Vegetable field day at Gascoyne Research Station
An interesting field day was held at the Gascoyne Research Station on September 26. Mr. K. O’Connor, Vegetable Inspector of the Metropolitan Market Trust, had just arrived at Carnarvon by arrangement with the Department, to put in a week among vegetable growers advising upon vegetable marketing conditions and methods of presenting produce for sale.

The meeting was called to introduce Mr. O’Connor to growers, and at the same time to give growers an opportunity of inspecting trials under way on the research station.

In his opening address Mr. Nunn, Officer-in-Charge, North West Branch, made reference to the several visits made during the year by specialist officers from Perth, and expressed gratification with the vigorous way the new team of advisers were approaching their duties at Carnarvon.

He reviewed the trials under way, and urged confidence, cooperation and support for the Departmental group comprising: Regional Adviser H. Suijdendorp, Agricultural Advisers J. A. Lawson and R. Rees, Station Manager R. C. Nailard and Technician R. Veen, who, he said, were working with energy and a desire to make a real study of their work, and above all a unanimity and a willingness to cooperate with each other, which had not been so apparent under earlier combinations.

An inspection was made of trials under way with bananas, avocados, mangos, cover crops and vegetables, with brief addresses in the field, followed by a talk by Mr. Lawson in the packing shed, on the vegetable trial programme and indications obtained from the season’s trials.

Vegetable trials were essentially of an exploratory nature, with small sowings of a great many varieties made periodically throughout the season for the several appropriate vegetable lines. Such plantings were essentially tiny in area to make the coverage possible, and of course a percentage of them had to fail in demonstration of unsuitable varieties and unsuitable planting times. For this reason it has not been at any time possible to have the range of vegetables under trial on display. The information got together however throughout the season, from systematic and multiple small plantings, has been considerable. Mr. Lawson presented this in interesting fashion.

Outstanding among the results was the story of onion plantings. Here the onion variety which Mr. Arthur Gardiner has developed over the years at Fitzroy Crossing, in the Kimberley Division, eclipsed all commercial varieties, and bulbs on show from January and February plantings and available for marketing in the present period of annual shortage, were described by Mr. O’Connor, as far and away superior to any onions now available in Perth from interstate and overseas sources.

Mr. O’Connor’s address on marketing matters brought a host of questions from growers obviously keen to make something of the new lines suggested to them.

A meeting which was, in the first instance, organised in rather a small way for the purpose of introducing Mr. O’Connor, developed into what was perhaps the best field day, and the most representative gathering of growers, ever organised by the Department of Agriculture at Carnarvon.
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