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BULLETIN NO. 11

JUNE, 1914

WISCONSIN BANKERS' FARM BULLETIN

Plant Profit Producing Potatoes

BY

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COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE, and SECRETARY WISCONSIN
POTATO GROWERS' ASSOCIATION



RURAL NEW YORKERS

THE STANDARD TYPE THAT SPELLS SUCCESS AND PROSPERITY FOR
COOPERATIVE OR COMMUNITY GROWERS

FILE THIS BULLETIN WHERE YOU CAN FIND IT WHEN WANTED

DISTRIBUTED BY

WISCONSIN BANKERS' ASSOCIATION

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Columbus, Wisconsin

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Plant Profit Producing Potatoes

Good Wisconsin potatoes are in demand on every market.

Importance of Crop. With the present enormous demand for good potatoes, and the reputation of Wisconsin stock rapidly being established, many more of our farmers are in position to add a profitable "cash crop" to their rotations.

In order to raise a high yielding crop that will best meet the present demands and bring the biggest returns, good seed of high quality must be used. This is scarce but some of the pure potato seed now on the market is the kind of foundation stock that will build up the industry in this state.

In several counties in this state local branches of the Wisconsin Potato Growers' Association have undertaken to secure pure potato seed for distribution during the present season. This work wherever carried on during the past year was productive of immediate results. It increased the yield, promoted uniformity of type, brought higher prices, and added to the farmers' profits.

Communities producing such potatoes in considerable quantities, attracted the attention of buyers, who were willing to pay premium prices for high quality tubers in carload lots.

Communities Succeed With Pure Seed. The plan has succeeded to such an extent that as rapidly as possible the work will be extended to the farmers of every community who wish to take advantage of this opportunity to produce high grade potatoes.

Every year a large amount of high class seed stock is raised in Wisconsin. Very often this stock is sold with mixed table stock and is lost for seed improvement.

By organizing, the growers have been able to reserve some of this desirable stock for 1914 planting. By this means and also through the field extension work of the Horticultural Department of the College of Agriculture a limited amount of pure seed has been reserved by growers for improving this year's crop.

In order to get good seed—

1. Select a variety suited to your soil, climate and other conditions. (Rural New Yorker and Green Mountain are recommended.)

How to Get Pure Potato Seed. 2. All potato growing interests in a community (growers, buyers, bankers, railroad agents, commercial clubs) should co-operate in securing a shipment of this seed from some reliable grower or dealer.

3. Distribute this seed among the best growers in the community.

4. Plant and harvest this pure seed separately.

5. At harvest time select for seed clean, sound, ripe, typical stock on the field.

6. Store carefully at a constant low temperature (35 degrees) until the approach of the planting season.

There will be a possibility under existing conditions that the best seed stock available will be slightly mixed.

How to Keep the Seed Pure. In order to eliminate this mixture growers should become familiar with the vine and tuber characteristics of the variety they are growing. (See Poster Bulletin, Wisconsin Experiment Station.)

Potato seed stock can be selected on the field at harvest season better than at any other time. After mixed hills have been discarded it is recommended that clean, sound stock (4 to 10 ounces) be reserved for seed purposes.

Potato seed must be planted in a condition to start at once into vigorous vine growth. Potatoes which

Good Soil Needed. have been injured by sprouting, heating, or fluctuating conditions of temperature, cannot produce desirable yields.

Growers must also remember that there is a constant relation between the standard of the potato and the kind of soil on which it was grown. There is no economic crop which is more affected in type and quality by environmental conditions of soil and climate than the potato.

Standard potato seed or commercial table stock of high quality cannot be grown on worn out soils. In this relation it is especially urgent that attention be called to the fundamentals of successful potato growing in Wisconsin.

- (1) Select seed carefully in accordance with trueness to type and market demands.
- (2) Maintain fertility by growing legumes; i. e., clovers, alfalfa, soy beans, etc.
- (3) Rotate crop regularly with intelligent use of manures.
- (4) Cultivate intensively.
- (5) Restrict acreage in accordance with ability to maintain fertility by above methods.
- (6) Control insect and disease pests.

Improved quality in potatoes means medium sized stock—uniform in size, shape and color—bright, clean, smooth—free from checks and cracks. **Results:**—
Improved Quality, —ripe. These are terms which describe desirable exterior appearances in seed and commercial table stock. The tubers should be firm—free from hollow centers—flesh not soggy, watery, or streaked. All these terms indicate a standard of quality, and all are determined by inspection.

Greater demand results from improving the quality, standardizing the varieties, and marketing tubers in carload lots.

Better profits will be returned to Wisconsin farmers, as the result of high prices which are sure to come as soon as this state becomes a reliable production center for larger lots of choice potatoes.

Effective community work and state leadership will bring about all these results. It will standardize the quality, increase the shipments and prepare the industry to meet the problems of competition and development necessary to maintain a reputation for high standards.