

Sugar Beets -- New Crop for Arizona

An amendment to the U.S. Sugar Act of 1948, in April of this year, assures Arizonans that they will have home-grown sugar on their tables in 1966. This is pleasing to more than just our palates. Both agriculture and industry will benefit. Arizona farmers will have a new cash crop for at least 20,000 acres of land. A new multimillion-dollar factory which will employ over 200 skilled workers is to be built to process sugar beets.

D. F. McAlister

The allotment of sugar beet acreage to Arizona was not a matter of chance. Officials of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, who have responsibility for administering the Federal Sugar Act, had to be convinced on several points. They needed assurance that sugar beets could be grown successfully in Arizona, that there was an economic need for a new crop, that a sugar processing company would be willing to build a factory to extract the sugar from the sugar beets produced and, last but not least, that there would be a market for the sugar.

Proved We Could Qualify

Gov. Paul Fannin, his Sugar Beet Committee (led by its enthusiastic chairman, Floyd Smith) and the Spreckles Sugar Company were able to show at the hearings in Washington, D.C. last December that Arizona could qualify on all counts for a sugar beet acreage allotment. Dean Harold E. Myers of this college presented convincing evidence that sugar beets could be grown successfully in Arizona, and that there was a need for the crop for our farmers.

Officials of the Spreckles Sugar Company, one of the oldest, successful sugar beet processing companies in the west, are enthusiastic about the development of a sugar beet industry in Arizona. We can grow sugar beets as a fall-planted crop in Maricopa, Pinal, Yuma and Pima Counties for

Dr. McAlister is assistant director of the Agricultural Experiment Station and head of the Agronomy Department. He has directed sugar beet trials these past few years in many parts of Arizona.



TWO PHOTOS ABOVE show sugar beet date-of-planting and fertilizer experiments at the Mesa Branch Station in May of this year. Beets were planted the previous November and December. Some bolting (flowering) occurred in October plantings, none in those planted in November. John Nelson, farm specialist at the Mesa Branch Station, is shown in each photo. His research is concerned with sugar beets and grapes.

late spring and early summer harvest. In Cochise, Graham and perhaps some of the northern counties, the crop can be planted in the spring and harvested in the fall and early winter.

The possibility of a long processing period is especially important to a sugar beet processor because of the large capital investment necessary to build a factory. Interest charges continue, whether a factory is in operation or not. Most sugar beet factories in the northern states are idle for eight or nine months each year.

If enough acreage could be planted at both low and high elevations in Arizona, a sugar beet factory could be kept in operation for six months or more.

Transportation Big Item

It is too early to predict the areas where sugar beets will be grown in

Arizona. The fact that the crop can be produced in a certain location will be only one of the important considerations. Another will be nearness to the processing factory. The site for this new factory was chosen recently. It is almost certain that a sizable number of farmers near the factory will grow sugar beets because of the low cost of hauling them to the plant.

In areas too distant from the factory for delivery by truck, receiving centers at points on a railroad must be built. The processor must be able to arrange for an even flow of sugar beets to the factory at harvest time, since there is a definite limit to plant capacity in the daily operation. The beets must move almost immediately from the field to the factory once they have been dug, since the exposed roots are highly perishable in our climate.

Here's Our Mystery Picture



Here's a mystery picture which will make you old timers scratch your heads and ponder a bit. Where was this photo taken?

Who is the man taking the bridle off the mule? Turn to Page 24 for the answer.

(Photo by Bob Halvorson)

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To operate profitably, a sugar beet factory should have raw material for continuous processing for several months. It would be impractical to start operations for a small acreage of sugar beets grown in an isolated area. A successful sugar beet industry anywhere calls for close and friendly cooperation between farmers and the processor.

Grown In Many Counties

Sugar beet production experiments at the Branch Experiment Stations at Mesa, Safford and Yuma, as well as cooperative tests with farmers in Cochise, Graham, Greenlee, Navajo and

Yavapai Counties since 1960, have demonstrated excellent yields and sugar content under a wide range of growing conditions. Root yields have varied from 12 to 45 tons per acre, with sugar contents of 13 to 20 percent. These tests show which varieties now available are adapted to Arizona growing conditions. A wide range in planting and harvest dates demonstrates that a factory can be assured of a supply of sugar beets for a long processing period.

Additional information will be needed before recommendations can be made to Arizona farmers for growing sugar beets. There is every assurance that the necessary facts will be on hand in time to plant in 1966.



Cochise County

KAWT, Douglas—6:15 a.m. Mon. through Fri.

KHIL, Willcox — Mon. thru Fri., 2 p.m.

Coconino County

KCLS, Flagstaff—Tues. and Thurs., 8:20 a.m.

KGLS, Flagstaff (Home Agent) — Thurs., 9:45 a.m.

KPGE, Page — Fri., 2:30 p.m.

Graham County

KATO, Safford — Sat., 9:30 a.m.

Mon. thru Fri., 12:45 p.m. (daily)

Maricopa County

KTAR, Phoenix — Mon. thru Fri., 5:55 a.m.

KOY, Phoenix — Tues. thru Sat., 5:40 a.m.

KOY, Phoenix — Sunday Garden Club of The Air, 8:35 a.m.

KPHO, Phoenix — Mon., Cotton Report, 12:40 p.m.

KPHO, Phoenix — Thurs., Dairy and Livestock Report, 12:40 p.m.

KUPD, Phoenix — Mon. thru Fri., 5:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m.

KCAC, Phoenix — Mon. thru Sat., 6:30 a.m.

Mohave County

KAAA, Kingman—Mon., 10:45 a.m.

Navajo County

KDJI, Holbrook — Tues., 1:00 to 1:15 p.m.

Pinal County

KPIN, Casa Grande — Mon. thru Sat., 6:55 a.m.; Mon. and Fri., 9:30 a.m.; Tues., Thurs. and Sat., 12:20 p.m.

Santa Cruz County

KNOG, Nogales — Mon., 6:30 a.m.

Yavapai County

KYCO, Prescott — Mon., Wed. and Fri., 5:55 p.m.

KNOT, Prescott — Mon., Wed and Fri., 5:35 a.m.

Yuma County

KVOY, Yuma — Mon. thru Fri., 5:45 a.m.

KYUM, Yuma — Mon. thru Fri., 6:25 a.m.

10:05 a.m., Sat.

Sheep Income \$5.8 Million

Cash income from the sale of sheep and wool during 1963 in Arizona is estimated at \$5.8 million — \$4.3 million from sheep and lamb sales and \$1.5 million from wool sales. The income from sheep, lamb and wool sales in 1962 was estimated at \$5.7 million.