

UNIVERSITY FARM PRESS NEWS

Published Semi-Monthly by the University of Minnesota, Department of Agriculture, Extension Division.

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Department of Agriculture

VOL. VII

UNIVERSITY FARM, ST. PAUL, MINN., JUNE 1, 1916

NO. 11

Entered as Second class matter January 15, 1910, at the postoffice at St. Paul, Minn., under the Act of July 16, 1891.

ORCHARD AND GARDEN

June 1 to 8

Cannas, geraniums, in fact all bedding plants, may be set out now.

The wild grape, Beta grape, Virginia Creeper and bittersweet make good porch or trellis covers.

Nasturtiums do well in poor soil. If planted in rich soil, they produce foliage at the expense of flowers.

The May Day tree and flowering currant were the first shrubs in flower here this year. Both came out about May 10.

Large, well made exhibits indicate a greatly increased interest in ornamental horticulture.

It's time to make another planting of peas, beans, corn, etc. Several plantings supply these vegetables over a long season.

Do not let autumn-bearing strawberries bloom until about July 1. The plant should develop strength for fall use.

Kaiser Kroon and Carmoise Brilliant were two of the tulips that showed up well on the State Experiment Station grounds this year. A few daffodils and hyacinths came through the winter in good shape.

One of the interesting sights of the last of April and the first of May were the fields of wild crocus or pasque flowers near Fort Snelling. Some means of protecting our wild plants and flowers should be adopted before we lose some of the best. Lady Slippers, the state flower, are now hard to find within miles of the large towns or cities. Many of our school children do not know what it looks like.—LeRoy Cady, Associate Horticulturist, University Farm, St. Paul.

ORCHARD AND GARDEN

June 8 to 15

Don't cut asparagus much after June 20. It will weaken next year's yield.

Look out for currant worms on the currants and aphid or green fly on sweet peas and other garden plants.

The lilac makes a nice specimen plant or it may be planted as a hedge along a roadway or lane. There are many new sorts now that are vast improvements over the old kinds. The white sorts are rather slow coming into flower.

The horticulture division, University Farm, St. Paul, wishes photographs of good home yards, both farm and town, for use in a bulletin. If you have a well planted place or know of one in your community, won't you write or tell of it?

The summer meeting of the State Horticultural Society will be in session at University Farm late in June. There is always a splendid exhibit of peonies, and other perennials and usually of strawberries. Watch for the date and plan to spend the day at the meeting.

Roses should begin to bloom now. Rosa Rugosa and the wild roses make good plants for landscape planting.

There are few plants prettier the summer through than the native wild rose. It should be more often seen in solid masses at the roadside and in our parks. After the flowers, come the bright-colored hips or fruits which add much to our landscape. Cultivated roses require a sunny, well drained soil. There are twenty or more varieties that can be commonly grown in Minnesota with a fair amount of care. Many more will do well with special attention. For good flowers prune heavily before the leaves come out.—LeRoy Cady, Associate Horticulturist, University Farm, St. Paul.

KEEPING CROWS OUT OF THE CORN

Scarecrows, poisoned corn and crows hung from poles in the field are common methods of protecting seed corn from crows.

The old scarecrow is still in common use about the corn fields and some farmers string white cord about the field from which they hang bright pieces of tin which flutter in the wind.

Scarecrows, if used, should be changed occasionally. The crows soon become accustomed to any scarecrow, however.

A very effective way of keeping crows from the corn is to shoot two or three and hang them by a string from poles in the field. Some farmers resort to trapping and, having caught a few crows in steel traps, hanging them alive from poles. This is not a humane practice, and we cannot, therefore, recommend it.

If one uses poisoning, corn may be soaked in a solution of strychnine. Ten cents worth of sulphate of strychnine dissolved in enough hot water to soak two quarts of corn will serve well. Poisoned bait of this kind should be scattered about the field late in the evening, when there will be less danger of its being eaten by poultry, stock or game birds.—F. L. Washburn, University Farm.

TRAP OR POISON IS SPARROW REMOVER

"We have had some success in the use of the sparrow trap, catching from eleven to twenty-five in half a day," says F. L. Washburn of the division of entomology, University Farm. "It must be noted, however, that such success does not come every day and further that the young birds are most easily caught. Both old and young soon learn to avoid the trap."

Another man who tried the sparrow trap reports even greater success than Mr. Washburn. Several report an average catch of ten birds a day for nearly four months. Dearborn describes nest-box traps in Farmers' Bulletin No. 493, United States Department of Agriculture.

On the farm one may shoot sparrows singly or when gathered together feeding, Mr. Washburn says. If a shotgun is to be used effectively, the birds may be baited with grain for a few days and made accustomed to gathering together in a close flock.

Eggs and nests may be repeatedly destroyed, if placed within reach. A discharge of Roman candles at night into the roosting places in trees, or a well directed stream of water from a hose often makes them desert their roosts, at least for a while.

Sparrows may be poisoned, but this calls for extreme care. The best method of poisoning the birds is to feed cracked corn a few days and then substitute poisoned corn for the usual feed. The feed is poisoned by soaking a quart of cracked corn in water, taking it out and letting it get about half dry, then soaking until it swells in a solution of one ounce of strychnine in enough hot water to cover the corn. The corn should be dried completely after it is soaked in the poison solution. An experimenter fed a large number of sparrows killed by this feed to a pet cat with no ill effects. But scattering the poisoned feed about is dangerous.

"In the meantime," Mr. Washburn adds, "we may continue tearing down nests where they can be reached and shooting where it is feasible."

NEW TUBERCULOSIS SANATORIUM READY

With the opening of the new tuberculosis sanatorium at Puposky, Beltrami County, three institutions are available to tuberculosis patients in as many parts of the state. These are the Battle Lake Sanatorium, Battle Lake; Mineral Springs Sanatorium, Cannon Falls, and the newly opened Lake Julia Sanatorium at Puposky.

The cost of treatment in these institutions is \$10 a week. In cases of patients unable to pay their own expenses, the county from which they are sent pays the cost. The state reimburses the county half of the amount spent.

The new Lake Julia Sanatorium has been built for Koochiching, Hubbard, and Beltrami counties. It is the first sanatorium built in Minnesota by a group of counties. That this is the most advisable plan for counties not fully settled, is the opinion of Dr. I. J. Murphy, secretary of the Minnesota Public Health Association. "In this way," he says, "the counties may build larger institutions than any single county would need and can have modern equipment, as well as a fire-proof building. Expert medical service and nursing will be supplied more easily in the larger institutions."

There are three other sanatoriums in the state for tuberculosis patients. In Hennepin, Ramsey, and St. Louis counties, the number to be accommodated is so great that there is a waiting list at these institutions, as there is for the state sanatorium. Patients can be admitted from any part of the state when there are no county applicants on the waiting list. In the case of the sanatoriums at Battle Lake, Cannon Falls and Puposky there are seldom patients from the county waiting for a chance to be admitted.

LIVESTOCK MEN TO MEET IN DETROIT

Members of the Minnesota Livestock Breeders' Association and of the Red River Valley Livestock Breeders' Association will meet in joint session in Detroit, June 16. This will be the regular summer meeting of these associations. Mer prominent in livestock work in the Red River valley and in the state outside of the valley will be on the program.

The next day the third annual summer meeting of the Red River Valley Development Association will be in session at Detroit. Much attention will be given to questions of drainage, good roads and community development at this meeting.

SCHOOLS TOO OFTEN NEGLECT HEALTH

The old roller towel, improperly regulated drinking fountains which are merely called—not kept—sanitary, too high temperature, too low humidity—these are some of the menaces to the health of children in Minnesota public schools which two field nurses have found in an investigation for the Minnesota Public Health Association. Dr. I. J. Murphy, secretary of the association, thinks that the health of the majority of children in the public schools of the state is not properly safeguarded.

The investigation made by the nurses and reported to Doctor Murphy included rural and village schools. In none of the places visited had the children been inspected for poor sight, poor hearing, adenoids or other physical defects, nor was there a systematic plan for controlling infectious diseases. All the localities visited showed much interest in the matter of health supervision for the schools.

A supervising nurse is the best guard of children's health, Doctor Murphy says. Many of the smaller villages are looking forward to grouping together to hire a permanent nurse, the investigation showed, and some county superintendents expect to be able to employ nurses for the schools in their counties soon.

HELP DEVELOP MINNESOTA--NOW

The first annual meeting of the All-Minnesota Development Association, State Capitol, St. Paul, June 1-15, will be CRUCIAL.

James J. Hill said:

"According to the lines on which it may be organized for practical work the All-Minnesota Development Association will become either a valuable agency in promoting the growth and prosperity of the state, or one more wheel added to its already cumbrous machinery. Since its first annual meeting will go far toward deciding which, it is of unusual importance!"

Mr. Hill is absolutely right.

It is up to the people of the state to attend the coming meeting of the All-Minnesota Development Association and help to MAKE the association right in organization for practical work.

Mr. Editor:

Will you attend?
Will you urge others to attend?
Will you get your business men together and appoint a delegate?
Will you do it NOW?

BARLEY AND OATS GOOD LATE CROPS

It always pays to work up the ground and plant seed in drills for forage and root crops in the northern part of the state, says M. J. Thompson of the Duluth Farm and Station. Even in new land, the makeshift of scattering the seed broadcast over the land and harrowing in later is a poor, though common, practice. Seedlings may be thinned later if planted too thick.

Millet, often used for forage when other seedings are delayed in the northern part of the state, does not thrive especially well there. Oats may be sown up to July 1 and may be depended upon to make a good hay crop, Mr. Thompson says. If an early variety is sown, they may even ripen when sown that late. Oats, he says, are preferable to millet.

Barley is a filler crop that must be raised under different conditions, the superintendent of the state farm says. In St. Louis county one field sown in barley the last week in July last year produced a crop. This, however, is an exceptional record.

The possibility of profitably using flax as a late-planted crop has been overlooked by many farmers in the Northwest.

Combinations of peas and oats, spring rye, peas and vetch, and green oats alone are being used in the Northeast Minnesota section for early soiling crops to be fed when the flies drive the cattle indoors for a part of the day.

In deciding between the value of mangles and rutabagas on northern Minnesota soils, it should be remembered that while the rutabagas are more dependable, there should be a few rows at least of mangles, for the chickens seem to prefer them.

THEY COOPERATE; CREAM PRICES UP

Most cooperative creameries in Minnesota pay their patrons from 5 to 8 cents a pound more for butterfat than is paid by individual cream-buying establishments. There are 850 creameries in the state. Of these, 622 are cooperative, 189 individual, and 39 centralized.

A canvass made of the representative creameries of Minnesota for last March showed that first class cooperative creameries paid from 40 to 42 cents a pound for butterfat, while a few cooperative creameries that are poorly supported paid as low as 30 cents a pound. In every case of the low price, there was a small amount of business, the creameries making only about 100 pounds of butter a day. The creameries that paid 42 cents made about seven times as much. Many cooperative creameries making from 200 to 300 pounds of butter a day paid from 37 to 39 cents a pound for butterfat. Farmers who shipped cream got on an average about 35 cents a pound.

The cooperative creamery is the only means whereby the farmers can get the highest price for butterfat.

Many cooperative creameries that are struggling along with only half a business could do well if they got all the cream produced in the community. It must be remembered that a cooperative creamery to pay the top price must have at least a certain amount of business. The creameries that paid 42 cents a pound for butterfat during March were buying large amounts every day. One hundred farmers in any community with seven to ten cows each can have such a creamery in their community if they will work together.—A. J. McGuire, University Farm.

WOULD MAKE PLAYS COMMON IN STATE

To serve the state through the drama is the plan of the General Extension Division of the University of Minnesota in establishing the dramatic advice department of the division. It is the purpose to assist communities in becoming live, enthusiastic centers for the production and enjoyment of good drama.

Offering plays for examination is the main part of the work of the department now, but this is considered only the first part of a service that is expected to grow into an institution of value to schools, clubs and community centers. Dr. Raymond V. Phelan of the extension division will issue a bulletin on the community and the drama next fall.

"Good plays serve to develop self-expression and growth of the actors, as well as to furnish entertainment and instruction for the people," Doctor Phelan says. "Every community has some good actors and the residents of every town like to see a good play. It is the purpose of the drama service to aid in putting on better plays and presenting plays more frequently than is done now."

STORE SEED CORN LEFT, HIS CAUTION

The lateness of the season and the unfavorable condition of the weather makes one look forward next spring to a possible repetition of the seed corn shortage of this year, says C. P. Bull of the division of agronomy, University Farm, St. Paul.

In view of the possibility of a shortage, Mr. Bull would encourage every farmer in the Northwest to take every possible precaution in preparing his ground so that his corn can have the best possible chance for germination this year to get as early and as large a crop as possible.

As a precaution against a famine in the seed corn supply next year, Mr. Bull advises that every bit of seed not planted this year be held over and stored in a safe, dry place.

CHICKS STILL NEED SUMMER SHELTER

Though May 15, the date we commonly mark as a sure and safe one for putting out young chicks in the field, is past, the cold and damp weather will without doubt compel us to supply artificial heat for the youngsters even later than June 1. If any chicks are out in the fields now with only the customary summer shelters, it is a sorry situation for the chickens.

Hens will brood the chicks successfully in buildings without heat, but buildings used for such purposes must be draft proof and must have a dry floor. Sunlight is also necessary to keep the building dry and provide a comfortable atmosphere.

A portable hover will keep the little chicks warm in the same building that the hens would require, and it will pay to have these facilities first, when chicks must be hatched reasonably early to get fair prices.—A. C. Smith, University Farm.

CALLS FLAX GOOD CASH-YIELDING CROP

Many inquiries concerning flax seed have been received recently at the State Experiment Station, University Farm, St. Paul. The unfavorable conditions of the winter have cut the wheat acreage short and bid fair to interfere with corn planting. Naturally the farmers are turning their attention to crops which may be sown later but which ripen before frost can do any damage in September. Flax is the crop most considered.

"We believe that the growing of flax should be encouraged," says C. P. Bull of the division of agronomy at University Farm, St. Paul. "It is a safe cash crop and is thoroughly adapted to any part of the Northwest."

It is impossible, Mr. Bull adds, to refer to any first-hand seed supply. Persons desiring seed will have to be supplied by the seed houses of the cities or by the elevators, unless there be a small local supply near.

To make the crop safe, a treatment of the seed with formaldehyde is advocated. This treatment will remove some of the chances of flax wilt.

FLAX CROP COSTS BUT \$7 AN ACRE

Flax seed will be high-priced this year. There is a shortage in the world supply on account of the abnormal conditions due to the European war. The United States did not produce half as much as was needed by American mills in 1915.

Minnesota, Montana and the Dakotas are the principal flax producing states in the Union, according to a late report of the United States Department of Agriculture. More than 90 per cent of the annual production was grown in the Northwest a few years ago. Oil mills at Minneapolis and Red Wing have a capacity of 16,000,000 bushels of seed a year and the oil made from flax grown in the Northwest is of a better quality than that made from imported seed.

The average cost of raising flax in Minnesota is from \$7 to \$10 an acre, in addition to rent, according to bulletins of the Agricultural Experiment Station. It will grow on old lands as well as on virgin soils, its only requirement being an abundance of humus and water. With the present shortage in supply, therefore, it should prove a valuable crop.

A bulletin on flax growing will be sent from University Farm, St. Paul, on application.

CORN NEEDS EVERY CHANCE OF SEASON

Because the season is late, it will be necessary to give corn every possible advantage during the growing period. The field should have been well prepared and the land well tilled before the corn was planted. Cultivation should begin immediately after planting or as soon as the rows can be seen. If deep cultivation is to be given at any time, it should be given the first time through the corn. As soon as the roots become established they spread out near the surface and then deep cultivation becomes a danger.

During a period of drouth, corn quickly dries up or fires. Some farmers think that firing is caused by plowing too soon after a rain. This does not cause firing when cultivation is shallow. Deep cultivation that cuts the roots of the plants causes the withered appearance and retards the growth of the corn. Cutting the roots impairs the feeding powers of the plant and the leaves wither as a result of not getting enough nourishment and moisture. Cultivation should be frequent and as early as possible after a rain, but it should not be so deep as to interfere with getting raw materials for food.

The season will be short enough this year at best. Do not cut off a single day of the growth of the corn by poor management of the soil or crop.—Andrew Boss, University Farm, St. Paul.

FURNACE NEEDS CARE IN SUMMER

If you want to avoid furnace troubles next fall, give the smoke passages and fire box a thorough cleaning out as soon as no more fire is needed this spring. Sweep and scrape all smoke passages thoroughly. Take off the smoke pipe, clean out all soot and see that the chimney is clean where it goes on. It is best to stop up the chimney with a paper and to store the pipe in a dry place. Put a peck of unslacked lime in a box in the fire pot of the furnace to prevent rust.

This is the advice that is given by the extension engineers at the Iowa State College. A furnace can wear out in summer as fast as in winter, without proper care, they say.