Mr. Campbell—Yes, twenty per cent more—that is, twenty per cent of the value of the stock shipped. It looks like a good profit, but we are getting that.

A Member—No wonder you buyers are chasing the country so hard.

Mr. Campbell—Well, the buyer does not get all of that. You understand where one man is doing the shipping, that cuts out a lot of expense in the course of a year. I believe we have honest stock buyers, lots of them, but they are taking eight or ten men to do what one man ought to do, and that is out of place in this stage of the world. However, we have some stock buyers that I think would be more honest. They used to tell us we had a great shrinkage. The hogs we have shipped in the last year have averaged about two pounds and a half per head shrinkage.

POTATOES: COMMUNITY GROWING AND MARKETING.

J. W. Hicks, Prentice.

That growing potatoes for market is one of the big branches of agriculture in Wisconsin needs no other proof than the mere statement that the crop last year was about thirty-eight million bushels. This immense crop of one of our most stable food products having developed along improper lines for so many years, every grower following his own haphazard ideas as to varieties and cultural methods, in time brought about a condition that will require years of earnest, intelligent effort along right lines to overcome and to place the potato crop of Wisconsin once more in the front rank as to quality.

The ignorance and indifference of the grower as to variety, characteristics, selection and care of seed and of the best cultural methods, coupled with his desire for a more productive potato without regard to quality, on the one hand and with the unscrupulous avarice of a number of persons or companies selling seed potatoes, ultimately resulted in a hopeless mixture of the good market varieties and in the introduction, in many parts of the State, of varieties having little or no real market value. To put the potato industry on a profit-paying, business basis, the grower must learn and apply the fundamental principles of the business.

Standard Varieties for Wisconsin

In growing, manufacturing or preparing any commercial article or commodity for market, the successful man must first ascertain the requirements of his prospective market, second, he must grow, prepare and furnish to that market a commodity in every way measuring up to the required standards, third, he must so pack, label and advertise his product that his prospective customer may be advised of facts.

It has been demonstrated over and over again, by variety tests extending over several years, conducted by agricultural colleges in this and other states and further verified by field results, that there are but very few varieties of potatoes that are really worth while for market purposes under Wisconsin conditions. Just about as many as there
are separate breeds of cattle and about as easily recognized by any one who cares to learn the business. The farmer must be able to tell a Rural New Yorker or a Green Mountain as readily as a Holstein or a Guernsey, no matter what other name may have been applied to either of them.

In Wisconsin, the only varieties of potatoes in which the grower should be interested are the Rural New Yorker, the Green Mountain, the Peerless and the Burbank for the late ones, and the Early Ohio, the Early Rose, the Irish Cobbler, and the Bliss' Triumph for the early varieties.

For the general market crop, the Rural New Yorker and the Green Mountain will probably include ninety per cent or more of the Wisconsin crop and a very large proportion of the crop in Minnesota and Michigan, although grown everywhere under many different names.

The first step in the potato problem in Wisconsin, then, is to select and grow the varieties approved by the masses of the consumers in this great middle west, and the Wisconsin grower will not go amiss if he selects for his main crop the Rural New Yorker or the Green Moun-

View on Farm of J. W. Hicks, Prentice, Showing Part of Buildings and Clearings.

Community Producing and Handling

And here we come up to the same problem that the fruit growers, the stock breeders, the cranberry producers have all met and finally solved or attempted to solve by organization, co-
operation and the community plan of production and handling.

Growing and furnishing for the market a standard, uniform supply of potatoes, is, in principle, no different than are the problems involved in the fruit, butter or cheese business. In all of these and in many other lines of agricultural activity organized co-operative effort, having for its basic idea the community plan of production, has last few years developed into one of the greatest seed states and will, in the near future, if the community plan is intelligently taken up and followed out, become the greatest seed potato state in the union. Our soil and climate are unsurpassed for the production of good potatoes, our growers are, with few exceptions, men growing a limited number of acres of potatoes in rotation with other crops and fed to some sort of live

![Green Mt. Potatoes that went 400 bushels per acre last season.](image)

proven the solution of the problem of production and preparing the commodity for market. In every case it has also greatly simplified the marketing problem and often added much to the profit of the producer.

All of the reasons for community breeding of cattle, horses, hogs and sheep, or in the production of butter, cheese or eggs, apply with double force to the potato crop. Wisconsin has in the stock; we have no powdery scab and are relatively free from other potato diseases; in fact, having less potato disease, I believe, than any of the other great potato growing states.

Well directed community effort, by reducing the varieties to two or three of those above mentioned, keeping them free from mixture and preventing the introduction and spread of disease will enable us to maintain the high standard
demanded for good seed. It then follows without argument that the stock so grown and not required for seed will become the best possible market stock for table consumption. The higher price paid for the seed stock and the better table stock so produced will annually add hundreds of thousands of dollars to the profits of the Wisconsin growers.

country to correlate and harmonize the community efforts, it but remains for the individual to do his part in the great plan.

The Wisconsin System of Inspection

The State Association has during the last year, in conjunction with the College of Agriculture, worked out and

The Field in Blossom.

The foundation of this plan of potato production has been well laid in Wisconsin and today there are more than one hundred communities started upon this great progressive plan, and those communities first organized are already producing potatoes of a quality seldom found and never excelled and bringing corresponding higher prices for seed and table stock.

With the most efficient State potato growers’ association in this or any other put into operation in Wisconsin a system of inspection and certification of seed stock that is open to all growers whose field and stock measure up to the high standards demanded.

The inspection is made under the direction of the College of Agriculture and involves both field and bin inspection by experts, and the certificate, being issued by the College of Agriculture, carries with it a guarantee entirely removed from all commercial influences, which
makes it of special value to the purchaser of seed stock.

**Standardization the Next Step**

The basis of all continuous, legitimate, successful marketing or dealing, is founded on quality, quantity, uniformity and honesty, and while Wisconsin today has the quantity of potatoes, she has not the quality and uniformity, excepting in the organized communities, and possibly, in some instances the element of honesty is lacking.

Community production and standardization, I believe, must precede any considerable amount of successful community marketing of potatoes. A sufficient quantity to supply the market and having the standard of quality must be available in order that any large degree of success may be attained.

The officers of the Wisconsin Potato Growers’ Association are now at work upon the problem of establishing a practical system of market sorting and grading to definite market standards and, while the requirements of the grade have not all been worked out, it is safe to say that at least one of the requirements will be that each variety must be marketed free from mixture with other varieties and under its true name. It therefore becomes important that the growers of potatoes in Wisconsin should at once organize their business along community lines and in harmony with the other communities already organized. They should weed out, and standardize their seed as to variety this spring and then study the chosen variety or varieties through the entire season, so they may know the vine and tuber characteristics under all
conditions. If in doubt about the seed, purchase at least enough certified seed to plant a seed plot and, by intelligent hill selection and seed plot methods, instead of letting the seed “run out,” build up an ever better strain, producing better quality and a larger quantity.

Every grower should study and learn to recognize what, if any, disease is upon his field and the most effective methods of control and eradication. He should make continual use of the local association, the State Association and the University to the end that he may better understand soil conditions and the cultural methods and all other problems involved necessary to produce the largest and best crops.

He must plant in season, so that the crop may fully mature and in the fall his splendid crop of the one standard variety, well grown and matured, free from mixture, free from disease and properly graded to the market standard at the community warehouse, will amply repay him in the satisfaction of a thing well done, the larger yield of good potatoes and the increased size of the bank account.

One of the greatest assets of any agricultural community is the reputation of habitually producing a more than ordinary quality of some one particular product and this reputation can be built up only by well organized, intelligent, honest community effort.

**DISCUSSION**

A Member—What do you find to be the best preventive of scab?

Mr. Hicks—There are two treatments for it, one is the formalin treatment, the other is the corrosive sublimate. Either will destroy the disease upon your potatoes, but if you plant again in soil that is infected with scab, you will have a scabby crop just the same. The only way to clean up your soil is to keep potatoes off of it for seven years. If you do that and then go back upon the soil following clover, the chances are, if your seed is clean, that you will have no scab on your crop. The formalin treatment is the simplest, probably not as effective as the corrosive sublimate. For this treatment, put a pound of formalin in thirty gallons of water and soak your seed in that solution for two hours. For the other treatment, you had better get a bulletin from Madison, for it must be very accurately done.

A Member—What is the average yield of potatoes per acre?

Mr. Hicks—One hundred and fifteen bushels.

A Member—To what might it be increased?

Mr. Hicks—To from 250 to 400 bushels.

A Member—What would we get then for our potatoes if we all did that?

Mr. Hicks—It depends entirely on how many acres are planted. One of the greatest troubles in Wisconsin is that there are thousands and thousands of acres planted to potatoes that ought to be in corn and clover. Many a farm that has only one or two old scrub cows ought to have from twenty-five to forty head of cattle. That is what is making the trouble with our Wisconsin potatoes today. If you go into Chicago and study the market conditions, you will be almost ashamed that you live in Wisconsin.

A Member—What causes the black core in the potatoes lately? I have had a great deal of it this year.

Mr. Hicks—I do not know, without seeing the potato, just what you have in mind. It is quite likely that the dark hollow centers come from weather conditions. You remember last fall we had very warm, wet weather, and
the potatoes grew very rapidly and got very large. Hollow heart is liable to follow that kind of weather, especially in some of the larger, late varieties. There is a dark center that is entirely different which comes from storage conditions. It was found a few years ago that in shipping when the cars are very much heated, there would be a lot when they got to Chicago that would have black centers. That same condition was reproduced in the laboratory by subjecting sound potatoes to a given temperature a little above blood heat for a day or more.

A Member—Is it not true that in a good many potato centers all the large tubers are shipped out and those left for seed are rather small?

Mr. Hicks—I think so. I will warrant that some years there will be plenty of small potatoes planted. When potatoes are high, there are lots of small ones planted. I want to tell you of an interesting incident in connection with our Wisconsin seed potatoes. A year ago in January, Prof. Stuart, of Washington, was to have a little potato exhibit at Cornell University during their Farmers' Course. He wrote to Prof. Milward and asked us to send some show samples from Wisconsin. We sent down some Rural New Yorkers and a few Green Mountains. We didn’t hear much from the exhibit until in the spring, when we got inquiries asking, “where can we get some of those Rural New Yorkers we saw at the Cornell exhibit?” Prof. Milward informed the parties and the man who furnished the sample sold all he had at a dollar a bushel and might have sold many more. A man at Tomahawk, who furnished the Green Mountains, sold his two cars at the same price to parties in Michigan. Remember, Wisconsin has the best seed potatoes in the world and you are in position to get them with the certification of the Agricultural College that they are free from disease.

A Member—Will soil conditions in southern Wisconsin make any difference in the variety of Green Mountain potatoes from northern grown seed?

Mr. Hicks—The Green Mountain, we find, as a whole, do not prove as satisfactory on the heavier types of soil. Take it down here where your soils are well handled and liable to be on the heavy side, the Green Mountains are liable to grow very large and get out of shape.

A Member—What time should we plant late potatoes?

Mr. Hicks—I think late potatoes should be planted about the first of June. The bulk of the late crop is planted from the 10th to the 25th of June, goes on the market in an unripe condition and is discriminated against for that reason.

Adjourned to 1:30 P. M.