Proceedings of the
Sixty-Eighth Annual Meeting
of the

NEW YORK STATE
HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

Held at Rochester, N. Y.
Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, January 10, 11, 12
1923

Next Annual Meeting at Rochester
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HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

I honestly believe that with the unfavorable conditions we are
up against at the present time and with the growing competition we are
meeting more and more from standardized fruit from all other apple-
producing sections of the country, it is going to be absolutely necessary
that we work out a comprehensive grower-controlled, valley-wide packing
and marketing agency. The success of the whole movement depends
on these local co-operative packing houses.

Without the loyal support and earnest efforts of everyone of the
members, this movement will fail. If the associations have the loyal
support and encouragement of all its members, the movement can ac-
complish anything it sets out to.

PLANS FOR HORTICULTURAL EXPERI-
MENTAL WORK IN THE HUD-
SON RIVER VALLEY

DR. R. W. THATCHER, Director State Experiment Station, Geneva

VICE-PRESIDENT MITCHELL: I would like to have Dr. Thatcher
outline to us an idea of what his experimental plans are for this summer
as concerns the Hudson Valley.

DR. THATCHER: I assume that what the presiding officer has in
mind is the proposal which is before the legislature in the form of a
bill to appropriate something like eighteen thousand dollars for experi-
mental work in connection with fruit growing in the Hudson River Valley.

I think most of you are aware that the history of this movement
is that there has been desire for special facilities for research work
in connection with horticulture in the Hudson River Valley. That
was brought to my attention soon after I came to Geneva a year and a
half ago. It has seemed to me that there was real need for some special investigations in connection with horticultural problems in the Hudson River Valley on the following basis:

First of all, I should like to say I do not think it will ever be wise policy for New York State or any other state to locate sub-experiment stations around in different parts of this state in response to the popular demand for such things. I do not believe that the geography of this state, or the politics of this state, should be the determining factor in locating experiment stations. The purpose of experimental work, or research work, is to solve problems, and no man has ever been wise enough to say that a certain problem will exist in one county that will not exist in another county. Many people have been wise enough to say they want experiment stations located in a certain county, but that doesn’t locate the problem.

We agreed, however, that there are certain reasons why there is need for special problem study in the Hudson River Valley. I think the first reason is that the New York port of entry is not only a port of entry for manufactured goods, and for goods for the consumption of the United States, but also is a port of entry for pests; orchard pests, that may come in despite the bans of quarantine that are put into force. They may come on the straw that is used for packing crockery, or the hay that is used for packing other things. Through that point of entry there has been in the past and is likely to be in the future constant invasions of pests up the Hudson River Valley. It is obviously impossible to study those things in Western New York where they do not exist.

Then I think there is a second series of problems which exist in the Hudson River Valley which cannot be solved at Geneva or any other experiment station located elsewhere than in the Hudson River Valley. These have to do with the stimulation of high productivity of certain types of soils characteristic of the Hudson River Valley and found nowhere else.

I believe that wherever there are local problems which cannot be solved in the laboratory located under other conditions, the experiments ought to go to the locality where the problem exists. When I became convinced through the representations made by some of you who are men engaged in horticultural work that there are these specific problems in the Hudson River Valley which need experimental work, I was very happy to help plan for this work. A bill has been introduced providing necessary funds to pay the salary of three associates in research—one in horticulture; one in entomology; and one in plant pathology, to devote their entire time to the problems of fruit growing in the Hudson River Valley. The horticulturist will be concerned particularly with problems of soil management, of variety adaptation to Hudson River Valley needs and the things which are matters of orchard management from the standpoint of the horticulturist. The entomologist will be concerned with the insect problems; and the plant pathologists will be concerned with plant disease problems.

The bill provides for the renting of certain lands needed for experimental work. I am very much opposed to the purchase of lands for this purpose, because that makes a permanent location regardless of whether the problem is located there or not, and I believe that rental of lands where the problem exists is the wise plan.

The bill also provides what are regarded as adequate funds for traveling expenses, purchase of fertilizing materials and spraying materials.

If the bill is passed, we hope by the first of July to be equipped with a force of men actively engaged in the field studying the problems which appear to be local problems.

It has been suggested to us that the most pressing problem will be the location of the site. To me that is a very minor thing. I expect that the site will be in three or four different localities, because I cannot conceive there is any one site in Germantown, Middleburg, Poughkeepsie, or Kinderhook where all the problems are concentrated at one spot. There seems to be plenty of ardent local supporters. (laughter) That doesn’t quite appeal to me as the deciding factor in the matter.

I hope, therefore, that the legislature will make the necessary appropriation. So far as I have been able to observe there is no disposition not to do so. The appropriation will undoubtedly be made if several people interest themselves actively in it to see that the bill isn’t lost in the shuffle. I use the word “shuffle” advisedly, because I have been at Albany two or three times and in Albany the shuffling seems to be the principal activity. (laughter) So if this bill isn’t lost in the shuffle, funds will be available for special study of those problems peculiar to this district.