Can't Can Water At Price of Tomatoes

One of the most interesting subjects to the average farmer now is what will be the price of tomatoes? How much will the packer pay? This is as much of a puzzle to the farmer as it is to the packer, and vice versa.

Of course the packer will pay all he can afford, and the farmer wants all he can get. He needs it bad this year. But there is only one way to look at the subject, and that is from the market. If there are plenty of canned tomatoes and the stores are selling them at a ridicuously low price, the chances are the packer will not get much and the farmer can't expect much either.

This week one packer said No. 1 cans of tomatoes were selling at 37½ cents a dozen. About 3 cents a can. This is the lowest price seen in some time, and puts the market in a position where production has to meet it.

"I could not pack water in No. 1 cans and sell them at 37½ cents a dozen," said one packer on Monday last. "It would cost me that much if I didn't put anything but water in the can. The cost of labor and the can and the commissioners paid to the brokers would eat up this much if I only put water in the can. How we can make any money with such prices staring us in the face is more than I can figure.

"The cost of tomatoes that goes in the can does not amount to a great deal compared to the can and the labor required to turn out the finished product.

From this statement it will be seen that canned tomatoes are now selling for less than it costs to put them up. Under these conditions how can the farmer expect much for his products? The market is flooded with canned goods, and the prices are dripping all the time. Four cans of No. 2 tomatoes were offered for 25 cents this past week in some of the stores. This is the retail price after the packer, broker, and jobber have had their little bit. Not much left for the farmer.

Last year's pack was the largest in several years, in spite of the drought. The solution of the problem seems to lie in quality. Efforts have been made by the packers to raise the quality of tomatoes grown here. They have developed a high type of fruit by constant experiments with seeds of all kinds, and it is believed that a variety suitable to the soil and climate of Kent has been developed.

Congress has taken a hand in the matter and has set up grades for tomatoes. A certain standard is made, and all canned tomatoes not measuring up to this grade must be so labeled.

The United States grades are as follows: U. S. No. 1's, U. S. No. 2's and culls. U. S No. 1's and firm, sound, ripe red tomatoes having at least 90 per cent of the surface of good red color. U. S. No 2's are tomatoes not as good as No. 1's but must have at least two thirds good red color and be of such quality that the trimmings and peelings will show a loss of not more than 20 per cent. Culls are tomatoes which are unfit for canning purposes because of decay or of being overripe or green.

Ungraded tomatoes as delivered to the canneries contain a considerable portion of culls due mainly because the tomatoes are picked too green. Canners have found that buying tomatoes on U. S. grades eliminates practically all of the culls, especially those due to being picked too green and too ripe.

In selling tomatoes on a graded basis the grading is done by a Federal or state licensed grader who is under the daily supervision of the supervising grader for that district who will check up on the local grader once or twice a day.

Selling tomatoes on a graded basis is founded on the principle that the grower should be paid a premium for good quality tomatoes. It has been shown in the three years experience in Indiana where almost three thousand growers sold their tomatoes on the graded basis that the average premium paid the grower ranged from $1.18 per ton to $3.41 per ton. Federal grading of the receipts of thirteen canners in Indiana in 1927 who were buying on an ungraded basis showed that the culls averaged 19 per cent of all deliveries to the 13 canners. The first year that the canners bought on the graded basis the delivery of culls for the year dripped to a little over 5 per cent. This proves that there will be an improvement in the quality of tomatoes delivered to the canners by growers where the grading system is in effect.

A very interesting table has been compiled showing the prices for last four years of graded stock. This table shows the average price increased while culls decreased.

It is believed that very soon the grading system will be in vogue in Kent county.

Under the old system and which has been in effect to date in Kent the man who picks a nice basket of red ripe, sound tomatoes gets no more than the man who brings in a basket of overripe or green tomatoes. Of course the canner cannot get as much out of a basket of overripe fruit as he can out of one containing No. 1 tomatoes.

The better the grade the canner puts up the more he can get. The more the canner gets the more he can pay the grower. The interest of these two are closely related and they should work together instead of pulling opposite.

All these facts have been brought out by F. M. Shook, of the Tri-State Packers' Association. He has the figures before him to verify all these statements, and sooner or later Government inspected tomatoes will be sold to the canners and none other. If the fruit does not come up to the standard it will be rejected.

Canned goods is fast coming to the point where the milk industry is. If milk does not measure up to a certain standard the farmer has to take it back home and feed it to the pigs. In the near future he will have the same problem facing with his tomatoes. He will learn to pick the tomatoes only when they are sound and ripe. Half ripe ones will be left on the vines until thoroughly ripe when he will receive a better price.

LOWER PRODUCTION COSTS ARE EQUIVALENT TO INCREASED PRICES

Since normal price prospects appear doubtful and since profits are so essential, the surest way to get them is through reduced production costs. Not every one will be able to use all the various means of reducing costs—among which may be named:

Use of less employed labor, more work by the farmer and his family, till fewer acres more intensively to increase yields per acre (not totals) and quality. Use modern and adequate machinery — use commercial fertilizers in adequate amounts, since fertilizer appears cheaper than labor and since moisture conditions are increasingly favorable. Use adapted, tested seed of right variety, fit and till seed beds with unusual care. Keep weeds, insects and diseases under control.

Study and thought will reveal ways to solve problems.

AT THE THEATRE

Outstanding in every respect, a massive production with a story which for tenseness and human interest has seldom been told on the dialogue screen, and every character played by a thorough stage artist, the Pathe picture, "Holiday," which comes to the New Lyceum Theatre on Monday and Tuesday, April 20 and 21, doubtless will be acclaimed as being perhaps the finest comedy drama of high society and wealth ever filmed.

Sophistication and smartness—these are the terms that truly describe the charm and scintillation that marks every scene of "Holiday." Set in the background of a Fifth Avenue mansion of unlimited wealth, a most gripping story is developed with intelligence and savoir faire. The brilliant dialogue of Philip Barry's stage success, has been retained in the screen version almost in its entirety.

Five stage players of great prominence are featured—Ann Harding, Mary Astor, Edward Everett Horton. Robert Ames and Hedda Hopper. Others in the excellent cast are Elizabeth Forrester, Hallam Cooley, Monroe Owsley, William Holden, Creighton Hale and Mabel Forrest. The picture was superbly directed by Edward H. Griffith under the supervision of E. B. Derr.

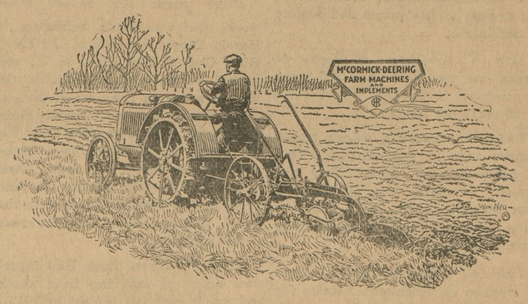
Charlie Lockhart, new state treasurer of the big state of Texas, is only 45 inches high and had to stand on a chair to be sworn in.



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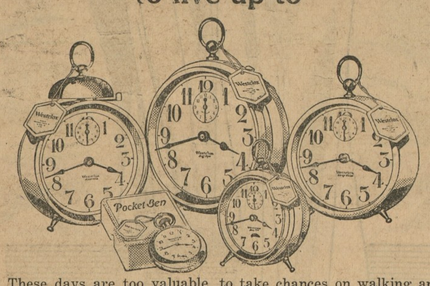
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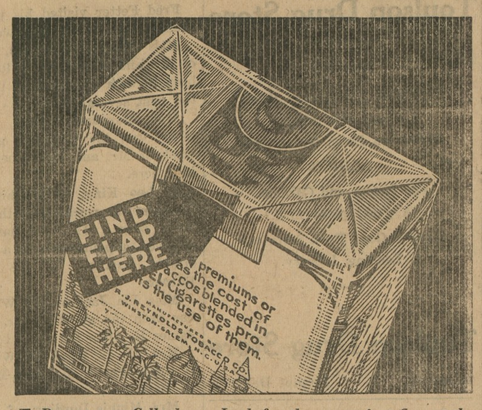
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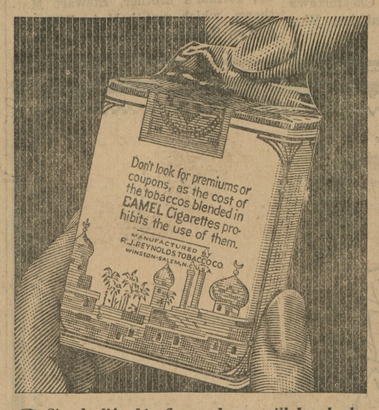


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The right way to use the new HUMIDOR PACK



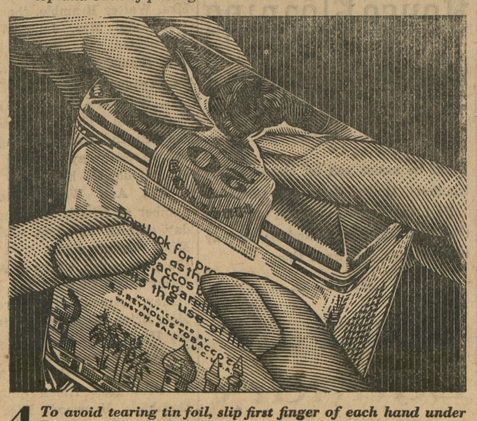
1 *Do not tear Cellophane. Look for the convenient flap at the top and back of package*



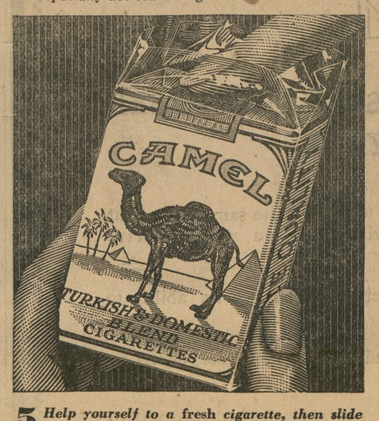
2 *Simply lift this flap and you will break the specially devised air-tight seal*



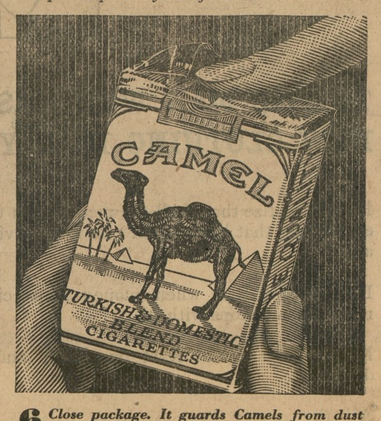
3 *Hold package as shown and with your thumbs push it part way out of Humidor Pack*



4 *To avoid tearing tin foil, slip first finger of each hand under Revenue stamp and break it*



5 *Help yourself to a fresh cigarette, then slide package back into its Humidor Pack*



6 *Close package. It guards Camels from dust and germs and provides sanitary protection*

THE MOMENT you open the new Camel Humidor Pack you begin to note the advantages of this new, scientific and sanitary method of wrapping Camel cigarettes.

At once you are greeted with the delightful aroma that comes from choicest Turkish and mellowest Domestic tobaccos in prime condition.

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That will keep intact the mildness and freshness that is making the whole country say: "Now I'd walk *two* miles for a Camel because they're twice as good."

If you haven't tried Camels in the new Humidor Pack, switch over for just one day.

Then go back tomorrow if you can.

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