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Cooperation in Packing and Selling Fruit

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GROWERS must accept the principle that they cannot be allowed to judge and grade their own fruit. Human nature is too frail, and the longest minded of us is sure to be somewhat biased in favor of his own productions, opinions, or possessions. Those who deem themselves above giving way to personal bias are referred to Herbert Spencer's "Study of Sociology," in which the learned author extends the theory that no one is capable of forming a fair and disinterested opinion on any subject whatever, so strong is the feeling of personal bias which creeps into all opinions, beliefs, sayings, and doings, no matter whether it is a business, social, political, theological question or what not.

This point requires particular emphasis as is evidenced by what happened years ago to a large organization in the Niagara peninsula. Some of the growers in this union had their fruit graded and packed at a central station. Others graded and packed for themselves. These latter, on their own statements, packed about ninety per cent. of their one fruit and ten per cent. se-

conds. In the central packing house the grade ran about sixty per cent. number one and forty per cent. other qualities. But members who packed for themselves received the same price as those who had their packing done in the central station. Clearly this was very unfair; but apart from the unfairness it shows that it is impossible to guarantee the grade unless packing is done by those not interested in the sale of the fruit.

Large fruit may be attractive to the eye but it is not generally so well flavored or so succulent as a medium-sized specimen. Growers, therefore, should make a stand against the fetish worship of large-sized fruit. All fruit that is free from blemish and attains a certain size, not necessarily very large, should be classed as choice fruit.

A FAIR WAY

The fairest way of grading apples, and the same system would apply equally well to peaches, appears to be that practised by the Hood River Apple Growers' Union. The fruit is divided into two grades: Number one and number two (and culls). At Hood River they classify

the grades as "Choice" and "Fancy." This classification is independent of size and applies to color, shape, appearance, and freedom from disease or imperfections. Number one fruit is properly colored and entirely free from disease or blemish. Number two fruit may not be properly colored, and it may possess not more than two stings or blemishes. It must, of course, attain a certain size.

Both classes of fruit are then subdivided on the basis of size in the pack, according to the number of apples which will fill the box. Each box of every grade then contains a fixed number of apples of a uniform size and quality. The boxes are sold as three-tier, three and a half tier, four tier, and four and a half tier, and the number of apples inside is stamped on the box. Both the square and diagonal pack are used.

This system is fair to all parties from the grower down to the public who finally consume the fruit. It is particularly convenient to the retailer who may sell by the pound or by the piece, it enables him to choose a grade that exactly suits his customers and the nature of his trade.



"Barnes" Vineyard, one of the Famous Vineyards in the Niagara Fruit District