1929 amounted to about 11 per cent of the total cost of growing the crop. Experiments comparing yields from ridge and level culture have generally favored the latter. Deeper planting or the furrow plant-shallow cover method will eliminate much of the apparent necessity to resort to ridging as a means of late season weed control. A survey of practices on 258 New York farms indicated that sunburn injury is somewhat reduced by ridging. Unless the ridging is done after the plants are nearly mature, the ridge should be wide at the bottom and flat at the top. Finally, it can no longer be truthfully said that the best potato grower is the one who cultivates most often. Rather is he the grower who handles his weed problem with fewest cultivations and at lowest cost.

CROP AND MARKET NEWS

By early May, Florida had nearly finished harvesting its commercial crop of 1,870,00 bushels of potatoes, and the shipping season was beginning to wane. Output of Florida to late April was fully one-third heavier than to the same time last season, in keeping with the 30% increase of production this year. The lower Rio Grande Valley of Texas also reported a 40% gain in production, or a total commercial crop of 1,030,000 bushels. Movement from Texas was comparing very favorably with that of last season.

Considerable change has occurred this season in containers for Florida potatoes. The double-head barrel is still the most desirable package along the eastern seaboard, but farther west the 100-pound sacks are increasing in popularity, while cities in Ohio, Illinois, and Indiana are asking for the bushel crates. Practically all dealers loaded crates to fill special orders, and the local Growers Association at Hastings averaged about 15 carloads of crates per week since the beginning of the season. One manufacturing concern introduced a new type of wire-bound crate, which is lighter than the usual type. Reports indicate that this package has been well received in terminal markets. Many shippers who still use the barrel are using 100-pound sacks for the U. S. No. 2’s.

Interesting developments are reported with respect to marketing of the summer crop farther north. Establishment of a central marketing agency for the handling of New Jersey’s potato crop is being considered by growers and dealers, with a view to eliminating ruinous competition, New Jersey College of Agriculture has announced. The proposal for a central agency, in which all potato dealers will be represented, came from a committee appointed last fall by growers to effect improvements in the system of selling New Jersey potatoes. If this plan is adopted, it will mean that all prices for New Jersey potatoes will be quoted from one office. —Bureau of Agricultural Eco-
For four weeks from March 28 through April 24 the F. O. B. price for Florida potatoes was steadily maintained at $3.00 per barrel for U. S. No. 1, and 25 cents higher on warehouse packed, washed potatoes. No. 2’s brought about $1.75 per barrel, with washed stock 25 cents higher. Florida suffered some very heavy rains from April 2 to April 15; on April 6, five inches fell in less than 24 hours. Late Blight was prevalent all season but dry weather from February 28 to April 1 checked its development. It spread rapidly, however, after April 3 and on April 18 nearly all vines were dead. Late Blight was the cause of much rot developing on the tubers. This decay, together with the fact that consignments to New York and Philadelphia were heavy during the week of heavy shipments, caused prices to decline to $2.50 per barrel F. O. B. on April 25.

The marketing agencies maintained a firm stand for four weeks and held prices to the higher levels. Had the growers cooperated to a larger extent in eliminating consignments and in stricter culling of the decayed tubers the higher prices may have been maintained.

The Lower Rio Grande Valley of Texas is fast cleaning up, expecting to ship 200 to 250 cars the first half of May. The Eagle Lake, Wharton Sugarland section, with 9000 acres, 20 per cent of which are planted with home grown seed, will probably begin shipments about the last week in May, moving 80 per cent of its crop the first half of June. The last week in April this crop was in a very critical stage as it was badly in need of rain. Shipments are expected to total about 1400 cars but if rain does not fall yields may be cut to total about 35 or 40 bushels per acre.

There has been too much rain in Louisiana and Alabama. Normal yields are expected however which may result in the movement of about 2000 cars from Louisiana and 1600-2000 from Alabama.

In South Carolina the acreage planted is near the 5000 mark compared with 9000 last year. The condition of the crop is excellent, with Cobbler in full bloom about April 20. Yields are expected to be very good. Shipment is expected to start about May 15.

Although poor stands are reported from the Mt. Olive and the Aurora sections the prospects are good in North Carolina. In Pamlico County 400 acres were killed to the ground on April 13. The stands in most sections are reported good. Rainfall has been heavy, particularly around Beaufort but no damage is apparent from excessive rains. The weather has been cool and prospects for a crop are fully as good as last year. It is expected that about 600 cars will move beginning May 29 with the peak June 9-16.

The Norfolk, Virginia, section reports a 10 per cent decrease in acreage. Their movement will probably be slightly smaller than last year and will become heavy after North Carolina’s peak is passed. On the Eastern Shore of Virginia the stands are reported as good as.