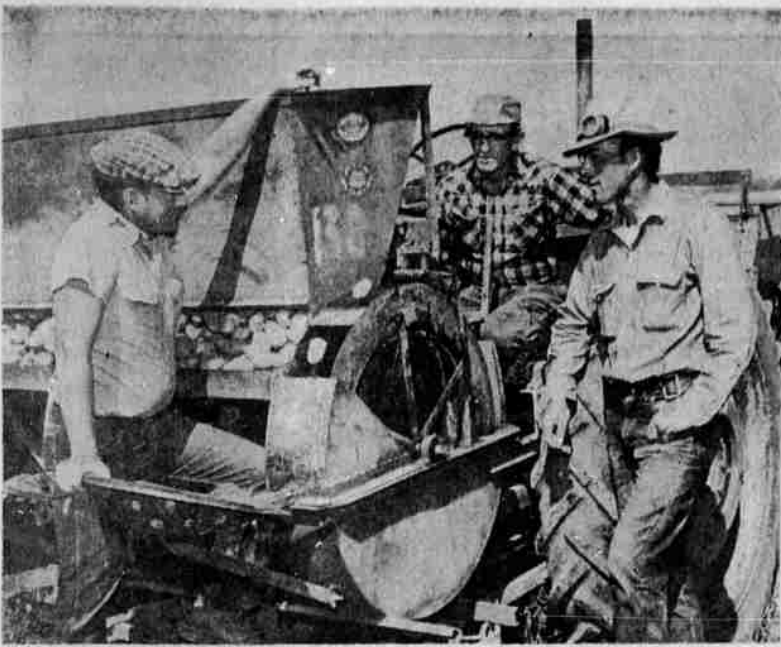




JOE MEEKER, left, discusses the new Scott Warren potato planter with his crew. The tuber unit planter was used on the Meeker ranch soon after the machine was first developed. Seed potato producers like the feature of planting all pieces from one tuber in consecutive order. Disease spread can be easily checked when coming from one seed tuber.

Survey Sees Machinery For Future Harvesting

Oregon's potatoes will be harvested more and more by local labor (rather than migrant) and by mechanized equipment, according to a survey completed in January by the Oregon State Department of Employment, Division of Research and Statistics. The survey, showing the potato harvest picture through 1963, is entitled "Survey of Manpower Effects of Use of Potato Harvesting Equipment."

As result of a questionnaire mailed to potato farmers in the three major Oregon potato harvest areas, the answers show both acreage and production of potatoes will be increased by 1961 and even more by 1963, according to present estimates taken by the survey in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Labor.

In the Central Oregon area production of potatoes in hundredweight increased from 1,400,000 to 1,412,000. At the same time, total employment of workers in potato harvest increased by 100 from 1,100 to 1,200, 1960 over 1959. It is estimated by a machine seller in this area that it is 50 per cent cheaper to harvest potatoes

by machine than by hand.

In the East Central (Ontario) area, the survey shows that production increased from 365,000 hundredweight in 1959 to 1,500,000 in 1960. In this area total workers decreased from 1,150 to 860 largely due to machine use.

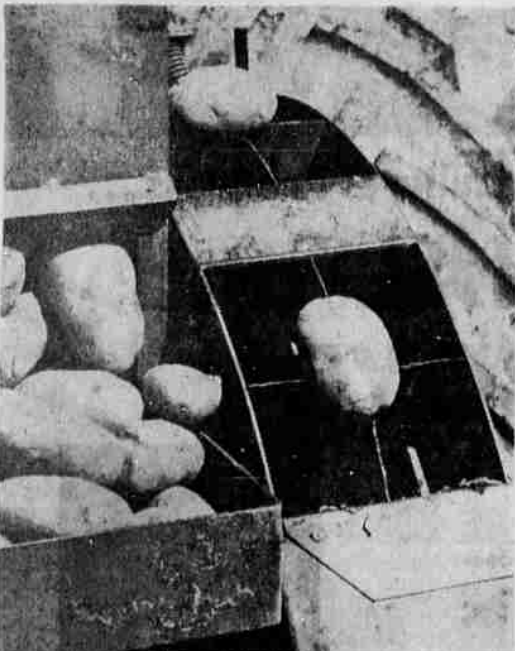
One grower in the area estimated his labor costs by machine were \$350 for 25 acres. He felt that, including gas, oil, and maintenance, his costs represented a 50 per cent reduction.

In the Ontario area also, the sugar beet is the most stable crop, the survey found. The demand for workers in this crop precedes the demand for potatoes, and since the need for workers in sugar beets and other crops also follows the potato crop, mechanization is not expected to change the present demand for migrant labor in other than the potato crop in the Ontario area.

In the Klamath Basin potato area, the survey showed production of machine-harvested potatoes dropped from 1,960,000 hundredweight in 1959 to 1,606,265 in 1960 and total workers from 1,000 to 588. In this area, the survey brings out the apparent fact that the use of mechanized equipment as far as acreage is concerned has reached an optimum. Approximately 90 per cent of the crop is now being harvested by machine.

By 1963, it is estimated that 11,000 acres of potatoes will be harvested by 800 persons as against 7,142 acres in 1960 harvested by 700 workers in the Ontario area. In the Klamath Basin, 7,500 acres are expected to be harvested by 1963 by 600 persons, a small 30-acre increase from the 1960 harvest completed by 588 workers. And in the Central Oregon area, 24,700 acres are estimated for 1963 to be worked by 1,000 as compared to 19,812 acres in 1960 using 1,200 workers.

In all areas, the survey brought out the fact that employment of potato harvest workers will continue to be on a more local basis. This is because of the more skilled nature of the machine harvest work. Migrant workers in potato harvest will continue to decrease because machine harvest jobs are more attractive to local workers. The result, as the survey points out, is a decrease in recruitment and housing problems for migratory workers.



SCOTT WARREN of Algoma developed the new tuber unit potato planter shown in operation here. This machine cuts seed potatoes in four pieces, dips them in disease protectant, and plants the seed pieces in consecutive order. Seed potato producers can check disease as plants grow from pieces of seed stock planted as one unit.

SEED POTATOES are cut into seed pieces by hand before planting. Most commercial fields use seed cut in cellars prior to planting. Some use new machines developed for this purpose. Cut seed pieces travel into disinfectant vats where they are given disease protectant before being planted.

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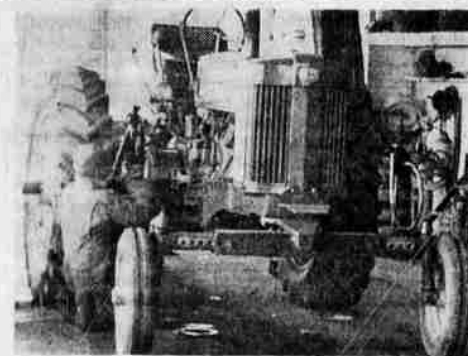


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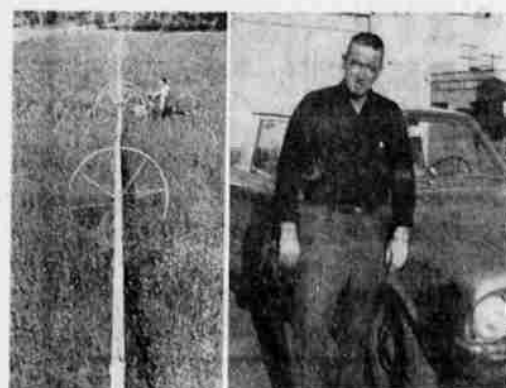
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DON POTTER EMPLOYEES: Top row, left to right, Jim Whetham, service; Chet Stonecypher, parts dept.; Wex Wallis, parts dept.; Jim Barrett, irrigation specialist; T. J. White, service; Harold Gattis, parts dept.; Elmer Frisvold, service; Bottom row, left to right, Dolores Vallier, bookkeeper; Herb Kurre, sales; Bill Doig, service; Art Borth, service; Rex Martins, service; Bill Burgess, Sales Mgr.; Muriel Smith, office, not shown.



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