

# Agriculture and Husbandry

## Useful Alfalfa

In an age where the unusual and the uncommon things of existence are looked for, commonplace things, facts are often overlooked. In agriculture, while botanists are continually discovering and developing new forms of plant life, engaging the attention of agriculturalists and farmers, many an old-established, useful product is not utilized fully.

Probably as old as agriculture itself is cultivated alfalfa. Easy to grow, useful as a food for cattle, as an improver of soil, it has come down to the present generation from past ages. By historical record, present day people know that King Xerxes of Persia, (700 B. C.) utilized alfalfa as forage for the animals of his vast armies while on conquering expeditions; know that the Romans used it and introduced it into other countries including Spain, from which it was brought to the New World.

In California, alfalfa covers about one million acres of land, placing this State first in the country as a producer of alfalfa hay. In California it is called the Universal Plant, called the most valuable plant because it is the basis of the dairy industry, as well as being responsible for sustained production of vegetable crops, for crop rotation it supplies the soil with humus and nitrogen.

Almost every county in California has some of its acreage sowed with alfalfa. But the principal Southern California producing areas are around Antelope Valley in Los Angeles County; San Jacinto, Hemet, Arlington and Palo Verde Valley in Riverside County; Mojave River, and Chino districts in San Bernardino County, and Imperial Valley.

Commonplace as it is, alfalfa is not ungenerous with its growers in remunerative return. Though not the highest producer of wealth in California, it nevertheless is near the top of the list. Costs of production vary greatly with the districts. Land valuation, water costs, yields per acre, and many another factor must be considered. The average production of alfalfa in California is 4.20 tons per acre.

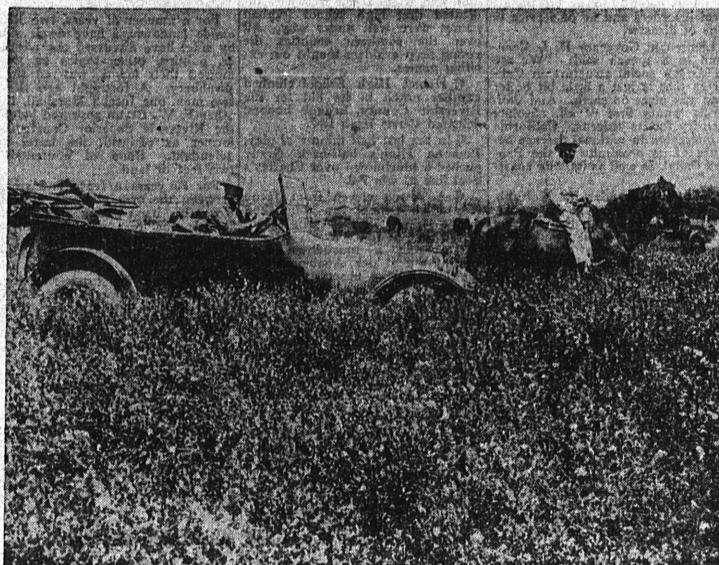
Some of the average yields range from six to eight cuttings are the rule, produce from six to eight tons and up to as high as 11 tons per acre. The Antelope Valley average is around five and a half tons per acre. In the Hemet area, seven tons is the average. Imperial ranges about five to seven tons of good alfalfa per acre. The price range on the Los Angeles market for the past two or three years, for No. 1 dairy alfalfa has been from \$18 to \$30 per ton.

Where land and water costs are reasonable and where good quality hay can be produced, experts are of the opinion that there is great possibility for profitable expansion of alfalfa production in Southern California. At present outlets for outside markets are somewhat hampered due partly to transportation costs. Neither are there any compress facilities at Los Angeles Harbor. Local growers, however, are keeping a close watch on the market in mind waiting for a time when local production exceeds local demand at a period when the price is low. Then they expect to gain a goodly share of the coast business, which at the present time goes, in large measure, to San Francisco.

## Mustard, 85%

Few dining tables are there which have not at some period of their life played host to a jar of food-flavoring mustard. Mushy and yellow, thousands of different brands with it, make otherwise unappetizing meals quite delectable. Growers and manufacturers take the mustard plant, pick it, grind it and tin it. Housewives and chefs buy the dry, powdered mustard, add water, make it into a yellow paste. As such consumers spread it upon their food.

In all the country, 85 per cent of commercialized mustard is grown on the slopes of enchanting Lompoc Valley in Santa Barbara County. Huge areas of mustard add beauty to an already flower bedecked district there.



ALFALFA IN THE ANTELOPE VALLEY

... first in the country as a producer of alfalfa is California.

During the past season, Lompoc Valley planted and raised two thousand acres of mustard (red or Trieste variety). From this huge crop growers harvested a yield of approximately 20,000 100-pound sacks. Average production per acre in Lompoc Valley is from 1000 to 2000 pounds, although some growers are known to have obtained 3,000.

The introduction of mustard in the valley took place about forty years ago. Experimenters found that cultivation was easy and inexpensive; found also, after demonstrations, that the valley was suitable for the crop. From then on mustard has been produced commercially, has grown to be one of the principal crops in the valley. Also has it won high honors, prizes, in competition with foreign mustard wherever exhibited.

At Washington before the two national legislative bodies is a protective tariff bill, which if passed, will place a two cent protective tariff upon mustard. Hard at work to secure this tariff for some time has been the Lompoc Chamber of Commerce.

## Imperial's Fair

Four years ago, Imperial County inaugurated what it called the Imperial Midwinter Fair. Sponsored by Brawley business men, it continued for two years, then ended in financial disaster. Undaunted, a newly appointed fair board took hold of the matter this year, revived the Midwinter Fair as a county proposition, made plans for the event. Last week the plans of the fair board were accepted by the County Supervisors. Of \$37,365 appropriated by the county for fair purposes, the fair board proposed to spend the major part in erecting a grandstand, administration and other buildings, after the plan of the Los Angeles County fair grounds, in Pomona. The board favors the same eighty-acre site, on which the former fairs had been held, near the city of Imperial. Tentative figures last week indicated that the Midwinter Fair would not be held until sometime in February, allowing time for the grounds to be properly developed.

## Olive Markets

While scores of California crops were being successfully exploited, olives for the past few years have had trouble in finding suitable markets, although in point of production they have been steadily in-

creasing. To combat this lurking evil was lately founded the California Ripe Olive Distributors, Ltd., formed by independent and co-operative packers and grower leaders to exploit markets with the surplus of normal sales. The new organization is expected to turn sluggish returns of owners of the State's 29,820 bearing acres of olives to aggressive profits, and this in the face of conditions which show that the United States has not as yet begun to use olives as a food, or knows nothing of their rich vitamin content, or of the thousand and one ways they may be used as food.

Therefore last week sixty-thousand cases of California's finest olives were rolling eastward, pooled by the new California Ripe Olive Distributors, Ltd., with produce included from 1365 acres in Los Angeles County; 1205 in Riverside; 1165 in San Bernardino; 1300 in San Diego; 350 in Santa Barbara; 412 in Ventura; 953 in Kern; 59 in Imperial; 250 in Kings, and 30 in Orange.

Olives are raised in practically every county in California except those in the high mountain and timbered areas. And with an aggressive educational campaign, think olive packers, their product will stage one of the most spectacular comebacks in agricultural history.

## Cattle Center

Fourth greatest producers of beef cattle in the United States, leader in the production of lambs, is the State of California for the year 1928. Thus speaks a report compiled by the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce last fortnight. Very few are the beef cattle shipped out of the State to eastern centers, but spring lambs are shipped as far east as New York City, where, because they reach the market ahead of other shipments, they receive top prices.

For more than a dozen western states, Los Angeles, in the last year, has become the marketing center. Through the thirty packing houses, 500,000 cattle and calves, 700,000 hogs, and 700,000 sheep and lambs pass annually. To California stockmen the Los Angeles packing houses pay more than \$65,000,000 annually. All told, 2,000,000 live-stock are passing on through the packing plants yearly.

Various are the sources from which the cattle, sheep and hogs are drawn. During the spring and summer months, when grass feed is available on Southern California's pastures and ranges, nearly 100 per cent of the cattle and sheep consumed in the section originate from ranges as far east as Colorado the supply is taken during the remainder of the year.

Imperial Valley alone, stockyard records indicate, is the grazing ground for 70,000 cattle that find their way yearly to Los An-

geles. Recently in San Bernardino County were figures compiled pertinent to hog producing; resulted a report declaring that the enormous rate of 7,000,000 pounds annually were being produced. Local product, however, does not equal consumption.

To the end of making Southern California a leading pork producer was launched last fortnight a thoroughgoing study of the situation in the South. The enabling of the southern counties to take advantage of their extensive alfalfa and barley crops in hog raising is the aim of the present investigation.

## Horticultural Rarities

Thousands of plants, some valued at thousands of dollars, others never before produced, were this week exhibited when Pasadena's annual Southern California Fall Flower Show opened its doors. The floral displays were viewed by thousands during the four days and nights of the show. Its theme: "California Gardens."

Forty communities, twelve California counties, many private conservatories, garden clubs entered exhibits; competed for the \$2000 cash awards, the sixty silver trophies, valued at \$100 each, to be presented to prize winners.

Featured rarities: the only green chrysanthemums ever grown, a single orchid valued at \$6000, a cactus which jumps at passersby, Mexican and Central American plants, other floral oddities.

## Teague Explains

At Columbus, Ohio, last week met the United States Chamber of Commerce. At a round table discussion of the agricultural marketing act, among others, sat California's C. C. Teague, Federal Farm Board member. Fresh from a quizzing by the Senate agricultural committee at Washington, Teague was at home with the topic under discussion, took an active part in reviewing it.

In a specially prepared speech he told the Chamber of Commerce of the problems facing the Farm Board, of the board's plans to make the agricultural marketing act workably sound. In answer to criticism of certain members of the Senate that the board was functioning too slowly, Teague quoted two paragraphs from the farm relief act, thus: "That the stabilization corporations who wish aid shall exert every reasonable effort to avoid losses and obtain profits"; also that loans were prohibited when the board might consider them likely to increase production in which there was already a surplus.

If the board is to abide by these provisions, thought Teague, it must make exhaustive enquiries into the responsibility of the stabilization corporations before any

loan can be made. All this takes time, said Teague, as well as administrative machinery which cannot be set up in a few days.

Agriculture and business are closely related, Teague told the chamber members, in conclusion. Agriculture, he said, is a basic industry, but largely dependent upon the prosperity of business. Only when business is good can agriculture find a good market for its products.

## Nonchalant Nut-Picker

When two automobiles crashed last week on Valley Boulevard, causing one of them to deflect into the Ernest Jackson walnut grove, west of Ontario, and strike a tree in which a Mexican laborer was picking walnuts, not at all disconcerted was the picker. He dismounted from the top of the ladder on which he was perched, placed it on the body of the car, remounted, continued his nut-picking.

So startled were other pickers in the orchard that they refused to resume their labor until the smashed machine was removed from the grove. Meanwhile, the undisturbed laborer continued picking, picking, picking.

## Rabbit "Bloat"

Could a rabbit express himself he would probably vouch for the fact that the most pernicious of all rabbit diseases is the "bloat." Worried rabbit raisers in Southern California for the past year have wracked their brains continually for a cure of this disease, which threatened to wipe out the rabbit industry in this part of the State.

Last fortnight to their aid came assertedly Heaven sent Dr. Roger Truesdale of Pomona College, formerly of Redlands. Diverse experiments led him to what he believes is a cure to formerly incurable rabbit bloat. His remedy is developed from a mash, left after alcohol has been extracted from cane molasses. He salvages mineral charcoal from the mash and feeds it to the rabbits. This concoction has the result of stopping the disease.

Said John Meyer, director of the United States Rabbit Experiment Station at Fontana, concerning Truesdale's remedy: "It has good results in all sections, but it will take time to determine definitely whether it is a remedy in all cases."

## Nursery Law

Fiercely the State of California wages continual war on insect pests; jealously the State guards its crops from ravenous bugs. Recent among provisions to guard agriculture was the revision of the California nursery license law. Among the new provisions are those demanding more complete registration of persons and firms, selling nursery stock and plants, giving state authority to restrict licenses of willful violators of the law.

Those who deal in potted plants, used for ornamental purposes, are also subject to registration requirements. The law is designed to allow officials to inspect nurseries and thus prevent the spread of insect pests and plant diseases.

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