A STOCKPILE OF SPUDS. "Woody" Gueck is a confirmed believer in the excellence of cull potatoes as fodder for cattle and can cite many examples of exceptional gains. The scene above shows only a small section of his operation out at Scott McKendree's feedlot on the east side of Stukel Mountain. Cattle on a potato ration have been known to consume as much as 100 pounds per head per day and make a daily gain of three pounds per animal.

Potatoes As A Livestock Feed Prove To Be Highly Efficient

Klamath County is in an extremely favorable position in that we raise large numbers of cattle on our unsurpassed pastures and ranges which need only to be finished to produce excellent beef, while we also grow tons of potatoes which are unsuitable for market consumption. This combination to fatten stock in feedlots on a ration based principally upon cull potatoes and at the same time potato growers have a ready market for their undersize and reject spuds.

Feeding potatoes is a relatively new idea in this country, but is a time honored practice in most of the northern European countries where as much as 40 to 50 per cent of the annual potato crop is fed to livestock. Several methods have been tested by local stockmen and results have proven conclusively that potatoes will produce the cheapest gains of any fodder combinations available.

ECONOMICAL ROUGHAGE

By gradually introducing potatoes into the ration cattle may be brought up to a daily consumption with such economical roughage as barley straw and a small amount of protein supplement the feeders have been known to exceed a three pound per head per day gain at a minimum expense. On such a ration choice beef will be produced in a feeding span of from 180 to 200 days. Some cattlemen found that the addition of a protein supplement was an unjustified expense and did not increase the rate of gain sufficiently to warrent it's inclusion in the ration, but tests conducted at OSC's Ontario Experiment station indicate the worth of added protein.

The National Potato Council urges growers to keep their inferior spuds at home and either feed them out themselves or sell them to local feeders. In this way a greater consumption of market potatoes will be encouraged because only the best tubers will be offered to the consumers. "Sell the best and feed the rest," is their slogan.

This would appear to be an extremely sound practice and will benefit both the potato grower and cattleman.

FEEDING

There are several methods of feeding potatoes to cattle, but so far the simplest has proven to be the most practical: stockpiling. Local operators have found that by dumping the spuds and fencing them so that the stock cannot disrupt the pile, but can get at them free choice, maximum consumption is encouraged. Problems involving bloating or choking may be overcome in a number of ways. By feeding a small amount of ensilage, say four or five pounds per head per day, one feeder found that the incidence of bloat was almost completely eliminated. Chopping the potatoes has proven to be impractical as it not only entailed too much labor, but reduced the palatibility as well.

Care in introducing the culls into the ration, a reasonable degree of watchfulness while the cattle are on feed and a constant supply of roughage such as oat or barley straw seem to be the answers to a successful and economical ration.

CULL POTATOES

Cull potatoes can be used very successfully as ensilage. Experiments show that a mixture of 80 per cent spuds and 20 per cent hay, or even straw, has a value equal to good quality corn silage. The easiest way to handle such silage is in a trench silo which can be easily set up so that the cattle can eat their way into it thereby eliminating handling. Tests run at the Colorado Experiment Station showed that potato ensilage kept very well in such a silo, indeed, it proved to have even greater food value in the second year than it did the first.

Putting potatoes in silos would certainly comply with all of the present government diversion program regulations. Dairymen have found potato silage to be an excellent fodder and more and more of them are switchover to it, as are beef feeders.

One operator reported that he spread cull potatoes on his pasture in the fall, allowed them to freeze and dehydrate over the winter, and in the spring turned his stock in on them. The carbohydrates from the potatoes balanced by the protein in the grass made a complete feed and good gains were secured. This system saves labor and allows for the quick disposal of culls from the packing shed.

For further information regarding cull potatoes as a stock feed contact your county agent's office in the post office building.

Next Week

The Herald and News Magazine Section of Klamath Basin Living for next week will be devoted to the increasingly popular pastime of square dancing. Watch for this issue and learn the history of square dancing as well as the opportunities available to residents of the Klamath Basin to take part in the activities of various local clubs devoted to dancing.

Different Forms Readily Available

New and old processing methods make potatoes available to us the year around in many different forms. While you can always buy raw potatoes in the stores to prepare as you wish, you can also find on your grocer's shelves a wide variety of processed spuds ready to eat.

Besides potato chips there are canned new potatoes, dehydrated, frozen and pre-peeled raw potatoes as well. The latter are popular with institutions and hotels where large quantities are used each day.

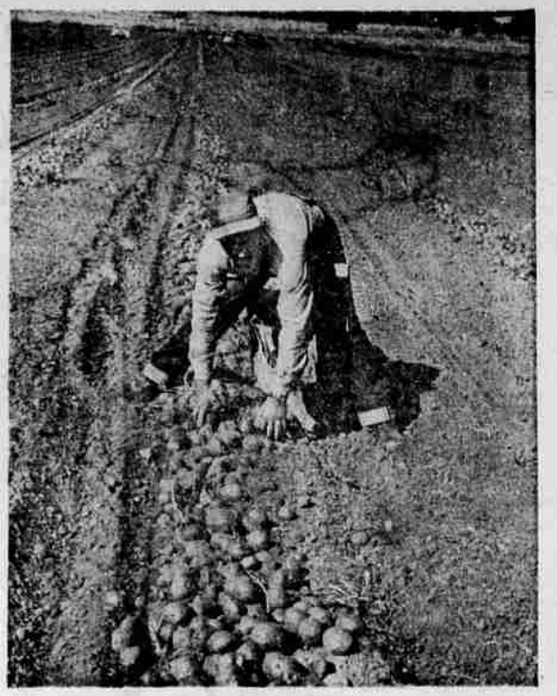
Frozen french fried potatoes have gained rapidly in consumer use because they only require a brief step in their final preparation. Canned fried shoestring potatoes, ready to eat, are handy for picnics and parties. Powdered potatoes have become a regular part of the modern baby's diet. You can also buy excellent ready-made potato salad.

For centuries the potato has been an important factor in the human diet, but never before has it been so readily obtainable in such a number of different forms.

Report Made On Animal Diseases

More than 200 cases of infectious keratitis are listed in the current summary of reportable diseases compiled by Dr. K. J. Peterson state veterinarian with the Oregon Department fo Agriculture. This report covers July findings of veterinarians throughout the state.

Lungworms, infectious icterohemoglorinuria and hog cholera each caused five livestock deaths.



GET OUT THE LINIMENT. There is still plenty of back breaking labor involved in harvesting potatoes in spite of the fact that in recent years more and more of the work has been taken over by machinery. Above, Dale Wallin is shown picking up uncovered Pontiac potatoes at the ends of the rows so that the combine in the background can make its turn when it finishes each row and starts down the next one.

Commission Warns About Contractors

Ben Davidson, administrator of the Oregon Potato Commission issued a statement this week warning potato growers to be sure and have a clear understanding of their legal position in regard to their relationship and responsibilities to their help.

In recent years, the Oregon potato industry has had so-called "labor contractors" come into the production districts to harvest the crops. This labor contractor, according to our Oregon State Statutes of the Bureau of Labor, is not what is generally conceived to be a labor contractor. It is merely a contract between a certain individual who has manpower and equipment to harvest potatoes, and the producer. In any event, the producer has no assurance that the so-called contractor will pay off the crews that are actually engaged in doing the work. Therefore, the producer or grower is liable under existing Oregon State Statutes if these harvest hands are not paid. For example, a grower could enter into an agreement with a harvest contractor, have his crop harvested and stored, and should the contractor abscond with the funds paid by the grower, the grower would then be liable for a labor lien by the harvest hands, causing him to pay twice for the labor involved, Davidson said.

There is no method, at present, by which the grower can be legally protected as there is no requirement for bonding the contractor. It is thought that perhaps a statute should be written covering such practices requiring that the so-called contractor be bonded. It behooves all potato growers to obtain a written agreement with any harvest contractor.

The Oregon Potato Commission has been studying this matter for some time. Contracts have been made with the Oregon Bureau of Labor and the Oregon Employment Service in regard to this matter, according to Davidson.

Anyone interested in this program is requested to write to the Oregon Potato Commission at 1057 S. Commercial Street, Salem, Oregon, making their request known.

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