

Cooperation in Packing and Selling Fruit

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COOPERATION on the part of growers in the packing and sale of apples, or other fruit, has met with unqualified success in every case where any society or organization has been conducted on a proper business footing. Contrariwise, every case of failure in cooperation can be traced to inefficient

is given to selling fruit. No grower who looks after his orchards has time to study markets. A salesman, on the other hand, has little else to do.

Practically speaking, therefore, the success or failure of a cooperative organization is narrowed down to the question of obtaining a good salesman and an

fruit, it is better to keep the management and sales departments separate, and have each under the charge of a suitable man.

That cooperation has benefitted the grower in many sections is evidenced by the prices now obtained for the produce raised. In the case of apples a price frequently offered by the buyer, and judged by the farmer to be a good one, was one dollar a barrel on the tree. Many sales, as a matter of fact, took place at lower figures, and some were effected at not more than fifty cents. In sales of this kind the buyers put up the pack while the grower usually supplied labor for picking.

In Norfolk county, Ontario, under cooperation the price to the grower for the years 1909 and 1910 rose to two dollars a barrel on the tree. The average f.o.b. price under the Norfolk association was three dollars a barrel, which is really equivalent to two dollars on the tree, expenses being counted as follow: Cost of selling, twenty cents; picking, fifteen cents; packing, fifteen cents; barrel, forty cents; hauling and loading, ten cents; total, one dollar.

Around Oshawa the net return also now averages two dollars a barrel on the tree. In the Burlington district, which has worked up an export trade to England, the price to the grower averages not less than two dollars ten cents on the tree.

The case of the Hood River (Oregon) organization, however, supplies the best argument in favor of cooperation. Before the Hood River Apple Growers' Union was formed the average price realized by growers was one dollar twenty-five cents a bushel box. Since



The Fruit Producing Possibilities of Eastern Ontario as Demonstrated at the Last Ontario Horticultural Exhibition

management. Yet the fact remains that there are still many fruit growers very half-hearted, if not actually hostile, in their attitude towards cooperation. It will be found that growers of this class are either unaware of the benefits to be derived from cooperation on a business basis, or else that they have been disappointed in the results achieved by some organization of which they have formed part, and which has not had the advantage of capable management.

The trend of all modern business or industrial operations is the sub-division of labor, and the greater the degree to which this sub-division is carried, the cheaper will prove the production or distribution of the goods, whatever they may be, and the higher the ratio of profit. Hence, on merely theoretical grounds, cooperation in packing and selling fruit is a great step in advance, because it creates a sub-division in the labor of the fruit grower, whose time should be given entirely to raising produce and not to selling it. A fruit grower may be, but as a rule is not, a business man. In either case he is making a mistake if he attempts to sell his own fruit, because it may be taken as sine qua non that better prices could be secured by a salesman whose sole time

efficient manager to look after the concern. These two qualities may be united in one man, and in small societies money could be saved by combining the two functions. But in a large concern, which handles a big amount of



Picking Prunes in Mr. Stirling's Orchard, Kelowna, B. C.