

August 25, 1944.

Dear Kazuo and Folks:

I hope you will pardon me for writing such a short note when there is so much to talk about at this time of the season, but I am taking time off from the dryer job to do this and so will have to make it do. Just want to say that am sending a box of apples and a handful of peaches off of our tree - the apples will be overripe, I am sure. Sam picked his at the right time, but as usual, I didn't have time to do it and when I did get around to it they were getting too ripe. Then to make matters worse I couldn't get them packed and shipped when they should have been. The jar of something or other is one I found way up in the cupboard when I cleaned up for the renters and I put it away until I could ship it with something else so it wouldn't break, or at least I hope it won't. Got your letter about the late stuff and I will try awfully hard to get some of them to you when the right comes. The Delicious and Romeas look beautiful right now, but are not ready (that is, the Delicious and Jonathans are not) for shipment. The Jonathans are running small, despite all the thinning I did every time I went near a tree. The Delicious are huge and free from worms. For that matter, all the late stuff looks fine, with exception of Baldwins, they have nothing. The Wageners came back with a crop and the Spitz have more than they can hold. Those darned old trees are the devils to take care of. We seem to prop the wrong limb all the time. This year the Cravensteins suffered very few breaks, but the Spitz just let go way up high without any warning whatsoever. We had a tough time with props again, same as last year. We used all of yours on the Gravs and then hauled an immense load of ours up there and still when the late stuff needed props we had to hunt around in the Gravs and rob a prop here and there to use. Sam insists that Winkler got away with some of your props when he had the place, but I don't know about that. I think that we should have a lot more than you have because even with a much lighter crop than last year we were very short. Well, we just finished shaking and picking up this afternoon at 1:30. We have had a couple of Mexicans shaking and finally Joo went up this morning and stayed with them until they finished. They are slower than the seven year itch, but we are thankful to have them. The highest we have had to pay them so far is 80¢ and I don't know of any Oakie or any other white help that picked for that much per hour or that works for any less than 90¢ per hour. Most of them picked by the box and received as high as 30¢. The rate ranged all the way from 17¢ to 25¢, but I know of one fellow that paid 30¢ to get his finished. We had from 4 to 7 Mexicans up there since the start - they went over the entire orchard twice and I am sure they didn't leave very many shippable apples. They were ~~xxxx~~ slow, and maybe a few too many dropped before they got to them, but I can say this - we picked them right up and no apples rotted on the ground. The one bad feature of that place is the way they sunburn before we can get around to them. I would start the bunch near the road and by the time they got behind the dryer we had cooked apples by the box full. After the first two weeks all of the turned ones went to Speas for \$20.00 per ton so that is not so bad, either. Before he started paying that we were getting \$12.50 for them, which wasn't bad at all. Of course, we run them all over the belt for size, etc. we have one Mexican that did that belt work for us last year and he is swell at it. He does nothing all day long but dump boxes and sacks over the belt and when I am not needed in the trimming room or somewhere in the orchard I help him. He can't weigh or make out tags so on

of us has to be there all the time to do that work, but as far as knowing what apples to put through, you can't beat him. The dryer business is rotten and we are just about to give up instead of attempting to run late stuff. Now, though, it looks as though we are going to get too much stuff from Mendocino County to run through Silva's dryer alone so we will probably have to keep it going. The help has been bad enough, but the quality of the apples is the worst. I never saw so much hollow core in my life and to make matters worse, the cores seem to be filled with either green mold or black stuff that is so hard to cut out. I guess we will live through it - everybody is having the same trouble with the fruit. The help is independent as can be. We have two Fillies - one day man and one night man and they have it plenty easy, but what are you going to do? Our day man costs us \$11.60 and the night man gets \$1.00 per hour and he puts in plenty. Of course, the wage scale is set and can't be fooled with in the dryer, but it really makes us crazy to think about it. Here Joe and I work all day long there and in the orchards then go back there until midnight or 1:00 in the morning and to think that we have to do that in order to keep the help contented and to keep them from doing a tiny bit of extra work. I was doing all the trucking and tractor driving up at Forestville until Joe got so upset and ~~xxx~~ nervous around the dryer he traded jobs with me. He felt much better right away and I am not quite so tired at night as when I drove equipment all day and tried to handle boxes along with the men.

We are holding a couple of Mexicans waiting for the Jonathans and Delicious to be ready and I hope we don't have to keep them busy too long before then. These fellows cost us money if we have nothing for them to do, because we have to pay them a minimum of 36 hours per week and their board if they don't work. Now they are going to shake our orchard and then Joe intends to go to Fville and haul out all the props and left over boxes so that might bring them up to picking time. You know there is a ceiling on now so we can't expect anything like last year for those varieties, but I do think that if nothing happens we will pick quite a few boxes. The Jonathans are so small they might not pan out so well, but the Delicious and Romes should really make a showing.

Well, I am expecting young Frei over with a check for labor done by a few of our Mexicans before they left so I had better end this right quick. I hope the fruit arrives there in half-way decent shape and that it will still taste good.

Best regards to everyone.

As ever,