

KENTUCKY FRUIT NOTES

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POSTWAR FRUIT GROWING

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What are the prospects for the fruit grower after the war? This question is vital at this time. Although it would be foolish to try to forecast the future, there are considerations that bear on the future, from lessons learned by experience, and such knowledge as we have of the changes that are to come.

The basis of our national economy has been set for good prices and wages, as a means of paying off the debt of the war. As the war ends, the food stocks of the world will be low, and the United States will be the most important source of agricultural products. Manufacturing demands will be high and will expand rapidly as soon as the factories can be converted. An extensive building program will be needed in every section of the United States. Great changes are expected in transportation. Air express and air freight may be able to solve many distribution problems concerned with perishable products and open up markets heretofore inaccessible. Modern refrigeration is expected to replace the old ice bunkers in rail transportation. New developments of storage will greatly extend the market for perishable goods. Export and import of food products are set to develop on a scale little dreamed of until now. Foreign nations must have our food products, and imports of foreign goods are necessary to pay for them. Practically unknown countries may become our neighbors and business associates. Much of Europe's fruit industry has been destroyed or sadly neglected during the war.

Everybody will be affected, but how can fruit growers adjust their program to profit most? No simple

answer is apparent, but certain considerations should be studied.

It would seem that areas best adapted to fruit growing will crowd out the marginal areas.

Quality fruit should be expected to assume more and more importance as consumers are able to get tree-ripened fruit quickly from distant areas, and the demand for green fruit should fall. Many poor quality, but heretofore profitable, varieties may become unpopular.

During the war there has been a letdown on grading and packing, and considerable fruit has been sold in bulk, on account of scarcity of labor and containers, also of transportation difficulties. Such methods have resulted in much fruit reaching the consumer in bad condition. With the return of a plentiful supply of containers and quite possibly the development of newer types, strict grading may become essential.

How will availability of good quality fruit affect consumption? It seems reasonable to assume that better distribution of good products should result in a greatly increased demand. Also, new fruit products and by-products, as well as the general recognition of the health properties of fruits, should insure a continued large demand. Great possibilities lie ahead in promoting the consumption of fruit to improve the health of the nation. Think what it would mean if everyone had the fruit required for an adequate diet. Certainly, there would be less doctors' bills, less time lost through illness, and the volume of fruit required to accomplish this would be more than double our present production.

In the growing of fruit, there may be many changes. Several new insecticides that will be available after the war, promise to be more effective than those now in use. This may reduce the cost of production, and some who have aban-