

(2). The loss of strength by the cloth, due largely to exposure to sunlight (5), can be reduced by impregnation with lead chromate (6).

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DEVELOPMENTS IN THE MARKETING OF THE OHIO POTATO CROP

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The potato, beginning with the early history of our agriculture to the present day, is one of the most important cash crops on Ohio farms. Records of the crop are available from 1866 when 57,000 acres were planted. The acreage gradually increased until the peak of slightly over 200,000 acres was reached in 1909. The per capita production in Ohio over this same period of time equaled that of the United States, which was a little over three bushels. When the per capita production was over three bushels, the state produced all the potatoes it consumed. The rapid development of industry in Ohio meant a rapid increase in population and the building of many cities. Potato production increased with the population until the beginning of the decline of acreage in 1910. In this year the acreage in Ohio started downward, reaching the low point of 100,000 acres in 1926. While the per

capita production of the United States had increased to about $3\frac{1}{2}$ bushels in the ten year period, 1920-29, the per capita production of Ohio fell to 1.75 bushels. This reduction took place during a period of high-price years. In the past few years the acreage has not fluctuated much and there seems to be no tendency to materially increase it.

The early history of the potato found our production centered along the Ohio River for the mining areas and for bulk movement down the river, some boats going as far south as New Orleans. Elsewhere in the state, production was centered around the industrial areas to supply the large urban population. As the demand increased for the more perishable vegetables, the latter displaced much of the potato acreage around the larger cities. Shipping areas in southern and northern states developed with transportation facilities. These areas found industrial Ohio a good market outlet. Their higher average yields made real competition for the Ohio grower even though freight rates were high.

The southern part of the state produces early potatoes, while production in the northern section is mainly late, with a few scattered early areas. The predominate varieties are Cobblers for the early and Russets for the late crop. The early crop in southern Ohio starts to move to the market in early July and digging is usually completed in early August when the early crop in northern Ohio is ready. Digging of the late crop starts in September and is completed in October. The average crop in Ohio for the five-year period, 1928-32, was about 10,500,000 bushels of which the late crop makes up 7 to 8 million bushels.

Marketing conditions have changed in the last few years. Consumers formerly bought their winter's supply of potatoes in the fall and stored them. Now they buy from week to week. Old line commission merchants were about the only marketing agents. Some speculators bought in the fall and stored potatoes. Terminal market commission men have done little speculating with the crop the last few years. Large buyers representing chain store organizations and truck peddlers, have become a factor in our marketing scheme. The chain buyers want potatoes in large quantities and individual growers with comparatively small crops have found it difficult to sell to them; hence, the trucker has played an important role in our Ohio marketing the past few years. Few Ohio farmers have ample storage for their crop. Therefore, they have to move their potatoes before cold weather sets in. The truckers take full advantage of this situation by beating down the price.

A standardization bill was passed by the Legislature this past year

and became effective September 15, 1933. The pertinent points of the law are: That every person, firm, corporation, organization, or distributor who, by themselves or by their agents or employees, pack or repack fresh fruits, vegetables, or honey in containers, or transports, common carriers excepted, consigns, delivers or offers the same for sale, either privately or in the open market, shall cause such containers to be marked in a plain and indelible manner as follows:

1. With their full name and address, including the name of the state where such commodities are grown or packed or if the commodity is repacked the state of origin must be shown, regardless of the size or type of container.

2. The net contents by weight, or numerical count if not in a standard container built in accordance with the specifications of the federal standard container act, in which case the cubical contents are sufficient.

3. The grade in accordance with the standards established by the state of Ohio, except commodities covered under the terms of this act may be offered for sale in an ungraded condition or graded according to individual standards, providing the term "ungraded" or "growers grade" is marked conspicuously on each package or on each tag or label used on each package. The grade designation terms used in the standards adopted for Ohio shall not be used in connection with the words "growers grade" and all markings on the package, tag or label shall be in letters of legible size.

The passage of this law added stimulus to developing of a marketing program for Ohio.

A statewide meeting of potato producers and buyers was called in September. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the problems involved in the marketing of the Ohio potato crop with the hope of developing means for the orderly disposition of that crop. This meeting authorized the appointment of a committee to proceed with the preparation of plans for a marketing program, the proposed program to be submitted as early as possible to all counties in the state in which potato production is important. In the preparation of its plans, the committee was instructed to confer with representative dealers in order that the cooperation of the buyers may be secured in-so-far as possible.

The committee met in early October. In its deliberations, the committee considered the following factors as being significant in the marketing of Ohio's potato crop:

1. The acreage planted to potatoes in Ohio has averaged approximately 110,000 acres in the five years, 1928-1932.

2. Production during the same years averaged about 10,500,000 bushels annually.

3. Value of the crop to growers during the same years averaged about \$9,000,000 annually.

4. Average yield during the same period was about 96 bushels per acre.

5. The commercial crop in this state is produced mainly by about 3,000 growers.

6. There are 34 counties in Ohio each producing over 100,000 bushels annually.

7. Not over 100 commercial potato farms in Ohio have suitable frost-proof storage for their own crops.

8. Each producer sells his own crop; there is practically no co-operative merchandising of potatoes in Ohio.

9. Ohio is a deficit area in potato production. About 20,000,000 bushels are consumed in the state each year, one-half of which are shipped in from other districts. These 10,000,000 bushels come mainly from the following states:

Early—Florida, Texas and Alabama; mid-season—North Carolina, Virginia and New Jersey; late—New York, Michigan, Maine, Minnesota, North Dakota, Wisconsin and Idaho.

The committee considered the following elements of the problem to be of primary importance:

1. Inadequate storage facilities and inability to obtain credit on the crop, result in the major part of the crop being rushed to market during a brief period at harvest time.

2. Widespread selling competition between individuals; many of whom are unskilled, poorly informed or weak bargainers. No centralized control over shipments or sales.

3. Lack of uniformly high standards of grade and pack.

4. No coordination between marketing of the Ohio crop and that of other states.

The committee recommended, therefore, that efforts to stabilize the marketing of Ohio-grown potatoes be directed along the lines indicated above and proposed the problem be attacked by:

1. Providing for collection and dissemination of current information on prices and on supplies moving and available.

2. Encouraging sales only through those marketing agencies whose ability and integrity have been proved.

3. Establishing county or area cooperative marketing units in districts where justified by volume of production. These units should

provide facilities for grading, packing, sorting, financing and selling for local members.

4. Forming a centralized agency for the entire State of Ohio to exercise control over shipments and sales.

5. Joining with other important potato-producing states in the formation of a national potato board for the purpose of co-ordinating supply with demand through control over planting and shipments, and to exert a stabilizing influence on prices.

Although the committee approved this program as a whole, it doubted the advisability of attempting to secure the immediate or simultaneous adoption of all its phases. It is believed that a greater degree of success may be attained through the consecutive adoption of the foregoing proposals in the order given. It was suggested that only the first and second phases be stressed at the outset, with some preliminary work being done looking to the establishment of local units prior to the 1934 marketing season.

Work was immediately started on the first of these five points. Key growers were selected in the important potato counties to furnish information on farm supplies and prices. This information along with terminal quotations, carlot shipments, etc., are combined and broadcast over three broadcasting stations. Several counties have organized potato associations to assist in the work outlined.

Many reports have come in from growers saying that these broadcasts have done much to prevent price cutting which usually demoralizes our market. The committee is now working on the second and third phases of the recommended solutions.

Recognition should be given to the committee consisting of Henry Leimbach, Barnett Graham, A. L. Smith, E. H. Borton, V. O. Hutchinson, Samuel Studebaker, W. E. Stough and Charles W. Hauck, Marketing Specialist, Ohio Agricultural Experiment Station for their fine cooperation in this work.

SECTIONAL NOTES

NEW JERSEY

Planting will be delayed somewhat this year due to the unusually late spring. Some growers are already disinfecting their seed so as to be ready to plant as soon as conditions permit. Definite information on the number of acres to be planted is not yet available but leading dealers and growers predict an increase of approximately 15 per cent over last year. There are some reports of frozen seed in storage cellars. It is impossible to obtain definite information on the extent of