modoc County.

Whitaker says he will not spray the roads in front of homes for fear of damaging trees and shrubs and asks farmers to chop or kill the weeds in the ditches and borrow pits in front of their homes.

These two weeds are becoming very serious pests in the Tulelake basin and Farm Advisor Ken Baggett mentions that they should be controlled now to prevent seed from scattering in the fields. Baggett says many farmers have had difficulty in harvest barley due to heavy infestations of Kochia and five-hooked Bassia. The plants are easily killed with 2, 4-D in the fields and can be controlled on ditchbanks and roadways with Pentas and oil or 2,4-D.

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SCD Meet Thursday

CHILOQUIN—Thursday night at 8 (PST) farmers from throughout Northern Klamath County are expected to participate in a hearing at the city hall here to determine whether to hold an election for the establishment of an extension of the Poe Valley Soil Conservation District boundaries.

The hearing will also set boundaries, all of them within or on those boundaries already advertised. Proposed inclusion would add some 2,000,000 acres to the approximately 200,000 acres presently included in the Poe Valley SCD.

State conservation policies are placing emphasis on hearings since election rules have been relaxed. Soil conservation men report.

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