

Onions for Dehydration Harvested



600 SACKS PER ACRE of onions were gathered off this Tulelake field this season. One of the big minor crops, onions are shipped south to dehydrating plants, and the demand this season has been fairly heavy. Irvin Long, one of the instigators of onions for dehydration here, surveys the field he is supervising on the John B. Bone place.



ONIONS by the hundreds of pounds go across the grading machine, much in the fashion of potatoes. Standing back right are Bill Huse, Tulelake agriculture commissioner's office, and Dick Owens, inspector. Across the grader are Bone and his son Lloyd. Woman in foreground punches "ticket" for onion picker to show he has dumped a load.

BY BILL HUSE

Foreseeing the need for crop diversification in the Klamath basin Irvin Long, Tulelake, some 10 years ago planted an experimental plot of dehydrating onions which has developed into an important row crop being grown successfully in the Klamath Basin.

The crop, estimated at about 600 acres this year will return approximately \$450,000 to the basin.

The crop is usually contracted for prior to planting by two large dehydrating companies located at Vacaville and Gilroy, Calif. Southport White Globe is the variety planted, the seed being furnished by the companies.

About three pounds of seed is planted upon prepared beds, with planting usually completed during the middle of April and the crop harvested about the middle of September.

Long notes that only the uncertainty of harvest labor and the short growing season limits the acreage grown in the basin, but that the dehydrating companies are well pleased with onions grown here, inasmuch as they yield about 20 per cent more of the finished product as compared to dehydrating onions grown elsewhere.

Klamath basin onions reach the dehydrators at a time when their supplies from other areas are about depleted.

Long has had yields of as high as twelve hundred fifty-pound sacks per acre and being able to market from 95 to 98 per cent of the crop as the cut-out is negligible in that the dehydrating companies will ac-

cept everything except scullions and take the crop direct from the field eliminating the necessity of storing.

All grading operations are carried out in the field, the half sacks or stubs being dumped upon a slow moving grader on which rides the sorting and sacking crew. Harvesting costs — including topping, grading and loading—run in the neighborhood of 38 cents per sack.

Long has done considerable experimental work upon this crop regarding weed control, fertilization, planting and harvesting but as yet has not solved the fertilization problem as to the proper amount, kind and time of application.

He has also had great success with a Southport White Globe hybrid which develops a larger bulb and matures slightly earlier than the regular strain. However hybrid

seed is extremely difficult to obtain and it is not likely that it will replace the parent strain until a source of seed is established. It is reported that the entire hybrid seed crop was a failure this year and it is not likely that any hybrid seed will be available for next year's crop.

About twenty basin farmers are involved in this year's 600 acres of dehydrating onions.

While friendly Irvin Long is a busy man he is never too busy

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Postal Regs On Seed In

A new interpretation of postal regulations covering shipments of seed samples to the OSC seed laboratory prohibits writing directions for testing on the package if fourth class postage rates are claimed, the laboratory has been notified.

Written statements, words or initials giving instruction to the laboratory as to the type of seed test desired makes the package first class mailing material, postal officials have ruled. First class rates are considerably higher than fourth.

To meet the needs of seed growers and others for an easy, convenient mailing label that qualifies for minimum fourth class postage, the laboratory has printed a supply of special labels. These labels require a 3-cent stamp to cover the information that can be filled in on the blanks provided and then takes the regular fourth class postage covering the seed sample.

Available from all county agent offices, the labels have space for writing in the return address, kind of seed, lot number, and type of test desired.

to take time out to aid and advise a novice grower.

He says that anyone new to the game should consider seriously the advantages and disadvantages of growing this specialized rowcrop, stating that even the best growers are sometimes whipped by adverse conditions which results in some plantings being plowed up here this year.

Irvin is not adverse to growing a few potatoes when things look right and is growing a crop of White Rose seed and commercial Gems in addition to his onion acreage. He also holds the dubious distinction of plowing up a field of rutabagas a few years back due to poor prices.

Incidentally, Irvin can skin a muskrat in less time than it takes you to read this sentence.

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Burnett Retained In PMA

Returns on the Klamath county PMA committee election held in County PMA Office, Sept. 25, 1952, show that William Burnett of Bottama was elected chairman, Sam E. Egan of Henley, vice-chairman; and Grant Brown of Fort Klamath, member.

Earl Wilson of Malin and Oscar Capellen of Sprague River were elected alternates.

All of the committeemen are farmers.

They will take office as of today, and will be responsible for the county administration of the Agricultural Conservation Program, price support activities, Federal Crop Insurance and other activities which may be assigned.

In the coming year, they will arrange for the training of community committeemen and have responsibility for approval of conservation practices carried out on Klamath County farms.

COMMUNISTS SEIZE BOATS

TOKYO (AP)—Communist China is even worse than Russia in seizing and keeping Japanese fishing boats the Fisheries Board says. The board reports that the Russians have seized 35 boats since Japan became independent in April but returned 33. The Chinese Communists in that time seized seven and kept them all.

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