

Agriculture and Husbandry

Grape Dreams

Thirty odd years ago one Secondo Guasti, Italian immigrant, came to the vast expanse of Cucamonga desert. Other people had come before him, saw only the hot sanded waste. But not Signor Guasti. Where the others had seen desert, he saw miles of vineyards, grape-haden plants, and in the midst of it all, a prosperous town. For he had examined the soil, knew it was productive. And persisting in the face of scoffing, sneering from those who knew it all associates, many another hardship, Guasti made his start, planted his first few vines.

Today in the once barren wasteland of Cucamonga lies the exact fulfillment of Secondo Guasti's dream, just as he visioned it years back. But Secondo Guasti lived only to see his dream come true; now his son, Secondo Guasti, Jr., holds the reins of this world's largest vineyard.

A few years advanced the Guasti family became increasingly prosperous. Wine makers took from them great quantities of grapes. Other markets, too, bought grapes from the Guasti family.

(1918) halted the great markets for wine grapes, made the Guastis stop to ponder the situation. But not dimmed yet were old Secondo's visionary powers. He again looked ahead, saw future markets for choking wines, medicinal wine tonics, wine flavors for household use, "grape concentrate," government bonded liquors, other legitimate markets. And in the utilization of these new outlets, Guasti's vineyards have grown to be world famous.

Even the hulls and stems of the squeezed grapes are now utilized, made into fertilizer, turned back into the soil. And in the finding of these new outlets, Guasti's vineyard has prospered, because the world's largest. Five thousand acres in area, the vineyard is composed of 2,000,000 individual vines. At harvest time, many a special arrangement must be made to pick and ship the grapes from so large an area. Unique among transportation methods is a narrow gauge track on which a small steam engine operates. The tiny track is portable and is moved about, laid near where the pickers happen to be at work. The Southern Pacific Santa Fe and Union Pacific all run spur tracks to Guasti.

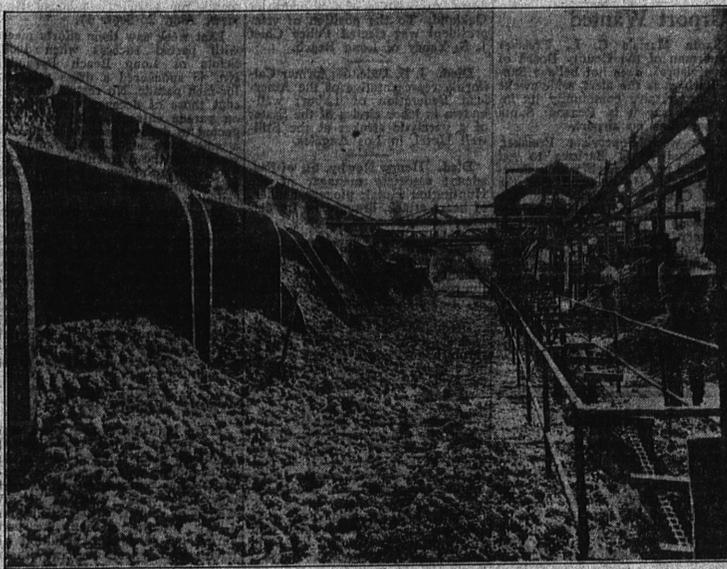
The town of Guasti itself is an enduring monument to old Secondo and his grapes. Out of grapes and wine has come a modern four-room schoolhouse, an attractive stone church, a railroad station, a store, and big stone buildings where products of the ranch are stored. Hundreds of families live in contentment and security at Guasti, live off the product of the vine.

Interesting at Guasti are the phases of the grape industry usually unknown to the uninitiated. The labeling of jelly jars requires a large force of men, a cooper is required to make oak barrels for wine, a mill turns out log boxes for shipping purposes, a garage is kept busy repairing machinery, bunk houses and boarding houses are maintained for unmarried men, comfortable homes for families. For the many "criticisms" centers a Mexican village has been built, giving the Mexicans home surroundings, making for contentment among them.

In all, Guasti and its grapes form one of California's most important agricultural (Cinturón) centers. It is a triumph to Italian-American methods, perseverance. And even though prohibition of alcoholic wines caused many another grape grower to give up, Guasti only worked the harder, brought out new methods, saw new markets, succeeded.

Three Yolks

Strange happenings make more interesting the daily humdrum of a sometimes ordinary existence. Lately a five-month-old hen made a few hours of life interesting for Mrs. James T. Tolbert of Reseda. Many were the hens in Mrs. Tolbert's chicken house. Many too were the eggs they laid. But no hen nor



UNLOADING WINE GRAPES AT GUASTI'S

... from a barren desert Secondo Guasti made millions.

egg was as famous as a little five-month-old pullet which daily pecked the littered earth of the coop.

In her nest of hay the pullet labored and laid an egg six and three quarter inches in circumference (the short way) and over eight inches (the long way). Many an experienced hen would have surveyed such a product with great pride, gazed over her companions. Size was not the only virtue either to the mammoth egg. In keeping with its great bulk it contained three yolks. If all eggs were of this sort, great would be the boon to hurried restaurant cooks, chefs,

Picker Thieves

Bold have been many thefts in the history of thievery, but none more daring than the recent wholesale theft of an entire ten-acre crop of Valencia oranges from a Fullerton grower.

Lester S. W. Smith, president of the First National Trust and Savings Bank of Fullerton, watched the growth of the oranges in his well-tended grove. He watched the buds turn to blossoms, the blossoms to oranges. Then he prepared for the picking, his own picking, and of a tidy financial return. Soon he would have his association strip the trees, market the fruit. Later he had gone to look over the yield, saw no oranges.

Amazed at first, Smith concluded that his association had already picked the fruit. He phoned the association officials, learned that no fruit had been picked by them, learned later that thieves had picked, packed, stolen all the ripe oranges on his ten-acre grove, 2000 boxes of them.

In righteous wrath, victim Smith called the police who discovered tracks of men, of a heavy delivery truck which had made many trips in and out of the grove. The trees had been carefully picked, off-bloom fruit had been meticulously overlooked, left hanging. Smith estimated the loss at \$5000. The theft was among the largest in citrus history.

Farm Succor

To bring Federal aid and succor to needy U. S. farmers was one of President Hoover's campaign promises. Cautious, careful, the Engineer-President first decided to diagnose the farmers' problems before prescribing relief. To probe agricultural ills and to suggest a remedy, he appointed a Federal Farm Board.

Because of the keen interest they

had evidenced in California's agricultural problems, President Hoover named as members of his board Santa Paula's C. C. Tengue, experienced in fruit and nut co-operatives; Los Angeles' George Farland, a lawyer with an "abiding interest in American agriculture." (See News Review, August 19-25).

Last week, President Hoover's Federal Farm Board had been on the job for two months. Since its organization on July 15, members of the board had spent long and arduous hours investigating the difficulties confronting the farmer, determining what methods might best be used in coming to his permanent aid.

Work Done. During these two months, the board listened to the production and marketing problems of some 50 farm delegations who sought the board's assistance. Hearings were given to representatives of the Farmers' Terminal Grain Commission agencies, the wheat pools, and the farmers' elevators in producing states. To become acquainted with the problems of each commodity, the Farm Board hearkened to growers of wheat, cotton, rice, beans, fruit, vegetables, wool, raisins, and fresh grapes.

Money was advanced to Florida's citrus fruit co-operatives to combat the Mediterranean fly; to California's grape growers to tide them over the crisis resulting from the low prices, caused by overproduction. (See News Review, Sept. 2-8).

Work Outlined. Chief among the aims of Chairman Alexander Legge and his colleagues is the creation of an efficient farmer-owned and farmer-controlled marketing system. This would provide the producer with an increased net farm income, keeping prices to consumers unchanged.

Under way is the organization of a national grain sales agency, to be known as the Farmers' National Grain Corporation. Elimination of the middleman is one method of bringing about permanent succor, the board believes. Thus the board members are working on this middleman-eliminating grain agency. Once it is functioning effectively, similar corporations will handle wool, cotton, other forms of products.

Emergency relief measures are receiving comparatively scant attention at the hands of the board, which is intent on outlining plans for sounder cultivation and marketing in the future. The present unstable foundations of agriculture are being analyzed preparatory to the erection of a firmer framework.

Capitulation. Vice-chairman James C. Stone last week capitulated the Federal Farm Board's objectives, epitomized them as follows:

(1) Existing co-operatives are to be strengthened and enlarged through assistance in the development of sound managerial and financial policies;

(2) Merchandising economies are to be effected by the co-operation of co-operatives in various commodity groups;

(3) Growers in unorganized areas are to be assisted to develop sound plans and procedure for cooperative organizations;

(4) Better business relationships are to be developed, with manufacturers, mills, processors, other users of farm commodities; and

(5) An effective educational program is co-operative marketing is to be developed, assisting both the farmer-producer and the city-consumer.

Onions

From two ranches near San Jacinto, one at Lakeview, another at Ferris, one R. H. Diddleton, "onion king of San Jacinto Valley, expects to harvest 40,000 sacks of onions. Of this output, 7000 sacks have already been sold to a Phoenix, Ariz., wholesale house.

Strawberries

Strawberries, in the vicinity of Atascadero, have proved a successful product. One H. A. Halstead started a strawberry bed a year ago with 5000 plants. Now, after a year of progress he has 11,000 growing plants. During the peak of the season he picks 100 baskets per day and finds a ready market for all his produce.

Many experiments have brought to his gardens numerous varieties consisting of Banners, Carolinas, Tutties, Mastodons, Magoons and New Orleans. Favored by Halstead are the New Orleans, Banners, as well as adapted to the conditions prevailing around Atascadero.

Ramona's Wells

Fears concerning a lacking water supply at Ramona were dispelled lately when new wells increased the available water by 50 per cent. Consequently farmers there are free to enlarge their acreage of citrus, bulbs and winter vegetables. They are confident, since the new supply of water was discovered in the summer, that in winter it will be permanently available for pumping.

Cattle Traffic

In October, many a head of cattle will stamp into the Imperial Valley for winter feeding. Beef cattle, said Cattleman J. T. Sperc, prominent in the cattle market, have been purchased for shipment into the Valley, and shipments will be under way in a few weeks. Dairy cattle also will come in large numbers.

Many a Coast dairyman has chosen Imperial Valley for feeding purposes in preference to other places where feed is scarce and expensive.

Holtville Peas

Many a crop has been grown and already harvested this season, but only beginning is the pea crop around Holtville. Grower's reports indicate a coming large pea planting. Seeding is already in progress, a plentiful harvest being expected in November, and later, until the frost puts it to an end.

Eggs

In the Los Angeles egg market, where centers the Southern California egg market, poultry raisers have an edge on the rest of the State, observed C. G. Ross, vice-president of the Poultrymen's Co-operative Association, in a recent article in Poultrycraft.

Lately, the price for "extras" to the producer was 48 cents per dozen against 42 cents last year. The price to the producers for "mediums" was 38 1/2 cents, against 34 cents last year. The new high prices received are of benefit alike to the companies and the owners of the poultry, thinks an official of the Runnymede Poultry Farms, largest poultry plant in the world.

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