

# Know Your Own State

In an annual publication recently issued a communication appeared therein from Clark V. Savidge, state land commissioner of the state of Washington, depicting the possibilities of small farming in Western Washington, and though the editor of this publication has lived in this section of the state for the past thirty years, yet much it contained was so unknown to him that it is absolutely news. In our opinion hundreds of the readers of this monthly will be glad of an opportunity to read the communication, hence it is herewith reproduced:



CLARK V. SAVIDGE

The state of Washington is coming to be recognized as a mecca for the small tract rancher or farmer. No longer does the non-city producer believe that he must till hundreds of acres in order to make a decent living. There are great farms in this state but they are not necessary for a living of quality.

The small tract, set out in fruit, berries or even vegetables is recognized now as the best method of gaining returns on a limited investment. The man who has little except his own labor to offer for a living is turning to the logged-off lands of the state of Washington; the man who has some capital is combining that money with his personal effort and is rapidly becoming independent. The office man of the city, the professional man as well as those who simply lean toward the great outdoors, are taking up tracts of land that have heretofore lain idle and these men are coming to realize that instead of having merely a plaything, a place to exercise, they have in reality a wealth producer. They are realizing on their investment.

It has been only during the past few years that the state of Washington, with the exception of a small section, has been recognized as a small fruit country. Today hundreds of citizens are raising berries of all sorts. Back-yard orchards have taken

place of dumping ground for ashes and cans and these small plots are furnishing a winter's fruit supply for the owners.

The state's logged-off land perhaps offers the best advantages to the person who desires a small tract for ranch purposes. This land may be purchased at a minimum price or it may be leased from the state. The cost of clearing, cultivating and actually preparing this ground for production is astoundingly low. One tract has been reported as costing \$60.00 an acre. There is a final cost and includes a consideration of the purchaser's time. The greatest cost that has been reported is \$200 an acre and this is exceptionally high.

The constant demand for lease or purchase of the state's logged-off land gives evidence of its growing popularity and the State Land Commissioner at Olympia reports that his office is receiving inquiries in every mail asking the methods of securing a tract of state land. It is a simple matter. Upon request the state land office will send an application blank to the inquirer together with detailed instructions as to how to proceed. Application may be made either for purchase or lease and the land will be appraised by a state officer. The appraisal figure will be made to the applicant and the land will eventually be offered for the purchase or lease at public auction.

More than a million acres of state land are subject to purchase through the office of the State Land Commissioner and at least one hundred thousand acres of this land are logged-off lands.

Most of these logged-off lands lie west of the Cascade mountains, in the section of the state that has proven beyond a doubt to be a natural small fruit country. There is neither extreme heat nor cold in this section of the state; the rain supply is plentiful and irrigation is not needed. Climate and soil have conspired to make agriculture a leading industry.

Methods of clearing these logged-off lands have been developed until the removal of a gaint stump is not the difficult problem or undertaking as it was a few years ago. The land may be made ready for seeding or planting in a remarkably short time. The land jumps in value from an average of \$10 an acre to \$200 when ready for its crop.

The fruits that have been raised successfully on logged-off lands include apples, pears, prunes and berries of all sorts, while unusual grain crops have been reported from some individual tracts. However, the small fruits are claimed to be the natural, surest and best paying crop. Cannaries are springing up all over the western part of the state, thus affording an easy and a sure market for the fruit.

Because of a lack of funds the State Land Commissioner has been unable to prepare separate printed lists of the state's logged-off lands. State inspectors were, however, furnished with descriptions of such of these lands as were situated in the sections in which they were working and inspections were made whenever possible.

Sales circulars are issued by the state land office four times a year, prior to the quarterly sales of state land and these circulars contain descriptions of such