

FRESNO PIONEER IN RAISINS

Busy California City Center of Dried Grape Industry.

PRODUCED BY SUN AND SOIL

Toothsome Fruits Go to Consumer with no Artificial Sweetening or Chemical Processes—Omaha to Observe Day.

Fresno, the geographical center of California, is the hub of the greatest raisin-producing section of that state and hence of the United States. Fresno county produces more raisins than any other county in California, though by no means all of them. Tulare, Kings and Madera counties, all of which border on Fresno, are heavy producers, while Kern county, or, in fact, most any part of the great San Joaquin valley, raises its share. Then there are the southern California vineyards to be counted in.

But Fresno, this beautiful city of some 26,000 population, is the pioneer raisin grower, the center of the great vineyard country, just as it was once the center of the greatest grain section of the state and is still of the deciduous fruit belt. Its sandy, loamy soil, like that of Tulare, Kings, Kern and Madera counties, is most highly adapted to these products and is watered by the most complete system of irrigation on the American continent.

Muscate Principal Grape.
The raisin is made from the Muscatel or Muscat grape, mostly. The process of its making is as simple as nature itself. In fact that most people of the eastern or middle states are grossly in error about. They have the vague idea that some artificial process is resorted to to sugar and cure the raisin. The fact is, raisin growers have to be careful not to let nature make their raisins too sugary, to use a term common to the industry. No artificial enters into its making at all. Nature does all the work, assisted by strong-backed men to pick and care for the grapes.

The Muscatel or Muscatel grape vine grows down on the ground. It is never trained up like other grapes. It is a most rugged plant. It sinks its roots deep in the soil and lives for long years. The vines are set at right angles eight feet one way and ten feet the other apart, so as to make straight rows across the field no matter which way one looks. This is for the purpose of cultivation, for a vineyard requires a great deal of cultivation. The vines are pruned in the winter after the leaves and fruit are off. Each vine is cut back nearly to the base, leaving about five short prongs of two or three knuckles or joints each. Viewing a naked, newly pruned vineyard in the dead of the winter season, one unacquainted with the facts would rather believe that by May it could develop to such lengths as to form one complete, solid mass of green over the entire area—some vineyards of hundreds of acres in extent. But that is what occurs. These prongs pruned back to the body of the vine grow out until they meet and overlap at the respective distances of eight and ten feet and covered with their deep, green foliage form a solid covering by what is regarded in this section as springtime.

Gather Crop in August.
The raisin grapes are not ready for picking until about August. Sometimes starting the last of July. The vines yield two and three crops, one picking beginning in a large vineyard almost before the other is completed. In fact, they depend entirely on the sun and how promptly the grapes ripen. The first picking is only intended to gather the ripest and an experienced picker has no difficulty in determining when the grapes are ripe. Many vineyardists have found it profitable to sell the last crop of grapes green without making raisins of them and to turn them in on their vineyards after the last picking. They fatten on the sugar-fruit.

In picking the grapes one has only to equip himself with a short knife made for the purpose. It is a squatting business, and, incidentally, it is the Chinese and Japanese make the best grape pickers, for they are squatting people. The picker has a tray made of shakes laid side by side so as to form a flat surface with cleats at the ends, about two by three feet. He simply lays his grapes in clusters upon one of these trays and leaves it on or between the vines for the sun to cure the grapes. At a good picking a vine usually fills a tray and leaves grapes for the next picking. Usually twenty pounds of grapes are placed on a tray and that makes up into about five pounds of raisins. When a vineyard has been picked over these grape laden trays stretch in great rows clear across the vineyards.

Raisins Are Sun Dried.
How long does it take for these grapes to lay into raisins? That depends on how vigorously the sun shines. Usually in the earlier crops it takes from three to five days. Then when the grapes are dry enough on one side one man, who goes through the vineyard for that purpose, turns them on the other side. This is done simply by laying an empty tray on the covered one and turning it over. That puts up to the sun the side that has been against the tray.

When the grapes are dried on both sides men go through the vineyards and put them into sweat boxes—pine boxes about two feet wide, three long and ten inches deep. These boxes are filled with the dried raisins and in time gathered up and hauled off to the packing houses or the vineyardist's warehouse, which on the large ranches is on the place.

That, in brief, is all there is to making raisins. But there is a vast amount more detail and hard work to the keeping of a vineyard and the caring for the fruit than could be told in three times that space. It involves much hard, laborious work and some science. The later crops are not out of the way before the fall rains, so that the utmost care must be taken to guard the drying fruit from the wet. A little rain will not hurt, provided the raisins can be immediately subjected to the warmth of the sun or the drier, but much moisture will mildew and ruin them. On the larger vineyards artificially heated drying houses are maintained for the later crops and there the danger from rain is not so great, but the small vineyardist who does not run one of these driers must be constantly stacking and unstacking his trays to guard against the wet. These trays with their fruit upon them are stacked up at night, perhaps fifteen or twenty high, properly capped to turn the rain and unstacked in the morning. This involves a lot of hard work.

Careful Cultivation Required.
About the only time a vineyard requires no attention is between the picking of the last crop of grapes and the pruning, say from October to January, and again from the time the vines have reached their full growth and the bloom is matured to the picking. As soon as the vines are pruned in January or February the plowing begins and then the irrigating and cultivating are kept up alternately. The weeds must be kept out entirely and the soil must be well watered.

One of the chief problems of the California vineyardist is that of labor; not enough white forces can be obtained. In some years they have had to depend on the Japanese and Chinese and so unsatis-

factory has this proved that in some cases the owner has simply sold his grapes on the vine to the oriental and let him harvest and market the crop. Digger Indians were used in former years by some vineyardists, but they were neither industrious nor numerous enough to meet the demand.

After the raisins leave the ranch those that are sold to the big raisin and fruit packers, they are prepared for the market. Duff hands in these packing houses, employing large numbers of women and girls, sort and grade them and place them in pretty packages or boxes, while those that are "stemmed" are placed in sacks. They are the "house" and "house" raisins you buy. This stemming process corresponds with threshing of grain and a stemmer looks like a big grain separator.

There is one kind of raisin that does grow up, or whose vine is trained up on sticks; that is the seedless raisin, which is used as a substitute for currants. It is of two varieties, chiefly in California—the Seedless Sultan and the Thompson Seedless. It is smaller than the Muscat or Muscatel and grows in very much larger clusters. It is a very delicious fruit.

There was a time in the early '80s when wise men predicted that the "bottom" will drop out of this raisin business, for about every rancher in the San Joaquin valley was setting out vines. One vineyard in Kings county, what was then the western part of Tulare county, consisted of 970 acres. It was known far and wide as the Lucerne vineyard and was the largest in the country. But the bottom is far from dropping out. The raisin business is still a very profitable one. The raisin industry today is stronger and better and surer than ever. It ought to go on increasing in profit every year. It is a science, for the best brain of the country has been applied to its care and culture.

History of the Crop.
In the old days, the far days, when the world was younger and simpler, raisins, figs and honey were the only sweets. Sugar, even in Roman times, was a rare drug, prescribed for medicine. Sweet foods and drinks were made with honey and raisins. The sweet wine, which the Roman matrons were permitted to drink, in the sober times of the republic, was a sort of a syrup of raisins steeped in wine. The Greeks had a similar syrup, prepared somehow with smoke. In all the Mediterranean countries, raisins were one of the earliest and most universal articles of food. The gift of Agaius to David was "300 loaves and two bottles of wine, and five sheep ready dressed, and five measures of pears, corn, and an hundred clusters of raisins and 200 cakes of figs." When David, pursuing the Amalekites, came on a famished Egyptian slave, left behind, too weak to talk, they gave him bread, and he did eat; and they made him drink water; and they gave him a piece of a cake of figs, and two clusters of raisins; and when he had eaten, his spirit came again to him. One of the prohibitions of those who had taken the vow of a Nazirite, during the time of their separation, was that they should not "eat moist grapes, nor dried." During all the middle ages, raisins were one of the articles of commerce, across Europe, when almost all other commerce was stopped. Raisins were part of the food served by early Russian cars to their druzhina, or followers. During the darkest of the dark ages, some commerce still survived, in the most precious things—pearls, silks, wine, women, and raisins. England has been, for more than a thousand years, the principal raisin importer of the world, deriving its raisins from Spain, Smyrna, Calabria, the Lipari Islands, the south of France, and, recently, from Africa, Australia and South America.

Processes Used in Europe.
The oldest way of making raisins is simply to leave them on the vines until the clusters are dried. These are Shakespear's "raisins of the sun." A quicker way is to cut the stalk part way through, to hasten drying. More commonly, they were cut and laid on the ground. "Dipping" has always been common—in Spain and France, dipping in it is a favorite custom in Asia Minor, dipping in hot water on which floated a film of olive oil. The finest raisins have always been served in clusters; the commoner sorts were always more or less separated from their stems.

These were the raisins which were the world's luxury, until California produced for the first time clean raisins, dried on wooden trays. California first equalized the moisture and graded the size of raisins. California first marketed stemmed raisins really seedless. California first offered a sun-dried world already cloyed with sweet, raisins palatable to even its jaded taste. And now California, raising day publicly is teaching the world a hundred new ways to serve raisins, and a hundred new reasons for eating them.

The only foods older or more universal than raisins are meat and bread. From the beginning of time, raisins have marked the center and the spread of civilization. They were the first luxury, and have been the chief delicacy of mankind. Of all staple things, only wheat and beef surpass them. And of all staples, no others are so strictly limited in their field of production.

Omaha will join in the movement to popularize the use of raisins, started by the Fresno Chamber of Commerce, by using many raisins April 25, the day set aside in honor of the raisin. Raisin dishes of various kinds will be served at the principal hotels of the city. Several Omaha bakeries will put out raisin bread.

Since the Land show, where raisin bread was distributed free by the Fresno Chamber of Commerce, Omaha consumption of raisins has greatly increased. One Omaha bakery is turning out hundreds of loaves a week to meet the demand.

Special raisin dishes and raisin bread will be served April 25 by the Home, Henshaw, Paxton, Merchants and Loyal hotels.

In other cities throughout the country some similar observance of the day will bear testimony to the fruits of the Fresno advertising campaign.

Settling Rapidly in the Fertile Cache Valley

People Find Garden Spot in Southern Part of Idaho and Buy Land.

In the southernmost part of the rapidly growing state of Idaho, adjoining the Utah line, in the Cache valley, 15,000 acres of fertile land have been thrown open to settlement. The Cache Valley Colonization and Townsite company have launched the project and are now rapidly filling up this country with people from various parts of the United States. The vast resources of this rich land are fully realized by all who once visit the valley.

Most of the land is cleared and some of it is in crops. That which is not now under cultivation, simply awaits the touch of man's hand to spring into the most fertile of fields, where abundant crops will be yielded year after year for an indefinite period.

Cache valley is known as the "granary" of Utah and Idaho, and it might be with equal appropriateness referred to as the sugar beet storehouse of this section, for the sugar beet has become one of the staple crops of the valley and the establishment there of two immense sugar beet factories has meant much for the farmers of the Cache valley.

Cache valley is an empire in itself, capable of supporting a population of 300,000 through its agricultural resources alone. The valley stretches from Paradise, Utah, on the south, to Oxford, Idaho, on the north. It is more than sixty miles long and from twenty to thirty miles wide, and contains about 1,000 square miles, about one-third of which lies in southern Idaho. The Idaho portion of the valley is just as fertile, just as productive, and in all ways as desirable as the portion lying in Utah.

In fact it is a continuation of the same conditions, and the same climate. The north portion, although not subjected heretofore to the same intense cultivations as the southern part, has been just as prolific in proportion to cultivation as any section of the valley.

The two large sugar factories of Cache valley have played a conspicuous part in the prosperity of the valley in the last few years. In the year 1909 these factories distributed among the farmers for beets, the sum of \$200,000, and for the factory labor, the sum of \$270,000.

Fruit growing is another industry for which Cache valley is noted. The apple is "king" in Cache, and over the entire country can be found no better apple than is produced here. In the year 1909 17,600 boxes of apples were shipped from the Cache valley, and in 1910 the yield was fully a third greater. Wheat was for many years the chief industry of that valley. In 1909 the crop of wheat alone amounted to 3,000,000 bushels. Dairying should also be mentioned as an important industry, the products for last year in that line were estimated at \$2,000,000.

Cache valley is also noted for the production of alfalfa, and for all crops of hay and forage. It is celebrated for its horses and stock.

In this fruitful valley the colonization plan is being carried out and any one with the inclination may take advantage of the opportunity. Canals have been constructed which will carry water to every acre of the tract. These canals are fed from Minik Creek, an ever constant stream of water supplied from the snows of the Wasatch mountains, and from two immense reservoirs into which the waters of the stream are emptied during the season when not being used for irrigating purposes. The huge reservoirs are now being filled ready to be turned on the land. The water right goes with the land which cannot be had without the water, nor the water without the land. Most of the land has a gentle slope south and east easy to irrigate and a great deal of it under fence.

Spring Humors

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C. M. McQUOWN, Secretary EXCEL COM. COMMERCIAL CLUB, Boise, Idaho.

Calldwell Explains Change of Marble to County Board

Says that the Board Preferred the Colorado Marble in the First Place.

George W. Calldwell of Caldwell and Drake, the contractors of the new court house, was granted a hearing Saturday morning by the county commissioners to show why he had advised the marble work to the Colorado White Marble company instead of securing the Italian marble, as called for in the specifications. It is one of the conditions of the contract that all sub-contracts for material must be approved by the board.

This unwarranted change was one of the charges brought against Calldwell and Drake by Architect John Latenser last week. In a signed communication to the board the architect states that the contractors never spoke to him about changing to "Italian" and would not have had his recommendation had they done so.

Mr. Calldwell had J. F. Manning, general manager of the Colorado company, with him Saturday morning, showing samples of the marble. The contractor asserts that the whole case is "much ado about nothing," and that the board wanted Colorado marble in the first place, but that they thought that it would come too high. He says that the Colorado company has come down \$25,000 in their bid. The contract calls for \$20,728 worth of marble.

The board took the matter of approval or disapproval of the change under consideration until Monday morning.

Commissioner Lynch is strongly opposed to allowing the change and says that the board should stand pat. He is highly dissatisfied with the attitude assumed by the contractors and the slow progress of the work.

SKIN-TORTURED AND DISFIGURED BABIES

And Worn-Out, Worried Parents Find Comfort in Cuticura Soap and Ointment.

Is your little one a sufferer from itching, burning eczema or other torturing, disfiguring skin trouble? Are you, yourself, worn out by long, sleepless nights and ceaseless anxiety, and have you tried treatment after treatment without avail? If so, you will read with interest the following letter from Mrs. Noble Tubman, of Dodson, Mont., telling what Cuticura soap and Cuticura ointment did for just such a case as yours:

"When my baby boy was six months old, his body was completely covered with large sores that seemed to itch and burn, and cause terrible suffering. The eruption began in pimples which would open and run, making large sores. His hair came out and finger nails fell off, and the sores were over the entire body, causing little or no sleep for baby or myself. Great sores would come off when I removed his shirt."

"We tried a great many remedies but nothing would help him, till a friend induced me to try Cuticura soap and ointment. I used the Cuticura soap and ointment but a short time before I could see that he was improving, and in six weeks' time he was entirely cured. He had suffered about six weeks before we tried the Cuticura soap and ointment, although we had tried several other things and doctors too. I think the Cuticura remedies will do all that is claimed for them and a great deal more."

Cuticura soap and ointment are sold by druggists and dealers everywhere, but mothers of skin-tortured infants and children can obtain a liberal sample of each, mailed free, with a thirty-two page booklet on the skin and its treatment, by addressing "Cuticura, Dept. A, Boston, Mass."

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