

NHC NEWS

A Monthly Bulletin of the Northwest Horticultural Council

RISK

In advance of America's official declaration of war against Germany on December 11, 1941, the United States had worked increasingly closer with its future ally Great Britain. Winston Churchill's government was provided with both economic help and indirect military assistance as described in a compelling account of this dangerous time: "The London Journal of General Raymond E. Lee: 1940-1941."

Stationed at the American embassy on Grosvenor Square as a U.S. military attaché, Lee witnessed the courage of the ordinary people of England as they suffered through the bombings and displacements of war. He saw Prime Minister Churchill's defiance of a seemingly superior military foe.

Raymond E. Lee's diary entry for November 12, 1941, reports on that day's activities and observations. Amongst these comments is this reflection on life's risks:

[...] especially on the part of Churchill, whose conduct of the war is so daring as to shake the confidence of our people in Washington. They cannot understand how he can bring himself to continue shipping forces from this country to Egypt. Personally, I do not think there is much further danger of invasion here, and that Churchill is quite correct in doing so. We Americans have been so bedeviled by insurance agents that we have a notion that everything in the world can be made quite safe and secure. There is too much "safety first" about America as it is run now, and there has been too much emphasis placed on security for everyone, high and low,

against unemployment, disasters, sickness, ill fortune and all the other evils the flesh is heir to. The fact of the matter is there is no such thing as security in this world for anyone. All life is a matter of taking chances from one day to the next. There was a time when any American was proud to say that Americans took chances. All of our education for the past ten or twelve years has been "safety first" and "take no chances." It is a deadening theory of life!



FOOD SAFETY

Food safety presents a myriad of difficult problems for production agriculture: for example, controlling open field intrusions by wild animals. This is much more difficult to achieve than what is routinely accomplished at enclosed food processing buildings. However, even if this could be achieved, would the certain real costs in terms of both fencing and wildlife loss be worth the theoretical incremental gains in final product safety?

Another little noted problem involves exports. With about 30% of the Pacific Northwest's annual harvest of apples, pears, and cherries destined for foreign markets, how imported food safety requirements are handled by regulatory officials in any one of these countries will depend to some extent on how the United States, in turn, regulates their nation's food shipments to our country.

This is not a fanciful concern. In late June and early July, the Northwest Horticultural Council assisted eight Washington state firms that export fruit to Mexico with on-site orchard inspections by

three food safety officials from the government of Mexico.

This is unlikely to be the last such visit by foreign governmental officials to our industry, as our own government ramps up its food safety inspections of agricultural production areas in countries that ship fresh produce to the United States.



Travel

Christian Schlect

August 18-22 – USApple’s 2010 Apple Crop Outlook and Marketing Conference and meeting of the board of directors of the United States Apple Association, Chicago, Illinois.

August 24 – Pacific Northwest Food Safety Committee meeting, Yakima, Washington.

Deborah Carter

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August 25-26 – United’s GAP Harmonization Initiative Technical Working Group meeting, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Mark Powers

August 24 – Pacific Northwest Food Safety Committee meeting, Yakima, Washington.

In the summer [of 1928, Leon Trotsky’s family of three, exiled from Moscow] rented a reed-thatched house from a peasant fruit-grower up on [Alma-Alta’s] nearby hills with a wonderful view of the snowcapped mountains at the end of the Tyan-Shan range. They picked apples and pears for the table...

Robert Service
Trotsky: A Biography

The Northwest Horticultural Council represents the deciduous tree fruit industry of Idaho, Oregon and Washington on national and international policy matters of interest to growers and shippers. Its members are:

- *Columbia Gorge Fruit Growers*
- *Idaho Apple Commission*
- *Oregon Sweet Cherry Commission*
- *Washington Apple Commission*
- *Washington State Fruit Commission*
- *Washington Tree Fruit Research Comm.*
- *Wenatchee Valley Traffic Assn.*
- *Yakima Valley Growers-Shippers Assn.*

The NHC also advises the Fresh Pear Committee (Portland) and Processed Pear Committee (Yakima) on certain issues related to food safety, crisis control and international trade.



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