

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
BUREAU OF RECLAMATION  
Ephrata, Wash.

ADVANCE--For Release Thursday, September 19, 1946.

EPHRATA, WASH., Thursday, September 19, 1946.—Columbia Basin Project landowners and prospective settlers now can obtain copies of the Columbia Basin Joint Investigations study explaining the equitable plan under which project farmers will repay the Federal Government for part of the cost of building the giant irrigation system to serve a million acres of dry land in south-central Washington.

The Bureau of Reclamation announced today that the 155-page report, "Allocation of Repayment Charges by Class of Land, Problem 13," can be purchased from the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington 25, D. C., for 30 cents.

The principles and recommendations in this report were incorporated into the Columbia Basin Project Act of March 1943, and into the repayment contracts that were negotiated between the United States and the Quincy-Columbia, East Columbia, and South Columbia Basin Irrigation Districts. These contracts, which subsequently were approved by 96 percent of the voting landowners, made possible the recent start of construction on the Main Canal system for the Nation's largest single reclamation project.

To provide equality of opportunity for settlers, construction cost assessments are to be levied according to the repayment capacities of



the various classes of lands. Investigators said that uniform assessments against all classes of land, without regard to differences in their productivity, would give owners of the best lands unfair economic advantage.

Repayable construction charges will average approximately \$85 per acre, with the better-class lands paying more and the poorer-class lands paying less. This charge will be payable over a 40-year period without interest. Repayments will start at the end of a "development" period not to exceed 10 years. Thus, after the "development" period, when landowners are to begin paying their share of the cost of building the irrigation system, the average construction charge will be \$2.12 per acre per year. Project farmers will pay less than one-fourth the cost of building the irrigation system. Revenue from the sale of power from Grand Coulee Dam, key structure of the irrigation works, will be used to pay the remainder.

W. W. Johnston, Ephrata, in charge of development and settlement of Columbia Basin Project lands, headed the investigators of the problem. He was assisted by E. F. Dunmeier, agricultural economist for the State College of Washington, Pullman, and specialists for the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, Farm Credit Administration, Soil Conservation Service, and Bureau of Reclamation.

"Every person who farms on the Columbia Basin Project will be concerned with the repayment policy outlined in Problem 13 of the Columbia Basin Joint Investigations," Johnston remarked. "I suggest that every prospective settler obtain a copy of this report, study it carefully, and retain it for reference purposes so that all phases of the repayment feature will be absolutely clear to him."



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(ADVANCE FOR RELEASE TO PM'S OF TUESDAY, MARCH 4, 1947)

CONTINUOUS MARKET SEEN FOR FAR WESTERN DAIRY PRODUCTS

EPHRATA, WASH., Tuesday, March 4, 1947--Dairy production on the Pacific Slope is not likely to overtake consumption and exports in the predictable future, a Bureau of Reclamation economist said today.

In a talk scheduled for delivery at the State College of Washington's 16th annual Institute of Dairying in Pullman today, Walter U. Fuhriman, chief development economist for the Bureau's million-acre Columbia Basin Irrigation Project in Eastern Washington, said developments since 1941 have materially altered the pre-war outlook.

Fuhriman said that the region's industrial development and population growth, increased per capita consumption of dairy products, prospects for a generally higher level of production, income, and living, and the war-postponed construction of irrigation works have made obsolete 1941 market studies which forecast surpluses of dairy products in the eight Far Western states beginning in the "early 1950's".

TWENTY YEARS AHEAD IN POPULATION

The estimated surpluses were based on a population forecast of  $14\frac{1}{2}$  million for the eight states by 1966, a figure already surpassed, the economist said.

"The per capita civilian consumption of fluid milk and cream in the United States increased from around 350 pounds during the pre-war years to 438 pounds in 1945," he said. "Milk production from 1940 to 1945 increased about 11 percent."

The war postponed by many years the entry of Columbia Basin Project dairy products into Western markets on a large scale, Fuhriman pointed out. Original plans called for bringing 60,600 acres under irrigation by 1945, and 50,000 acres yearly thereafter. Under present construction schedules, 5,400 acres will be irrigated this year, and about 1,300 in 1948. Several more years will be required to complete major irrigation system structures and bring any more land under irrigation, he added.

COLUMBIA BASIN PROJECT BIG FACTOR

Studies have indicated that the Columbia Basin Project at full development will increase by 10 percent the dairy production of the eight Pacific Slope states, the economist said. It was estimated that the project would support 198,000 dairy cows producing an average of 240 pounds of butterfat each, for a total of 47.7 million pounds annually.

Fuhriman said that while the long-time price outlook for the Columbia Basin Project's anticipated dairy industry is good, the Bureau of Reclamation plans new studies regarding the most desirable rate of bringing project lands under irrigation, and means of encouraging the establishment of efficient and adequate agricultural processing and marketing facilities on the project.