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ORCHARD AND GARDEN NOTES.

Test all vegetable seeds as soon as they are received.

Calliopsis is a desirable quick growing annual for the cut-flower garden.

Go over the tools, put them in repair, and order any new ones needed for the summer's work.

Order plenty of sweetpea seed. There is no annual that is more appreciated than this.

Grand Rapids lettuce is best for hot-bed or greenhouse. It is also a good variety for outside.

There are said to be 600,000 people engaged in growing vegetables in the United States, 90 per cent of whom own their own farms.

Sow a few asters, pansies, cobeas, and hardy carnations in the house the last of the month for earliest flowers outside.

The Senator Dunlap strawberry, Beta grape, King raspberry and Wealthy apple are good fruits for the garden. Plant liberally of each.

Cut a few twigs of pussy willow and put them in a vase or dish of water in the living room. They will open up in a few days and are always attractive.

Lilac branches may sometimes be forced into bloom by cutting them and keeping in water in a cool, moist place, gradually giving more heat until the buds expand.

Plant out a few shrubs about the yard this spring. Spiraea Van Houttei, common lilac, Japanese lilac, Japanese rose, Mayday tree, mock orange, and flowering currant are all good for the purpose.

Golden Bantam, sweet corn, Swiss chard, Golden Self-blanching celery, purple eggplant, Kohl Rabi, White Japan muskmelon, Sweet Hear watermelon, are all vegetables that are worth trying.

From now on the bulbs potted last fall will be coming into flower rapidly. Tulips and daffodils may be set back in a cool place when through flowering and planted in the open ground as soon as the soil can be worked. They will blossom next spring if carefully protected over winter.—LeRoy Cady, Horticulturist, University Farm, St. Paul.

COOLING MEAT.

Handling Carcasses at Hog-Killing Time.

While it is almost impossible to get the best conditions for handling meat on the farm, a knowledge of the best principles may aid in getting a better quality of meat. It is very important that the carcasses be cooled soon after slaughtering, and yet that they be not allowed to freeze. While the temperature cannot well be controlled on the farm, it is possible to slaughter when the weather is favorable to the proper cooling of the carcass. If during the winter season, choose a day when there is a prospect for cooling the carcass before the surface freezes. The most desirable temperature for cooling meat is 34° to 40° F., and an approach to these temperatures will give good results.

In summer seasons it is best to dress the animal in the evening, leaving the carcass in the open air over night and carrying it to a cool, dark cellar before the flies are out in the morning. Very often a cool room in the barn can be used for the purpose if made dark. There should be no fresh paint, tar, kerosene, or like substances around, however, as freshly killed meat absorbs such flavors readily.

Cooling is often hastened by splitting the carcasses into halves or even into small pieces. It is best, however, not to divide the carcass until the meat is firmly set unless absolutely necessary to prevent it from souring. Stripping out the leaf lard materially aids in quickly cooling the hog carcass. For the best results in cooling meat, the air should be dry, as well as of a low temperature; and free circulation aids greatly in carrying away foul odors and mold spores.

It is also important that flies and insects be kept away from the meat. If it is fly-blown, maggots will soon appear and it will be very difficult to save the meat.

A more extended discussion of Farm Meats is given in Farmers' Bulletin 183, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C.—Andrew Boss, Agriculturist, University Farm, St. Paul.

VETERINARY NOTES.

Cattle breeders should not forget that manure may be contaminated with the virus of infectious abortion and that the disease may be spread in this way.

In Minnesota the use of hog cholera virus is limited to veterinarians in State employ on account of possible danger of spreading cholera, by its careless or unwise use.

It pays to protect hogs against cholera. Potent serum from a responsible source should be used and it should be administered by some one who is competent.

We should quit thinking of tuberculosis as a hereditary disease and realize that it is an infectious disease. In extremely rare instances a calf may be born with tuberculosis, but such instances are so rare that they are unimportant.

In buying young cattle for breeding purposes it is decidedly safer to buy subject to tuberculin test from a herd where little or tuberculosis exists, than to buy from a badly affected herd, even though the diseased animal does not react on test.

Serum-only treatment does not give permanent protection against hog cholera. Serum alone should not usually be used in healthy, unexposed herds because the protection given is too short to be practical, but is very useful in recently infected herds where it usually gives fairly permanent protection.

There is no satisfactory medical treatment for blackleg, but blackleg vaccine is a very good preventive. It may be obtained in many forms from different sources. The Veterinary Division, Experiment Station, University Farm, St. Paul, Minn., keeps constantly on hand, a supply of government vaccine for free distribution to cattle owners and veterinarians.

There is probably no state in the Union where pure-bred cattle are so free from tuberculosis as they are in Minnesota and no state into which a breeder can go and purchase with equal safety. When he buys in Minnesota he gets from the State Live Stock Sanitary Board, a certificate of tuberculin test made usually by the State. This certificate of test is practically underwritten by the State of Minnesota. The percentage of tuberculosis in our pure-bred herds is extremely low for practically all such herds have been officially tested two or more times.—Dr. M. H. Reynolds, University Farm, St. Paul.

SOAP POWDERS.

Soap powders or washing powders are not desirable as a general rule, because so liable to be adulterated with caustic soda which injures clothes washed with it. There are said to be a few good washing powders however, but the only way to judge of their merits is by trial. Since there are many poor and few good powders, it is wiser for housekeepers to buy soap for washing and soda ash for water softening purposes as they are both cheaper and better in the long run than soap powders of unknown quality. Soda ash and sal soda or washing soda are not the same thing. The former is caustic soda, while the latter a carbonate of soda hence and less harmful, when properly used.—Junia L. Shepperd, University Farm, St. Paul.

MAKING SAUSAGE.

Pork sausage should be made only from clean, fresh pork. To each 3 pounds of lean pork add 1 pound of fat. As the pork usually used for sausage is the shoulder, neck, and lean trimmings, the sausage is quite likely to be too fat unless part of the fat is removed and used for lard. Mix the fat and lean meat together in chopping. Where a rotary cutter is used it is best to cut the meat twice. After it is cut the first time spread it out thinly and season. One ounce of pure, fine salt, one-half ounce of ground black pepper, and one-half ounce of pure leaf sage, rubbed fine, to each 4 pounds of meat, will suit the taste of most persons. The seasoning should be sprinkled thinly over the cut meat and the meat again run through the cutter to mix the seasoning thoroughly. This method will give a more even mixing of the spices than can be obtained by working it with the hands. For immediate use the sausage may be packed away in stone jars or crocks, to be sliced for frying. Many people stuff it into casings made from the small intestines of the hog. When this is done the intestines must be turned inside out and carefully cleaned. Casings for sausage can be bought for about 3 cents a pound. At this price it will hardly pay to bother cleaning them for home use.

For full information on farm butchering write the U. S. Department, Washington, D. C., for Farmers' Bulletin 183.—Andrew Boss, Agriculturist, University Farm, St. Paul.

SCRATCHES.

Carbolized Vaseline is Good for This Painful, Unsightly Condition.

Scratches, also called cracked heels or mud-fever, can be prevented by careful stable management. Cases are rarely met with in well kept barns, but are often seen in dirty, poorly drained stables. Dryness and cleanliness of the floor of the stall are the two most important factors in the prevention of scratches.

Horses should not be allowed to stand in piles of manure and decomposing urine. These irritate and inflame the thin skin in the fold of the ankle, just below the fet-lock. The skin then becomes thickened, due to the inflammation, and breaks or cracks in it appear and if allowed to go untreated, the condition grows gradually worse. The affected area grows larger, the cracks become deeper, and the animal is in an unsightly and painful condition.

Owners of horses can prevent the trouble, in the majority of cases, by doing two things. Do not allow manure to accumulate behind your horses, and see that your stalls are so constructed that the urine will drain away promptly. If your horses show any tendency toward the condition, apply a small amount of carbolized vaseline, benzoated lard, or zinc oxide ointment, well rubbed into the affected parts. These remedies will soften the skin and protect it from external moisture and irritating substances. During wet weather, or when the roads and streets are muddy or slushy, extra precautions should be taken to prevent the condition. Do not wash cracked heels, as water and rubbing only aggravate the condition.—Dr. H. Preston Hoskins, University Farm, St. Paul.

SILAGE FROM FODDER.

Good Results Obtained on a Minnesota Farm.

The following quotation from a letter recently received at University Farm, St. Paul, speaks for itself: "Must also thank you for information you gave me last fall in regard to filling silo with dry fodder. We had the alternative between feeding bundle corn or putting dry fodder into the silo. Finally concluded to do the last. Our corn was cut at the right stage and shocked so it was green and nice to look at, but as dry as it possibly could be. We put it in the silo October 31 and November 1. We ran about as much water in with it as the blower could handle. Toward the last we got short of water so on top it was a little spoiled, but after we got down where we used plenty of water it was just fine silage. I think it was practically as good as what we had last winter put in at the right time. Thanking you again, I am,

Yours truly,
E. M. ERICKSON, Hector.

EGG GRADES.

Fresh or newly-laid eggs are graded according to size, color, shape, strength of shell and cleanliness.

"Firsts" are full-size, weighing two ounces or more, strong-shelled, uniformly white or brown, of regular shape and clean.

"Seconds" are small, dirty, stained or smeared eggs, irregular in shape, thin-shelled, or extra large that so they may be broken in marketing.

"Checks" are cracked, dented and leaking. These damage others in marketing and soon spoil.

Stale eggs are shrunken, heated, moldy, flavored, and watery from being too long in nests, or those that have been washed and stored in warm, damp, poorly-ventilated places.

Rotten eggs are those partially hatched or those with dead germs. They may be old nest eggs, or from newly-found full nests on the ground.—N. E. Chapman, Poultry Specialist, University Farm, St. Paul.

BOVINE TUBERCULOSIS.

A Plain Statement of Facts About the Disease for Farmers.

The International Commission on the Control of Bovine Tuberculosis collects and publishes many interesting facts. They are stated in clear, simple language and published in attractive form. A Minnesota man, Dr. M. H. Reynolds, University Farm, St. Paul, is Secretary of the Commission. He has secured ten thousand of these pamphlets for free distribution among Minnesota farmers and others interested in bovine tuberculosis and every man who keeps cattle or uses milk or other dairy products should write for one of these pamphlets. It may easily be the means of saving financial loss in the herd, or vastly more important—of preventing the spread of the disease to human beings.

HOME COMFORTS.

A Modern Farm, Why Not a Modern Farm Home?

It is the common idea that country life is isolated, but since the advent of better roads, telephones and free delivery of mail, nothing could be farther from the truth. Social intercourse is often more restricted in the city than in the country, the city woman often not knowing even her next-door neighbor.

The real secret in bettering country life and building up country sociability is to give woman a better chance. She is now too much of a household slave and drudge. When her old-fashioned household methods are replaced by modern conveniences and the home fitted up with a few of the comforts which are necessities in the city, then country home life will no longer be barren or isolated.

Man's labor is lessened by many modern tools and appliances, while the woman often still works with her primitive methods. The improvements should go on in the home as well as in the barn and field. But the woman must take the initiative. She should figure up the costs, make her plans and present them as a declaration of independence, if need be.

TRAVELING LIBRARIES.

Demand Exceeds the Price for Traveling Agricultural Libraries.

Last November the Agricultural train was accompanied by Miss Helen J. Stearns of the Minnesota Public Library Commission. Those who heard her outline the plan under which traveling agricultural libraries are sent out, will be interested to know that thirty-four out of forty-five towns visited by the train have applied for these libraries. Those who are not already acquainted with the plan will be interested in securing for their localities the advantages of these libraries. Unfortunately the Commission has sent out all the agricultural libraries which it has on hand, and later applicants must wait their turn. It is unfortunate that there should not be a sufficient number of these libraries to meet the needs, of all applicants during this winter season when there is greater opportunity to read.—J. O. Rankin, Editor, University Farm, St. Paul.

THE JOBBER'S MARGIN.

Increased Business Profits From Storage, Insurance and Banking Functions Compensate Reduced Margin of Profit.

As a result of competition between jobbers handling farm produce at different primary markets as well as within a given primary market, the margin on which their business is conducted has gradually narrowed to a fraction of what it used to be. Fifteen or twenty years ago, the jobber's profit on butter was from one to two cents per pound. Now it is about one-third as much. On eggs the net profit was formerly about a cent and a half per dozen as compared with the present margin of from a quarter to a third of a cent per dozen.

While the jobber's net margin has thus been reduced, there are certain charges that have affected the gross margin on which jobbing is being carried on. If the farmers' produce were of a higher quality when it reached the primary markets and thus represented more nearly what the consumers want, the jobber's gross margin would be cut down considerably. This is well illustrated in the case of eggs where the jobber must incur considerable expense for candling, sorting and repacking as well as the throwing out of unsalable eggs. This expense can be reduced only so far as the producer and local shipper aid in improving the quality of the product shipped to primary markets.

Certain economies have tended to cut down the jobber's gross margin, however. Where products are held by jobbers for a future market, they can now be stored to better advantage and at lower cost than formerly. This is partly because large storage firms can make loans to patrons at say six per cent and, because of superior credit, get this money at the bank at four and a half or five per cent. The saving thus made by the large storage houses enables them to bid for business at a lower storage charge than smaller firms can afford to make. Then, too, the large storage houses act as insurance companies, insuring the products of their patrons and in turn protecting themselves by means of long time blanket insurance policies secured at lower premiums from insurance companies. This also gives the large storage house a relative advantage and at the same time cuts down the gross margin on which jobbers conduct their business.—C. W. Thompson, Agricultural Economist, University Farm, St. Paul.

GRAIN SHOW.

Minnesota Field Crop Breeders' Association, Mankato, Feb. 25-28.

Special notice has just been issued stating that premiums amounting to about \$1,200 will be offered for the classes in corn, wheat, oats, barley, flax and other farm seeds at the annual meeting of the Minnesota Field Crop Breeders' Association, Mankato, February 25-28. Each kind of seed is so classified that any farmer entering samples will have ample chance to compete. For corn, the State is divided into southern, central and northern sections, the third and ninth parallels being the dividing lines.

The forenoons will be devoted to Short Course work in judging live stock, corn and grains; the afternoons will be given up to the regular association programs in which practical farm subjects will be discussed. Among those secured to speak in these meetings are Prof. R. A. Moore, Agronomist, Wisconsin Experiment Station; Prof. C. A. Zavitz, Agronomist, Guelph, Ontario, Experiment Station; Prof. J. H. Shepperd, Agriculturist, North Dakota Experiment Station; Prof. A. N. Hume, Agronomist, South Dakota Agricultural College; Mr. J. W. Beckman, noted corn grower, Cokato, Minnesota. The evenings will be devoted to popular entertainments and addresses by men of state wide reputation.

MAKING HOME ATTRACTIVE.

A recent writer on "What the Farm Home Needs" makes a few suggestions for making the country home more attractive and pleasant:

Have as much music as possible. A phonograph is a good investment.

Indulge in an occasional trip either to nearby or distant points. On returning, the home will be much more attractive.

Read books, papers, and magazines. There is no company like a good book.

Replace the old household methods by modern labor-saving devices as far as possible.

Make over the house so that there may be a bathroom.

Have a better arrangement of the kitchen so that there may be running water and drainage.

Have as many modern comforts as possible, such as better lights, better heating system, comfortable furniture and home furnishings.

Arrange the home duties so that less of the hard manual labor falls on the woman. Let machinery do as much of the washing, ironing, churning, etc., as possible.

None of these things are out of the reach of the average country home and their introduction will repay their cost many times over and go a long way toward solving the country home problem.

PURE SEED WORK.

Farmers of Polk county established a popular precedent last winter when over one hundred organized the Polk County Pure Seed Association. The first meeting was held during the 1912 Short Course at the Agricultural School, Crookston, and was the direct outcome of a need felt by all the farmers of going to work systematically and not only of providing themselves with pedigreed seed, but also of seeing to it that they would continue in keeping up their standard. J. D. Bilsborrow, the agronomist of the Northwest Experiment Farm, was elected secretary of the association. They have on hand now small quantities of this seed, the yield of their first crop. The Polk County Pure Seed Association will meet during the 1913 Short Course at the Agricultural School, on February 19, at which time farmers from other counties expect to be present and learn of the benefits derived by their Polk county brothers.

During the past season, the Northwest Experiment Farm has begun tests of 137 varieties of wheat, oats, and barley. The best ten of each will be tried another season at the Experiment Farm, and also on the farms of the Pure Seed Association members and on the farms in other counties in order to determine the best variety of each cereal for Northwestern Minnesota. When this variety is determined and displaces inferior varieties, the goal of the association is reached. This work will reach into all the counties of Northwestern Minnesota just as soon as the farmers realize its value.—C. G. Selvig, Superintendent, Northwest Experiment Farm, Crookston.

A pencil worn to a stump in planning farm work pays bigger dividends than even a silo.

Repair farm machinery Now. You cannot afford to stop work in the rush season for repairs that can be made now.

Sit down and think through next season's farm work step by step. A day or even a week spent in this way will make you more money than many weeks hard manual labor in the year. Make your head save your heels.