merchandise from a stock of its own. It does not carry stock of any description. Each transaction is carefully considered in meetings of its membership and definitely concluded upon, and action is only taken after it is found that there is a thorough accord in opinion.

POTATO SEED CERTIFICATION.

W. D. Juday, Rhinelander, Wis.

Certification should be considered both from the buyer's and from the producer's standpoint.

The Buyer's Standpoint

The buyer wants his seed potato stock to be variety pure, free from serious disease, fairly true to type and reasonably uniform in shape. He is generally buying from men concerning whom he knows little or nothing, men who do not always give him the quality of seed he rightly expects. For this reason he welcomes a system which will reasonably assure him that he is getting what he pays for; and for this assurance he is willing to pay a little premium.

The Producer's Standpoint

In viewing certification from the farmer's standpoint, we can readily see that all potato growers do not want to grow certified seed and should not try to do so. Certification is for the man who is willing to treat his seed, spray with Bordeaux mixture, pull diseased and mixed hills from his field, exhibit at fairs and potato shows and sell only well graded stock of his own growing. A grower with a lower ideal should not attempt it.

Some of the Benefits of Certification

The next question is, "How much of a premium is the farmer to get for all this trouble?" A reasonable charge is 50 cents per bushel above market price for the well sorted stock. Charging exorbitant prices will tend to make certification unpopular with the prospective buyer and discouraging to the grower.

A farmer should consider, too, that part of the benefit derived from certification which comes in the form of increased yield and added ability to grow a better potato crop. The practices desirable for certification are practices which will always give more bushels of better potatoes to the acre. Even for table stock, a better price can be obtained for this grade than for the average sort.

Farmers receiving certification also get valuable information concerning the different phases of the potato game. They are shown diseases they did not know were in their fields and at the same time given methods of control. The best cultural practices are taken up with the inspector, new potato problems discussed, and plans for grading, exhibiting and advertising talked over. In short, the services of an expert are possible for every applicant. All the farmer has to do is to show his willingness to learn.

The scope of certification is limited. It carries with it a personal responsibility and must therefore be an individual rather than a community affair. It is now established on a sound basis in
Wisconsin and each farmer should strive to keep it so, by having field conditions right, by practicing a strict grading on the field or in the bin, and by offering his product at a reasonable quotation. The measure of its success will depend upon the number of satisfied customers. The ideal should be to carry on the work so that it will be a profitable protection, both to the buyer and to the seller.

DISCUSSION

Question. What are the definite objects of seed potato certification in Wisconsin?

Answer. There are two important objects. The first is that the plan will assist in making available a certain amount of standard seed stock which can be used for community seed development in Wisconsin. Each year a large amount of seed is interchanged between counties and between different sections of the state and it is highly desirable that this stock shall be adaptable to the particular region for which it is intended. The second object of the plan is to develop the pure seed potato trade in Wisconsin. Many outside sources are looking to Wisconsin for seed stock and they are very glad to take advantage of any plan which will furnish them information on the standard of the stock offered for sale.

Question. What are the advantages in the plan of seed certification over the old or common method of buying seed potatoes?

Answer. Under this plan a complete record is furnished relative to the condition of the field, disease freedom, variety, purity, yields, quality, etc. Although mistakes are liable to be made, the description or record furnished by the inspector is usually accurate. Although even good seed is liable to prove unsatisfactory under undesirable conditions, it is, however, of considerable satisfaction to the purchaser of seed stock to be able to secure the above record.

Question. How is this work associated with the general plan and purposes of field extension work?

Answer. Through the seed potato inspection service the potato inspector is able to reach many potato growers who do not receive inspection for certification. An interest is aroused in such matters as securing straight seed stock and in a practical plan of farm selection of seed. One of the chief advantages of seed potato certification is that it arouses a special interest in better seed stock on the farm and many men who have undertaken this work have begun for the first time better methods of growing and selecting their own seed stock.

Question. How many farmers get their potatoes certified?

Answer. In 1915 about 105 farmers received certificates. 172 made application.

Question. What are the common causes for rejections or refusal to issue certificates?

Answer. Very often undesirable cultural conditions such as poor stands, general weak vine growth, potato beetle injury, arsenic burning, etc., and a combination of these troubles cause rejection. Other causes are mixed fields, specific diseases, such as rhizoctonia (black scurf), common scab, late potato blight and rot, etc.

Question. Who is responsible for the final grade of stock turned out and who is responsible in cases of dissatisfaction?

Answer. It is apparent that after inspection has been given and definite instructions given to the grower that the grower must be finally responsible for the quality of stock sold. The in-
spection service makes every effort possible to give definite instructions and to examine all stock thoroughly. However, such troubles as tuber rots or damage from freezing may occur after the inspection is made and the potato grower must remove these troubles whether they showed in the inspection or not. It is often necessary also to leave certain definite instructions with the grower relative to sorting according to size. The grower is responsible that these instructions shall be carried out.

Question. Is there a misunderstanding on the part of both the grower and the buyer of certified seed relative to the standard allowed under the plan?

Answer. Yes, there is very often a misunderstanding. Some buyers of seed stock make an unreasonable demand relative to size and quality. The inspection service is obliged to adopt a standard which is consistent with field conditions. Obviously, perfection can-

FIG. 29.—WHERE CERTIFIED POTATOES WERE GROWN
In 1915, 110 growers raised 57,000 bushels of certified potatoes, an increase of 63 growers and 34,000 bushels of potatoes over the preceding year.
not be reached. Growers of certified seed stock cannot be expected to furnish select exhibit stock as certified seed.

Question. Do many of the growers of certified seed fail to live up to the standard?

Answer. As a rule the standard of certified seed is far above the average seed stock which is offered for sale. Some growers, however, do not sort as carefully as they should and in some cases the stock has shown too large a percentage of common scab and black scurf. The inspection service is constantly warning the holders of certificates against these troubles.

Question. About what price per bushel does certified seed bring?

Answer. This will vary somewhat with market conditions and will also vary with different growers. Well sorted stock under average season conditions should bring from one dollar to one dollar and a quarter per bushel in car lots. Some growers of certified seed have sold their stock field run, simply sorting out under sized and coarse stock, at eighty cents per bushel when the average market price ranged around forty cents. Small amounts of carefully selected seed must bring a price to warrant the extra care given in sorting and packing.

Question. Will it pay the average farmer to get his potatoes certified?

Answer. The plan is not adapted to the man who will not give the very best of attention to every cultural detail and who is not interested in seeking out the best markets for his stock.

Question. What must a potato grower do to secure certification? What is the regular method of application?

Answer. All applications for inspection must be filed at the Horticultural Department, Wisconsin Experiment Station, Madison, Wisconsin, by July 1. In 1916 the inspection fee required for four acres or less was $6.00; over four acres, up to and including eight acres, $9.00; and one dollar per acre additional for every acre above eight. The application fee which must accompany the application is one-half of the regular fee.

COMMUNITY POTATO GROWERS' ASSOCIATIONS IN BARRON COUNTY

R. L. Cuff, Barron.

In the spring of 1914 the conditions relative to potatoes in Barron county were about as they were in most of the other localities in Wisconsin. The potato growers, as a whole, were growing too many varieties in the same field, were not sorting closely enough and paid little attention to disease. A few of them were trying to grade up their potatoes. There were only about two men in the county who did any certification work.

The county produces on an average about one million and a half bushels per year, so it was thought that a little work on potatoes might be of as much benefit as any other line of work that could be taken up. Under the leadership and direction of the agricultural committee of the county board, the agricultural representative and state supervisor went through the cities, villages and country places throughout the county and organized in all twenty