

PART VII

Farm Marketing and Level of Living

Location for Marketing

Clark County farms are favorably located for marketing in the Portland metropolitan area. Transportation facilities between farms and collecting, processing and distribution facilities as well as those to distant market destinations are excellent. Clark County is part of the Portland metropolitan area which also includes all the population of Multnomah, Clackamas and Washington Counties in Oregon. The consumer population of this urbanized and industrialized belt was 704,829 in 1950, according to the 1950 Census. Portland, the central city, had 373,628 and the larger neighboring cities within the densely populated area were Vancouver, 41,664; Oregon City, 7,682; Hillsboro, 5,142 and Camas, 4,725. The immediate market area is increasing in population. It ranks 21st in the nation and is fourth on the Pacific Coast. Whereas most of the market is in the immediate metropolitan area, Clark County farmers and agricultural product handlers are also able to compete in the Puget Sound market in commodities which ripen earlier than in the northwestern Washington counties.

Transportation

Facilities for moving products locally and to distant markets are excellent. There is good access to major transcontinental and coastwise railroads and roads as well as to ship routes and airlines focused on Portland.

Rail freight transportation is available through the services of four railroads which pass through Clark County to terminals in Portland, Vancouver and to Puget Sound cities. These are the Spokane, Portland and Seattle Railway which runs eastward from Vancouver along the north bank of the Columbia River to Spokane terminals. The Northern Pacific Railway, the Union Pacific and Great Northern operate joint rail routes between Portland and Seattle which traverse the Columbia River benchlands in Clark County and cross the river into Oregon over a bridge at Vancouver. The Northern Pacific operates a branchline from Vancouver to Yacolt in the interior of Clark County which is important for moving farm woodland products. Most railroad car loadings of livestock products and crops originating in Clark County are made at sidings in Vancouver and Portland.

Most of the primary marketing of farm products from growers and producers to processors, distributors, wholesalers and retailers is by truck. A good highway network over the county permits a rapid and economical trucking service as well as means for farmers to use their own trucks. A recently improved four-lane route (U.S. 99) brings most of the farm areas within two hours trucking time to Vancouver and Portland and five hours to Seattle. Clark has a total of 874 miles of road, ranking 19th among Washington counties. There are 465 miles of paved and asphalt roads and 394 miles of gravelled roads. With the exception of the Cascade foothill section every township has road access year around. Two statewide cooperatives, one of dairy products and the other of poultry products, operate a scheduled hauling service through all farm districts.

Clark County producers enjoy the advantage of low truck freight rates because of their location close to centers of consumption or processing. ^{1/}

Clark County agriculture is well located for water-borne and airline shipment. Growing port facilities at Vancouver, Longview, Camas and Portland handle a large volume of grains originating in the Columbia Basin plateau. Some of the bulky grain and field crops of Clark County merge with this traffic. Nearby air terminal facilities at Portland are available for air shipment of high value specialty products.

Income, Value of Products Sold

Census of Agriculture data on the value of farm products sold show that gross income has been rising in recent years. Clark County farmers received \$6,585,242 for marketed products in 1944, a high demand, war-time year. In 1949 returns were \$8,450,958 and by 1954 were still higher at \$8,584,322.

Total Value of Farm Products Sold in 1954: \$8,584,322

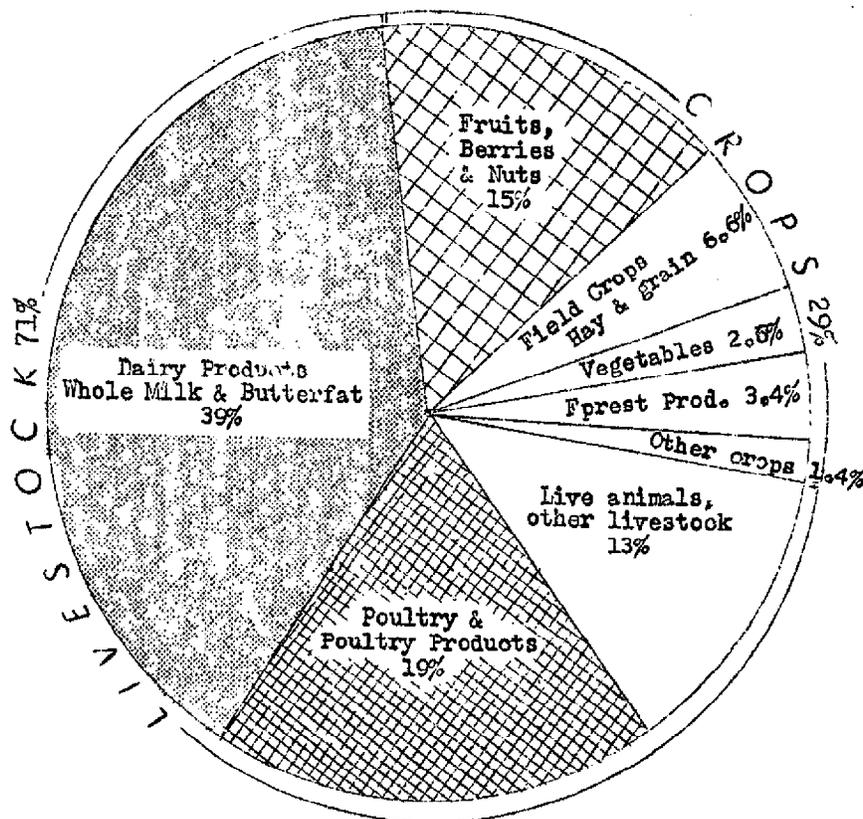


Figure 13.- Sources of Cash Income, Clark County Farms, 1954.

Source: U.S. Census, Agriculture, 1954.

^{1/} Wash. State Council for Highway Research, Commercial Motor Carriers as Highway Users in Washington, Part VI, Volume 2. Olympia, June 1956.

Most of the farm income is received by 1,490 commercial farms, or about one-third of the farms in the county. In 1954 there were 44 farms which marketed a gross of \$25,000 or more; 146 received \$10,000 to \$25,000; 271 received from \$5,000 to \$10,000 and 340 received from \$2,500 to \$5,000. However, the largest number (686 operators) received from only \$1,200 to \$2,500 per year. There were 210 low-income farms who grossed less than \$1,200. Nearly two-thirds of the farms enumerated in the Census were classified as non-commercial with little or no income reported from farm products.

Livestock and poultry and all types of animal products made up 71 percent of the total value of farm products sold in 1954. Whole milk and butterfat sold from farms accounted for over one-third of the total farm income. Poultry and poultry products comprised nearly one-fifth of the total. Fruits, berries and nuts are the most valuable crops. All crops sold by growers made up about one-third of the Clark County farm income.

Clark County gross farm income from the sale of products ranks in the middle group or 19th among the Washington counties. The income is high relative to the area of the county because in area Clark is only 34th, being among the smaller counties of the state. The gross farm income of Clark County is nearly the same as Franklin, Garfield and Kittitas which are larger counties in eastern Washington. The dairy farming income of Clark County is fifth highest in the state and the returns to poultry farmers rank sixth. Being located in an important pulpwood marketing area, Clark County farm woodland owners receive the sixth highest income for forest products.

Marketing of Dairy Products

In 1954, Clark County farmers marketed dairy, poultry, live animals and other livestock products worth a total of \$6,068,113. The sale of whole milk and cream by dairy farmers accounted for over one-half of the total. Farm producers of milk numbered 1,000 and cream producers 265 in 1954. These producers sold 78,639,457 pounds of milk and 147,139 pounds of cream to Grade A milk distributors, dairy plants and direct to consumers. Whole milk was the most valuable farm product of the county, grossing a return of \$3,242,173 for 1,000 producers in all.

Clark County dairymen are located close to large and numerous buyers, handlers and processors of milk. Grade A fluid milk is transferred by means of tank trucks and cans from farms to bottling and processing plants in Portland there are over 25 jobbers, distributors and processors of milk. Within Clark County there are nine state licensed producer-distributors and a plant of the Farmers' Dairy Association and another plant of the Dairy Cooperative Association. Three dairy products plants in Vancouver make ice cream, cottage cheese and ice-milk.

Marketing Eggs and Poultry

Clark County's 1,025 poultry and egg producers sold \$1,625,136 worth of products during 1954. The sale of eggs to distributors, retailers and processors grossed \$715,800. Eggs were the second most valuable commodity marketed in Clark County agriculture. A large portion of the 1,800,000 dozen eggs

Table 32.- Livestock and Livestock Products Marketed
Clark County, 1954.

Class of Livestock Products Sold	Quantity Marketed	Amount Received By Farmers
<u>Dairy Products</u>		
Whole milk-----	78,639,457 lbs.	\$3,242,173
Butterfat-----	147,139 lbs.	84,287
Total all dairy products		\$3,326,460
<u>Poultry and poultry products</u>		
Chickens-----	657,987 birds	\$ 496,826
Eggs-----	1,824,477 dozen	715,868
Turkeys, ducks, geese----		412,442
Total all poultry & poultry products		\$1,625,136
<u>Animals sold alive</u>		
Cattle-----	6,518 head	\$ 783,637
Calves-----	5,994 head	175,755
Hogs and pigs-----	3,272 head	90,093
Sheep and lambs-----	3,255 head	45,789
Horses and mules-----	41 head	5,701
Total all animals sold alive		\$1,100,975
<u>Other livestock and livestock products sold</u>		
		\$ 15,542
Total amount received for livestock and livestock products-----		\$6,068,113

Sources: U.S. Census, Agriculture.

produced are delivered to the egg grading and packaging plant of the Washington Cooperative Farmers' Association plant at Brush Prairie, for wholesale distribution in the immediate urban region and elsewhere in the Pacific Northwest. There is considerable marketing of fresh eggs direct from producers to retailers, and also from producers to consumers in rural localities.

The fresh egg market of the immediate Portland metropolitan area absorbs most Clark County production. Egg marketing of the county is closely integrated with the pattern of five southwestern Washington counties and eight northwestern Oregon counties who supply the urbanized lower Columbia River area.

Live and dressed poultry, broilers and turkeys comprise another marketing activity which returns an annual gross of about \$900,000 to Clark County farmers. Producers deliver live and dressed birds to or make off-farm sales to over 10 processors and handlers in Portland, and to four firms north of Vancouver at Brush Prairie, Orchards and Battle Ground and one at Camas. Broilers and live turkeys are major items sold to wholesalers and retailers. In recent years about 550,000 broilers, 100,000 chickens and 75,000 turkeys have been sold by Clark County producers in the lower Columbia River market area.

Marketing Cattle, Hogs and Sheep

Because of the large consuming market in the greater Portland area there is a nearby concentration of sales yards and meat packing plants to which livestockmen can deliver animals. Country buyers and haulers of live animals are also numerous. Major market outlets are several major packing companies in Portland, three slaughtering firms in Vancouver and licensed community auction yards at Woodland and Vancouver. Portland stockyards are also one of the major livestock market places of the Pacific Coast. Most Clark County livestock moves by truck from farm to auction yards where ownership of the animals is transferred to jobbers, breeders, and packers. There are over ten cold storage lockers in Clark County where meats are packaged and stored. These are important in local sales of stock and poultry from farms. In recent years livestock producers have sold annually over \$1,000,000 worth of live animals in Portland, Vancouver and Woodland. The major volume of trade is in cattle and calves.

Marketing of Crops

Farm marketing of crops is minor compared with the sales in the dairying, poultry and livestock divisions of the county's agricultural economy. Growers' sales of crops, however, have amounted to about \$2,225,000 annually during recent normal crop years or about 25 percent of all cash returns received by farmers. Commercial crops are well-diversified, fruit and berries being the most important dollar earners. Commercial crop growers are favored by location to numerous wholesale and retail outlets handling produce in the Portland metropolitan area. They are also within short trucking distance of several food canneries, freezers, by-products and food processing plants located in Vancouver and Portland.

Fruit, berry, nut and truck crop growers market a major part of their products to the canning, freezing and food distribution industry in Vancouver, Ridgefield, Portland and northwestern Oregon. In Vancouver are two major canneries which contract with Clark County growers. Originally established in 1930 to can purple plums, this cannery in recent years has expanded its line to include green beans, sweet and sour cherries and berries, frozen strawberries and other fruits. The food processing industry in Portland and northwest Oregon is a second major market. It includes over ten canneries and freezing plants which handle all types of fruits, berries and vegetables grown in Clark County.

Filbert nuts are marketed under a Federal Marketing Order. Nearly all of Clark County's filbert nuts are taken by Oregon firms and marketing is guided by the Washington Nut Growers Cooperative and the Filbert Control Board of the Filbert Market Order organization. Local filbert sales from growers to consumers is small, but about 200 tons a year from Clark County have been certified for the national and export market in recent years. 1/

1/ U.S.D.A., AMS, Agricultural Estimates Division, Oregon. Federal Courthouse Bldg., Portland, Oregon.

Other specialized outlets for Clark County crops include feed and grain dealers, potato chip plants, prune dryers, wineries, flour and cereal mills and florist wholesalers. In addition to numerous by-product plants located in Portland and northern Oregon, growers find markets at two potato chip factories and one winery in Vancouver and two prune and fruit drying plants in Portland.

Storage facilities for perishable fruits and for grains, pears, potatoes, hay and other semi-perishable crops are good in Clark County. Eight public frozen food lockers are located in Vancouver and there are three in Camas. Large grain elevator and terminal storages are near at Longview and in Portland.

Table 33.-- Crops Marketed From Clark County Farms, 1954.

Type of Crop Sold	Amount Received By Farmers (Dollars)	Percent All Crops Sold
Fruits, Berries and Nuts (plums, prunes, cherries, filberts, strawberries, raspberries, etc.)	\$1,300,585	58.5
Field Crops (oats, barley, hay and silage, grass seed, potatoes, mint for oil, etc.)	569,338	25.6
Vegetables (snap beans, let- tuce, cabbage, cucumbers)	223,614	10.0
Horticultural Specialties (trees, shrubs, cut flowers, plants, bulbs)	<u>128,055</u>	<u>5.8</u>
Total amount received by farmers for cash crops	\$2,221,592	100.0

Source: U.S. Census, Agriculture.

Marketing Farm Forest Products

Farm forest products are becoming more important to Clark County farmers as a source of income. Though still of secondary value, the farm forest crop is gaining in importance throughout all western Washington. A variety of products are being sold to an increasing number of market outlets. ^{1/} Woodland farmers are within close marketing distance of Longview and Camas, major pulp and paper and wood products manufacturing centers on the Columbia River. Forest products sold consist mainly of pulpwood, sawlogs, fence posts,

^{1/} Bulletin 15, Institute of Forest Products, Dept. of Conservation and Development, State of Washington. Marketing Woodlot Products in the State of Washington. George Stenzel, 1954.

Christmas trees and firewood. Sales in 1954 were made by 281 farm operators living in Clark County and their total returns were \$294,600. The major item sold is pulpwood of alder, cottonwood, hemlock and fir species, amounting to over \$265,000 a year. In forest product sales off-farms, Clark County ranks sixth in the state.

Table 34.- Forest Products on Farms, Clark County, 1954.

Type of Product	Farms Reporting	Quantity
Firewood and fuelwood cut-----	787	6,125 cords
Fence posts cut-----	175	22,453 posts
Sawlogs and veneer logs cut-----	235	13,229 M bd. ft.
Pulpwood cut-----	36	2,631 cords
Total value of firewood, fence posts, logs, lumber, pulpwood and other forest products sold-----	281	\$294,617

Sources: U.S. Census, Agriculture,
Washington Crop and Livestock
Reporting Service.

Agricultural Net Income Compared With Other Income Sources

Although Clark County is an important agricultural county, net income from farm operations makes up less than two percent of the total income earned by all the residents. Income from wages, salaries, rents and profits in non-agricultural occupations and industries was nearly fifty times that from

Table 35.- Types and Sources of Income 1950-1952, Clark County 1/

Type and Source of Income	Income in Dollars By Years			Percentage of County Income by Years		
	1950	1951	1952	1950	1951	1952
Agriculture	\$ 2,273,000	\$ 1,747,000	\$ 2,124,000	1.9	1.2	1.4
Construction	6,170,000	10,550,000	12,050,000	5.2	7.5	8.2
Government	16,091,000	20,252,000	22,280,000	13.4	14.4	15.2
Manufacturing	30,077,000	38,389,000	40,392,000	25.1	27.3	27.6
Service	8,804,000	9,502,000	8,405,000	7.3	6.8	5.7
Transportation and Utilities	11,522,000	15,377,000	14,593,000	9.6	10.9	10.0
Trade	17,111,000	19,499,000	20,077,000	14.3	13.9	13.7
Miscellaneous	3,456,000	3,417,000	3,291,000	2.9	2.4	2.2
Property Income	11,502,000	12,192,000	13,010,000	9.6	8.7	8.9
Other Income	12,828,000	9,761,000	10,407,000	10.7	6.9	7.1
Total	\$119,834,000	\$140,686,000	\$146,629,000	100.0	100.0	100.0

1/ John A. Guthrie and Stanley E. Boyle, County Income Payments in Washington, 1950-1952. Pullman, Wash. Washington State College, Bulletin No. 26.

farming in 1952. Total income in the county was about \$146,629,000 in 1952 while net income or profits received by operators of farms was \$2,124,000. Manufacturing is the predominant source of income in the Clark County area.

Specified Farm Expenditures and Costs

Clark County farmers have an annual total production cost of nearly \$4,000,000. The costs and expenses of operating a farm to grow and harvest crops and raise livestock reduce the net income a farmer receives as profits. In the Census of 1954, farmers reported a total expense approximating \$3,942,940 for feed, labor, gasoline, machine hire and fertilizer. The major production cost item was \$2,259,000 for livestock and poultry feed which accounted for over half of all farm costs. There were 3,095 farms which purchased feeds and their average feed bill was \$730. Labor was the second major cost, totaling \$827,575 or an average of \$653 for the farms who hired labor.

Table 36.- Specified Farm Expenditures in 1954, Clark County

Type of Expenditure	Number of Farms Reporting	Expenditure of all Farms	Average Per Farm
Machine hire.....	2,190	\$ 283,351	\$129.00
Hired labor.....	1,267	827,575	653.00
Feed for livestock and poultry	3,095	2,259,102	730.00
Gasoline, petroleum fuel & oil	2,601	414,345	159.00
Commercial fertilizer.....	914	140,915	154.00
Lime and liming materials.....	121	17,654	146.00
Total production costs		\$3,942,940	

Source: U.S. Census, Agriculture.

Level of Living on Clark County Farms

On the whole farm people have not enjoyed as high a level of living as city people. Farm incomes are lower on the average than urban incomes. Because of the isolated location of many farms, such conveniences as electricity, hot and cold running water and telephones have not been as easily available to farm families. This is the general situation in American agriculture.

In Washington State and in Clark County particularly, however, the farm population compares quite favorably with other population groups in conveniences of modern living. Clark County rural livelihood is slightly below the state farm average but is above the national average. Some isolated, low-income and part-time farms in the hilly sections of Clark County tend to bring down the county average which would otherwise be high. Farm livelihood in the State of Washington has a grade of 154 while Clark County is graded 136. In comparison, the average of all counties in the United States is even lower, being 112.

In facilities, Clark County farm households and farmsteads generally are better than in the state and nation as a whole. These include the use and convenience of electricity, hot water heaters, washing machines, refrigerators and automobiles. Farms are well-electrified. Home plumbing is about equal to

the state average. Clark County agriculture is slightly below normal figures in the state in average net income and in farm housing.

Table 37.- Indices of Level of Living of Clark County Farm Families, 1950 Compared with State and National Averages.

Index Items	Percentage of total farm families with listed index items		
	United States	Washington	Clark County
Farm Family Level-of-Living	122	154	136
Median Income per Family	\$1,567	\$2,380	\$2,193
Electricity	78.3%	92.5%	94.9%
Electric Hot Water Heater	17.4%	49.1%	55.1%
Electric Washing Machine	58.7%	85.4%	88.6%
Home Freezers	12.1%	14.5%	10.6%
Mech. Refrigerators	62.7%	77.4%	92.6%
Telephone	38.2%	57.5%	46.0%
Hot and Cold Water Plumbing	23.8%	70.4%	76.3%
Central Heating	18.1%	17.8%	21.3%
Houses with More than One Person per Room	22.3%	15.7%	14.8%
Automobiles	63.0%	77.6%	79.5%
Travel 10 Miles or More to Trading Center	21.4%	20.5%	17.0%

Source: Walter L. Slocum and Carol L. Stone, The Farm People of Washington at Mid-Century.

As history and statistics presented in these pages have shown, Clark County agriculture is a record of progress by its industrious people. In less than a century those who have chosen to live on the soil have made it an important farming county. Its numerous dairy, poultry, vegetable, fruit, berry and horticultural specialty farms add much to the economic well-being of the area. Many part-time farms provide a secure and wholesome way of life for industrial workers. Each farm stands as a living monument to the spirit of enterprise and progress and faith of the many and varied agriculturists choosing their homes in the Clark County countryside.