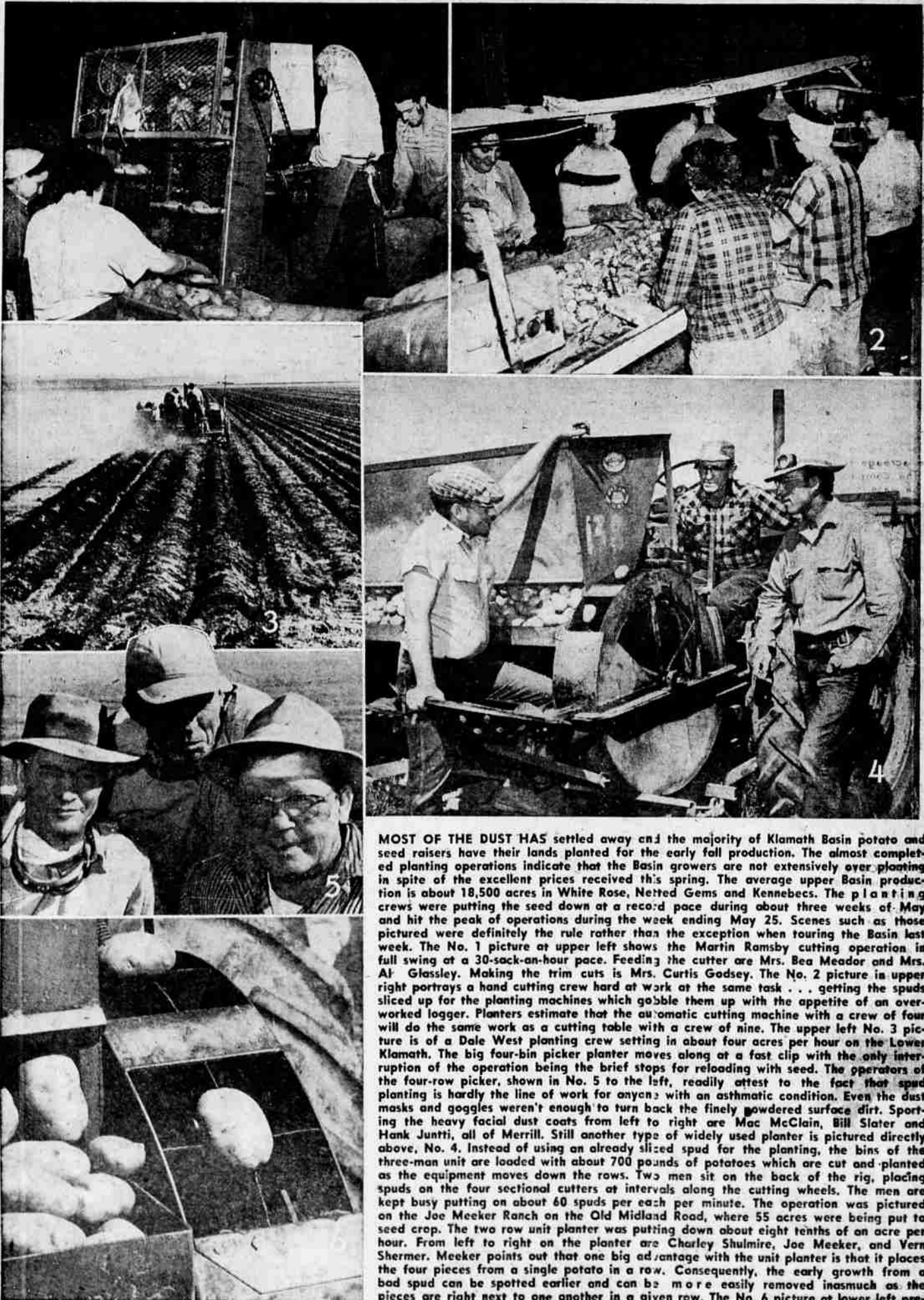


Bulk Of Basin's Spud Planting Completed



MOST OF THE DUST HAS settled away and the majority of Klamath Basin potato and seed raisers have their lands planted for the early fall production. The almost completed planting operations indicate that the Basin growers are not extensively over-planting in spite of the excellent prices received this spring. The average upper Basin production is about 18,500 acres in White Rose, Netted Gems and Kennebecs. The planting crews were putting the seed down at a record pace during about three weeks of May and hit the peak of operations during the week ending May 25. Scenes such as those pictured were definitely the rule rather than the exception when touring the Basin last week. The No. 1 picture at upper left shows the Martin Ramsby cutting operation in full swing at a 30-sack-an-hour pace. Feeding the cutter are Mrs. Bea Meador and Mrs. Al Glassley. Making the trim cuts is Mrs. Curtis Godsey. The No. 2 picture in upper right portrays a hand cutting crew hard at work at the same task . . . getting the spuds sliced up for the planting machines which gobble them up with the appetite of an over-worked logger. Planters estimate that the automatic cutting machine with a crew of four will do the same work as a cutting table with a crew of nine. The upper left No. 3 picture is of a Dale West planting crew setting in about four acres per hour on the Lower Klamath. The big four-bin picker planter moves along at a fast clip with the only interruption of the operation being the brief stops for reloading with seed. The operators of the four-row picker, shown in No. 5 to the left, readily attest to the fact that spud planting is hardly the line of work for anyone with an asthmatic condition. Even the dust masks and goggles weren't enough to turn back the finely powdered surface dirt. Sporting the heavy facial dust coats from left to right are Mac McClain, Bill Slater and Hank Juntti, all of Merrill. Still another type of widely used planter is pictured directly above, No. 4. Instead of using an already sliced spud for the planting, the bins of the three-man unit are loaded with about 700 pounds of potatoes which are cut and planted as the equipment moves down the rows. Two men sit on the back of the rig, placing spuds on the four sectional cutters at intervals along the cutting wheels. The men are kept busy putting on about 60 spuds per each per minute. The operation was pictured on the Joe Meeker Ranch on the Old Midland Road, where 55 acres were being put to seed crop. The two row unit planter was putting down about eight tenths of an acre per hour. From left to right on the planter are Charley Shulmire, Joe Meeker, and Vern Shermer. Meeker points out that one big advantage with the unit planter is that it places the four pieces from a single potato in a row. Consequently, the early growth from a bad spud can be spotted earlier and can be more easily removed inasmuch as the pieces are right next to one another in a given row. The No. 6 picture at lower left presents a close up of one of the cutting wheel; on the two row unit planter. The spud is cut as it passes over the uppermost position of the wheel and then falls into a chute from which it is planted.

—All Photos by Kettler