

Agriculture, Horticulture and Viticulture



THE resources of Yolo county are principally such as are produced by the soil. Manufacturing has not made much headway, for the reason that agricultural, horticultural, viticultural and other industries, dependent upon the soil, offer such possibilities and opportunities for profitable investment that the necessity for the encouragement of the establishment of factories has not been apparent. The distinctive feature of the population is rural and will probably continue so as long as the field for agricultural pursuits is so inviting. And that is one of the advantages of a home in Yolo county. A rural community rarely ever acquires great riches, but it is usually thrifty, prosperous and independent and characterized by stability and gradual but certain progress. The agricultural and kindred resources are capable of supporting a population three or four times larger than the county now has, and under the evolution now in progress the big wheat farm is disappearing and the small farm unit is taking its place. Intensive farming is making such progress that people now generally recognize that a small farm is now capable of

sustaining an average family in generous comfort.

The agricultural possibilities include everything that can be produced in practically every part of the United States, but the staple products are wheat, barley, rye, alfalfa, corn of all varieties, sugar beets, sweet and Irish potatoes and all varieties of vegetables.

As a rule, wheat and other small grains are grown without irrigation, but there are instances where the yield has been vastly increased in fields that are under the irrigation system. In the wheat-producing era of the state, the largest returns per acre and the largest yield in proportion to area in cultivation were from Yolo county. But wheat and barley growing is not conducted on such scale now as they were then, as a greater diversification of products has proven more profitable. However, the area sown to wheat and barley is still large and the cost of seeding, harvesting and marketing is steadily decreasing, owing to the improvement in machinery and farming implements. The conditions are such that both wheat and barley may be produced at a less cost per bushel than anywhere else in the world, outside of the Sacramento valley. Steam power is coming into use for both plowing and harvesting and the combined harvester is in general use. The harvest period

RESOURCES OF YOLO COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

is about ninety days, during which there is no interruption on account of rain.

In 1910 the value of the barley crop was about \$1,390,000, while the value of the wheat, oats, rye, corn, buckwheat and hay aggregated a like amount.

Alfalfa, the king of the forage plants, is one of the leading industries of the county, and it is rapidly growing in importance. In the irrigated districts the yields are very large and crops are certain. Crops are cut from three to six times a year and the yield is from one to three tons per acre for each crop. Alfalfa is generally sown in February and if flooded two or three times will produce good crops the first year and afford good pasture in the fall. However, it is better not to pasture it the first year.

The industry has become so important that an alfalfa mill is soon to be established in Woodland, the practical result of which will be to decrease the cost of marketing, afford a wider market, and insure permanency in prices and materially increase the alfalfa area. The alfalfa hay crop last year comprised five sixths of all the hay produced and was valued at more than \$500,000.

The sugar beet industry was first introduced in the county three or four years ago. It has in the meantime made wonderful development.

From a small beginning the acreage increased in two years to nearly 8000 acres and the crop was valued last year at over \$200,000, although it was not a full one. In an average crop season the yield will

run from 8 to 20 tons an acre. A fair average would be from 12 to 15 tons per acre. The quality is good and the percentage of sugar runs from 13 to 23 per cent. The average this year was in the neighborhood of 20 per cent. The price this season has been \$5 a ton flat, or a graduated scale of \$4 for 13 per cent beets and 25 cents for each one per cent above that figure, and the demand is so great that there is no danger of a decrease in the price, for many years at least.

Two companies, the Sacramento Valley Sugar Company, with a plant located at Hamilton, and the Alameda Sugar Company, with a plant at Alvarado, are bidding for the Yolo county product. Yolo county soil is so well adapted to the culture of the sugar beet that the establishment of a factory in the county is among one of the probabilities of the future.

The value of the hop crop, on the farms along the river this season, aggregated about \$140,000. This industry is constantly growing. The bean crop, green, and dried, was valued at over \$200,000 and the potato yield at over \$10,000. The vegetable and fruit crop was valued at about \$2,000,000.

All vegetables will grow here, and special effort in tomato culture will yield the grower thirty tons per acre. As for watermelons, there is only one reason why we don't supply the entire San Francisco market, and that is, we don't try. The once famous Lodi watermelon never possessed so many good qualities as the Yolo watermelon.



A HARVESTING SCENE IN YOLO COUNTY



FIELD OF POPPIES AND OAKS NEAR WOODLAND