APPLE GROWING IN CALIFORNIA: A PRACTICAL TREATISE DESIGNED TO COVER SOME OF THE IMPORTANT PHASES OF APPLE CULTURE WITHIN THE STATE

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GEO. P. WELDON

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THE STATE COMMISSION OF HORTICULTURE
SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA

Apple Growing in California

A Practical Treatise Designed to Cover Some of the Important Phases of Apple Culture Within the State

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PREFACE.

The great importance of the apple in our state, the many failures among those who have attempted to grow this fruit, the common opinion that an apple orchard can not be made a paying proposition, and the hopeless neglect and consequent failure to produce what might be beautiful and profitable orchards, together with a dearth of literature on the subject, are some of the things that induced the author to write this little book. It is published with a realization of its incompleteness and possible errors, but if it will in a small way, at least, serve as a guide to future profitable apple culture in California, the efforts put forth will in no way be regretted.

While primarily a treatise on apple culture, several of the chapters are designed to teach lessons that will be valuable in the culture of other fruits: For example, chapters on Pruning, Intercropping and Cover Crops.

I wish to express thanks to Dr. A. J. Cook, under whose direction the investigations were conducted, and who has at all times cooperated with me in the work. His valuable assistance in reading the manuscript is appreciated.

Thanks are also due Prof. A. V. Stubenrauch, Pomologist of the State University at Berkeley, Mr. W. H. Volck, County Horticultural Commissioner of Santa Cruz County and Mr. W. S. Ballard, Pathologist, Fruit-Disease Investigations, United States Department of Agriculture, each of whom kindly read parts of my manuscript; also to Mr. E. J. Vosler, Secretary of the State Commission of Horticulture and Mr. H. S. Smith, Superintendent of the State Insectary, for the same courtesy.

For illustrations I am indebted to the State University, Mr. C. B. Weeks, County Horticultural Commissioner of Tehama County, Mr. O. E. Bremner, County Horticultural Commissioner of Sonoma County, and Mr. J. F. Benton of Arcata.

GEO. P. WELDON.

Sacramento, California, November 5, 1914.

APPLE GROWING IN CALIFORNIA.

CHAPTER I.

STATISTICS.

There is no more cosmopolitan fruit among the long list grown, than the apple. It adapts itself to the cold climates of the north as well as to the more temperate regions farther south. Practically every state in the Union boasts of some places where apples can be produced, and as far north on the continent as British Columbia we find them doing remarkably well. The climate and soil in many parts of California are admirably suited to the growing of this fruit. Prof. E. J. Wickson, in his "California Fruits," divides the state into five regions, viz: northern coast region, central coast region, interior valleys and foothills, mountain valleys and plateaus, and southern California, and gives a long list of varieties that are adapted to the diversified conditions of these regions. The central coast region has so far produced a very great part of the state's output of apples, in fact is the only region which has taken up apple orcharding on a large scale. With splendid transportation facilities and with conditions of soil and climate such that certain varieties have done well, Santa Cruz and Sonoma counties, despite their low elevation and frequent fogs, have produced Yellow Bellflowers, Yellow Newtowns and Gravensteins, that have made them famous. The northern coast region, including within its borders Mendocino and Humboldt counties, is fast coming to the front, and the vast region classified under the name of "mountain valleys and plateaus" contains an abundance of land upon which apples of superior quality can be grown. From an elevation of about 2,000 to 6,000 feet along the Sierra Nevada range may be seen orchards and remnants of orchards in practically all of the counties which extend into these mountains. Fig. 1 shows an orchard at an elevation of about 5,000 feet. Transportation facilities are not such at present as to favor these sections, and since the markets are well supplied with shipments from Watsonville and other railroad points, the pioneer orchardists of the mountains have been forced to give up their practice of hauling the crop a long distance and the orchards no longer paying are neglected. Many splendid trees in some of these old remnants of orchards may still be seen, indicative of the possibilities of apple culture in the mountainous parts of the state.

The economic value of the apple is probably greater than that of any other fruit. Its cosmopolitan nature has made it a favorite for planting, and its food value is such as to make it prized above all our fruits. The cry of overproduction has rung in our ears until we wonder sometimes that any one has the nerve to go into the business. Despite this cry there is still a good profit to be made from the well cared for orchard of good varieties, well grown and packed. The apple business of the future must go to those sections where the fruit can be produced best, for small, gnarly apples will not pay for the expense of growing them, while the

Fig 1.—Orchard scene near Sugar Pine, Madera County, at an altitude of approximately 5000 feet. (Original)