

THE RANCH.

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For Everybody Who Wants It

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RANCH SMALL TALK.

Did you plant trees yesterday? If not, have an Arbor Day of your own before "the sap goes up."

A London paper says that \$50,000,000 worth of fruits are annually imported into the British Isles.

Every cool day now lessens the liability to fruit-killing frosts when the buds are bursting into bloom.

If you are the possessor of a fruit tree don't fail to read what Inspector Jesse had to say to THE INTERVIEWER as reported in this issue of THE RANCH.

The farmer who has wheat on hand will do well to give another twist to the string of his grain bags, if there is anything in President Van Horn's prediction about \$2 wheat.

To lose a ten dollar hint in order to accomplish ten cents' worth of extra labor, is about what the farmer does who finds no time to read his farm paper during the busy season.

The garden seeds come slowly this spring, but the philosophic gardener will console himself with the thought that the young plants are getting ready down below for a spring when the sun gets in a little better work.

The census bureau tells us that the value of the real and personal property of this country is \$65,000,000,000, or about \$1,000 for each inhabitant. Gentle reader, have you laid aside your share? If not, you'll soon have it if you attend strictly to ranching in the Yakima country.

The rapidity with which hop culture is extending in this region may be inferred from the fact that between North Yakima and a point six miles up the Ahtanum over eighty hop houses may be counted as one passes along the road. Quite a number of them are new structures.

California fears a dry year and consequent difficulties in crop production. Here again is another reason for irri-

gationists in the Inland Empire to make the most of their great opportunity. All signs point to a great agricultural year in 1894 for the whole Pacific northwest.

At the reorganization of affairs at Pullman agricultural college, Wm. J. Spellman, of Monmouth, Oregon, was elected professor of agriculture, and John A. Palmer, of Vincennes, Indiana, takes the chair of horticulture. Both gentlemen bear the reputation of being proficient in their respective departments.

If there is no great revival in business which means no wide distribution of money this season, the greater economy being practiced on all hands will of itself make easier times. Besides this, the majority of people have learned that they can be just as happy if they don't spend money quite so freely as of yore.

What to do in a dry season is a puzzling question to the farmers of a country dependent upon rainfall for its crops. In the arid region that problem "stands in solution" all the time. Other conundrums rise up in the minds of eastern farmers that are never propounded to the man who has pitched his tent in the desert—under a ditch.

In face of the ever-increasing market value of the mule as compared with the horse, our live horsemen must soon engage more generally in their breeding. Kansas City has about the finest horse market in the country; and now the mule is becoming so popular that a mule market of equal beauty and proportions is planned for early erection.

Talking about electric railroads for farmers, it appears to THE RANCH that a line to the westward, tapping the Wide Hollow district, and proceeding up the Ahtanum as far as Tampico, would pay about as soon as any that can be constructed out from North Yakima. What a Godsend such a line would be to the ranchers of that fertile valley! And it will come, too, some of these fine days.

M. N. Mansfield, up the Ahtanum, says he built a single-kiln hop house last year, 20x24 feet, with shed attachment, everything complete and in good shape, for less than \$600. He finds it ample for a yard of ten acres. In his opinion one that will answer for this acreage may be built in a rough way for \$400 at present prices of lumber. This of course means that the owner is to do a good part of the work himself.

Inspector Knight, of the state board of horticulture, finds few insect pests in the orchards about Chehalis. The

trees are also in a healthy condition otherwise. He is urging the organization of local horticultural societies in his district with good effect. The state board is succeeding in arousing an unusual interest in horticulture in all parts of the state. This will be by far the best horticultural year in the history of Washington.

Prosser celebrates the completion of her great irrigation pumping works on Monday, the 16th. Fred R. Reed writes THE RANCH that he has secured from the Northern Pacific railroad a special one and one-fifth rate to Prosser from all points west of Spokane and east of Tacoma and Seattle for the occasion. Great is King Irrigation. On Monday another of his triumphs over the "desert" will be duly proclaimed. Let us all join in the chorus.

What is the average cost of growing a bushel of potatoes in this part of the country? The question is suggested by the assertion of a leading coast daily that the American farmer cannot raise spuds without loss for much less than 40 cents a bushel. THE RANCH is confident that this figure is too high, and it calls for estimates from its readers. Correspondents are asked to figure closely each item, from interest on the landed investment to hauling to market. If it costs 13½ dollars to grow a ton of potatoes, that starch factory proposition may as well be declared off.

Last season's experience proved that it is time to "let up" a little on strawberry planting for market in western Washington, and to put out a greater proportion of the better-keeping, better-shipping and better-preserving varieties of small fruits. Planters will give the currant and the gooseberry a chance. These may not bring so much money per box or gallon, as the strawberry in prime condition, reaching a favorable market, but they are wonderfully prolific, and the cost of producing them is trifling. Hence the real profit in them is greater.

The president of the Canadian Pacific railroad company has a strong word of encouragement for the wheat growers of America. He predicts that the great cereal will be selling for \$2 per bushel within the next eighteen months. He bases this startling prediction upon the fact that past low prices have resulted in a very largely decreased acreage. He places the world's product at 2,600,000,000 to 2,700,000,000 bushels. The world's surplus has never exceeded 150,000,000 bushels. The surplus of last year will be used up before another harvest. Hence there will be a shortage the following year. You see the line of the argument. Watch the prediction.