

UNIVERSITY FARM PRESS NEWS

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

VOL. VIII

UNIVERSITY FARM, ST. PAUL, MINN., JANUARY 15, 1917.

NO. 2

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

February 1 to 8

It is time to plan the garden and order seeds.

Now is a good time to name the farm.

Cut out all dead trees about the place and make fire-wood of them.

Send for a number of seed and fruit catalogs and put in a few evenings studying them. It will be worth while.

Jewell's Winter and Salome are two varieties of apples worthy of trial. These do well in some locations.

One quarter acre of berries will not cost much to plant and it will give an abundance of fruit the season through.

Try a few autumn-bearing strawberries. Progressive is a good standard variety. Planted this spring and well cared for they will fruit in the autumn.

King and Minnetonka Ironclad are two good red raspberries. Columbian purple and Cumberland black are also good in their class.

The Wealthy is one of the most widely grown and profitable of the fall apples. It is a money maker, even in apple districts.

Glass on the coldframe, hotbed, or greenhouse may be cleaned by spraying with dilute oxalic acid.

Some of the vegetable forcers about Minneapolis have tried growing beets and swiss chard for greens with some success this year.

Has that summer wood pile grown to sizeable proportions this winter? If not, now is a good time to get busy on it. Firewood cutting is easier now than in hot weather.

Has the school house been painted lately? This spring will be a good time to see to it. Don't use a bright-colored paint. Gray or white is good.

Do not put too much dependence in the novelties offered by seedsmen. Many of them are excellent. Some are no better than the common grade. Better stick to an established strain of seed until the new one has shown its superiority.—LeRoy Cady, associate horticulturist, University farm, St. Paul, Minn.

ORCHARD AND GARDEN

February 8 to 15

There is still time to do some root grafting of apples. The cion should be two or three times as long as the root.

Plan to do some topworking this spring. This is a good way to get returns from unproductive trees that are thrifty.

Late this month or early next month is a good time to sow pansies, columbine, foxglove, and perennial seeds for early plants.

When ordering seed for the garden try some vegetables you have not used before. Salsify, swiss chard, and endive are good sorts to try.

There are more than 10,000 acres of land in California devoted to raising garden seeds. The annual value of these seeds is \$2,000,000.

The evergreens are interesting objects on the home grounds at this time of year. A good group or grove of them is a protection from the wind.

Bitter-sweet is one of the best vines for porch or trellis. If it is planted with other vines or plants, care must be used to see that it does not twine about them, as it will strangle another plant.

Soon the golden willow and dogwood branches will be coloring up nicely on warm days. Have you ever noticed the difference the bright twigs of these plants make among the shrubs on warm days in late winter?

Florence is one of the best crab-apples for general use. Sweet Russet is fine for sweet pickles and to eat out of hand. Early Strawberry and Whitney also are good to eat out of hand, but not of much value for market, because they are rather soft.

In spite of the large quantities of peanuts grown in the south and in California, about 20,000,000 pounds, valued at \$1,000,000 are imported from Africa, China and India yearly.

Send to A. W. Latham, 207 Kasota block, Minneapolis, for the list of fruits recommended by the State Horticultural society. This also gives a list of premiums offered by the society. It is worth sending for.

The American Forestry association says that unless the ravages of the white pine blister rust are soon stopped all white pines will be lost. This means a great loss to the country, since the New England district has pine worth \$75,000,000; the lake states, \$96,000,000; the western states, \$60,000,000; and the national forests, \$30,000,000; making a total of \$261,000,000. There seems to be no cure for the disease and it spreads rapidly. The only remedy is to remove and burn the infested trees promptly. Currants and gooseberry bushes may harbor one stage of the disease.—LeRoy Cady, associate horticulturist, University farm, St. Paul, Minn.

RIGHT FIRING KEEPS COAL COSTS DOWN

Has the cold weather sent the coal bill up and the temperature of the house down? It is a good time to waste coal now, according to J. L. Mowry of the division of agricultural engineering, University farm, St. Paul, and a little mixture of brains and coal will keep a warmer house and a smaller coal bill.

Stoking a furnace, Mr. Mowry says in a bulletin on house heating, is an art. There were three cases of firing in St. Paul last month which he cites as examples of the difference in cost between sensible and non-sensible heating. One brought in a coal bill of \$47, another one of \$36 and the third one of only \$16. The last house was equally warm with the other two. In its case, however, the coal was fired, in the others it was dumped in.

In firing, Mr. Mowry says, add as small an amount of coal each time as possible and fire often. Don't cover the bed of live coals entirely, but leave a small hole through which enough heat can go to fire the gases as they distill off from the new coal; gases that go up the chimney are lost. Keep the grates clean and clear of clinkers, and use a slice-bar to prevent a tendency to cake at the bottom of the fire.

The difference between proper firing and improper firing is not a matter of more heat on a cold day. It is a matter of a reasonable coal bill on the first of the month.

ORCHARD MAY BE PRUNED IN WINTER

Fruit growers do not need to wait until spring to prune their orchards, says W. G. Brierley of the division of horticulture at University farm. Results at University farm show little or no difference in the growth and maturity of the wood where pruning has been done any time between November and May.

If the usual care is taken to make the cuts close to the main trunk or branches no stubs will be left to die and decay, though the covering of wounds with a white lead and oil paint or with common grafting wax warmed to the consistency of cold molasses will give added protection.

Moderate pruning is better than heavy cutting.

NEW BOOKLET TELLS OF WHITE PLAGUE

"What every Minnesota citizen should know of tuberculosis," is the way Dr. I. J. Murphy, executive secretary, summarized the subject matter of a pamphlet recently issued by the Minnesota Public Health association. The pamphlet contains advice for consumptives and much information of value to any one interested in tuberculosis and the statewide campaign against it, Doctor Murphy says. Specific directions to persons afflicted with tuberculosis and to those associated with them; how the disease is contracted, when it develops and how it may be prevented and cured are things told in the booklet.

All the county sanitoria and other institutions in operation in the state in the fight against the white plague are illustrated, and lists of the superintendents of all the institutions and of the resident or staff physicians are given.

Copies for distribution will be sent free to anyone writing the Minnesota Public Health association, Old Capitol, St. Paul.

IS RUSTY STRAW GOOD STOCK FEED?

Is rusty straw safe or desirable stock food? The general teaching for many years has been that blights, rusts, smuts, etc., are all harmful and likely to produce abortions and other troubles. Actual experience and some research work, however, show that this statement is far too general.

There can be no question concerning the undesirability of mouldy hay, straw, grain, or ensilage, on account of the well known forage poisoning of horses and cattle, but quantities of corn smut have been fed in experimental work, without evident harm, though this does not prove that under other circumstances smut may not be injurious. Stock seems sometimes actually to prefer straw in the black rust stage and eat it readily, yet the same stock may appear to dislike straw in the red rust stage, possibly because more dusty.

We think that the farmer would be quite justified in the cautious feeding of rusty straw. On general principles, and in view of some uncertainty, it would be better not to use rusty straw for a female heavy with young, though even in such a case it might do no harm. There is little positive information available. The writer would greatly appreciate reports of actual experience.—M. H. Reynolds, chairman, division of veterinary science, University farm, St. Paul.

FUNDS FOR HIRING NURSE PROPOSED

An act giving county commissioners authority to vote funds for the employment of school or public health nurses has been introduced in the legislature. "Excepting the bill providing for the reorganization of the state health work, the visiting nurse bill is the most important health measure that the present legislature will have to consider," says Dr. I. J. Murphy, executive secretary of the Minnesota Public Health association.

"The law will benefit rural sections most," Doctor Murphy says, "though it will be of value to every citizen. While there is no specific legislation covering the matter, county funds are now being used to employ nurses in Ramsey, Renneville, and St. Louis counties. Recently the schools of Nobles county raised a fund of more than \$500 through entertainments and socials to provide for a nurse."

County commissioners now have no specific authority to vote funds for hiring nurses, Doctor Murphy says.

NEW SEED GIVES 72 BUSHEL

Minnesota No. 295 Oats Make High Yield in Kandiyohi County.

Figure what seed oats from the Minnesota college of agriculture are worth. Take your yield for last year, find the difference between them and 72 bushels yielded by an acre for a Kandiyohi county farmer, make a liberal allowance for difference and see what you might have done. Here is what he says:

"I bought three bushels of Minnesota No. 295 oats and threshed from it 2,304 pounds an acre. They were the best oats I ever saw. I have cleaned it and intend to seed it all on clean ground that was in clover the year before. I am well pleased to get seed like that."—George Enbloom, Atwater, Minn.

SILVER CLEANED BY BOILING IT

An easy and effective method of cleaning tarnished silverware, by boiling in a soda and salt solution in contact with a clean piece of aluminum or zinc, is recommended to housewives by the United States department of agriculture. The necessary materials are a graniteware cooking utensil deep enough to allow the silverware to be covered by the solution; a clean piece of aluminum or zinc, preferably the former; and baking or washing soda. The solution, consisting of a teaspoonful of baking or washing soda and a like amount of table salt to each quart of water, is brought to a boil in a graniteware or enameled utensil. A sheet of aluminum or clean zinc is dropped in. The tarnished silverware is then immersed in the solution so that it is in contact with the sheet of aluminum or zinc. The tarnish should disappear in a few seconds. The silver object should then be removed from the solution, rinsed, and dried with a soft cloth.

ANTI-PLAGUE FILM KEPT IN THE STATE

A copy of "The Great Truth," a two-reel motion picture film, will be left in Minnesota. This film, which illustrates anti-tuberculosis work, was released December 1 and shown in only a few of the larger cities. The only print available for this state, says Dr. I. J. Murphy, executive secretary of the Minnesota Public Health association, has been purchased by the association.

Through the cooperation of various local committees, arrangements have already been made to have the picture shown in many Minnesota towns. The state association will act as a booking agent for various health films. Further details regarding this, as well as some other films, will be sent to anyone writing to the Minnesota Public Health association, in the old capitol, St. Paul.

CARNIVALS PROTECT AGAINST PNEUMONIA

"From the standpoint of health alone," says Dr. I. J. Murphy, of the Minnesota Public Health association, "I would urge every citizen to participate in outdoor winter sports, like the St. Paul carnival. Deaths from pneumonia, bronchitis, colds and grip are most numerous during January, February, and March. One can greatly lessen the chances of falling a victim to one of these plagues by partaking freely of outdoor exercises. Minor outdoor carnivals ought to be held in every village and in every household. Proper indoor ventilation is difficult during the winter months; the lowered resistance resulting therefrom can be increased by obtaining long draughts of outdoor air. Breathe a little fresh air every day outdoors between now and April, and your chances for having the same opportunity in 1918 will be greatly increased."

FARM LIVING COSTS ARE \$162 A YEAR

At a cost of 6.8 cents for each meal, Minnesota farmers have beaten away from the door the high cost of living for the last ten years. The weapon they have used has been the direct use of products grown on the farm, which resulted in selling directly from producer to consumer, and in cutting off all profits of middlemen. Under this arrangement, the cost of living for each person in the average Minnesota farm family amounted to \$162.12 a year from 1905 to 1912. These are the figures collected by F. W. Peck, assistant professor of farm management in the Minnesota college of agriculture, and published in his new bulletin "The Cost of Living on Minnesota Farms."

The cost of living on farms in the study made on more than 100 farms included accounts for food; labor, including that of men and women and of farm animals; fuel, and an estimate for year on utensils and rent on houses.

The expense of living on Minnesota farms is distributed among: Purchased food, 24 per cent; farm produce, 22 per cent; labor, 29 per cent; equipment and fuel, 12 per cent, and rent, 13 per cent.

That the cost of living on Minnesota farms is higher than that in many other sections of the United States is indicated in a comparison with a recent bulletin published by the United States department of agriculture in which the cost of boarding a hired hand for a year is estimated at \$128. A remedy for the high cost in Minnesota is suggested by a page of pictures in the new bulletin by Mr. Peck, in which more livestock and poultry and a family garden are cited as the best weapons to fight the rise in living costs.

PROFIT IN KEEPING FARM LABOR BUSY

Investigations indicate strongly that farm operators who keep their help employed at productive labor the largest number of hours during the year secure the best returns from their farms, says W. L. Cavert of the agricultural extension division, University of Minnesota. This being true, it is important that every farmer should look over his program for the winter and determine whether or not there is a possibility of employing labor on profit-bearing enterprises.

Winter dairying, livestock feeding, and various other forms of winter employment are suggested.

Whether more livestock feeding should be undertaken will depend somewhat on the amount of feed stuffs available. Time spent in calculating the amount of feed on hand and the probable demands of each class of stock is one form of profitable employment for the farm owner. If a surplus of rough feeds is on hand it would be well to purchase a few feeders or stockers that are just now selling at a reasonable figure. Through these the feed and roughage can be converted into cash, and at the same time a larger supply of valuable fertilizing material for increasing next year's crops can be obtained.

SHORTAGE OF BEES LOSES 14 MILLIONS

Have you a little bee hive in your yard? If you haven't, you are helping to lose the fourteen million dollars' worth of honey products that are available in Minnesota every year and is not collected because there are not enough bees to store it. Nearly fifteen million dollars' worth of honey could be produced every year in the state. Only half a million dollars' worth is collected. The honey could be collected at a minor cost by keeping as many hives of bees in every yard as can be fed from the honey products produced around.

This is the advice that Professor Francis Jager gave the class in bees and poultry at the Farmers' and Home-Makers' week at University farm, St. Paul, recently. Professor Jager encouraged farmers to get a few hives of bees this spring, to develop them by the purchase of pure bred queen bees from University farm and to increase the income of the farm several hundred dollars by the work of the bees.

PIGS PAY 5 CENTS A MINUTE FOR WORK

With the returns amounting to 5 cents a minute for the time spent, A. J. McGuire of University farm, St. Paul, found that raising 100 pigs every year was the most profitable work the men did on his farm last year. The pigs were raised, figures completed at the end of the year show, with one hour's time a day. At the prices for pigs now, the returns this year on this 365 hours' time was nearly \$3 an hour.

The reduction of work to a minimum is the method that the McGuire farm uses to increase the return on the labor. The pigs collect their own feed in the spring and summer from rape and alfalfa fields and in the fall they gather the feed to prepare them for market by hogging down a field of fifteen acres of corn. Eight acres of rape and alfalfa keep the pigs and the brood sows in the summer, furnishing in a fair season all the feed they will eat. In September the pigs are turned into a fifteen acre field of corn, beside which is a four-acre rape field. The sows that are to be kept over during the winter are left to clean up the waste after the pigs are marketed.

Mr. McGuire finds that letting the pigs do their own work is just as satisfactory and economical and much more profitable. He even arranges the winter quarters so that as little attention as possible may be required by the sows. Straw sheds make good shelters for them and the corn cribs and feed boxes are placed as near the sheds as possible.

Watch what your neighbors are not feeding in the livestock line and feed that kind of stock, is the rule that one of the lecturers at Farmers' and Home-Makers' week gave at University farm, St. Paul, recently. High prices for stock will overcome high prices for feed and leave a profit larger than low feeds and low prices, he said.

EDITORIALS

COVERING THE FARM NEWS

Mr. Editor:

Have you a farm page in your paper?

Sixty-seven per cent of the circulation of weekly newspapers in Minnesota is among local farmers. Less than one half of one per cent of all the news printed is news relating directly to farms and farm work. Twenty-six per cent of all the news printed is departmental news dealing with politics, schools, deaths, editorial comment, farm work and community interests. Only 15 per cent of this departmental news is concerned with farms. This makes a total of only four-tenths of one per cent of all the news that is printed in the average country weekly paper in Minnesota constructive farm news.

Farm news is the easiest kind to get. Try some of these sources:

New farm homes, barns or silos planned for next spring or under construction now;

Big crop yields and the reasons for them;

New records in dairy herds;

Testing dairy herds and marketing the products;

Livestock—new grades, productiveness, sales;

Winter wheat or grass crops;

Damage to crops and plants by freezing or ice.

Then when these are exhausted try a dozen other sources that are special features of your territory.

CENTERING DEVELOPMENT

Future returns depend on intensive cultivation of Minnesota's resources. Expansion, except in the northern sections of the state, is finished. Mineral and timber resources have been taken up until there is no longer a chance to get something merely for taking it. Pioneering is practically finished.

Even if expansion were not finished, there are too many chances for profitable use of time and funds to expect any individual to develop a large section of the country merely for what it will pay him. The development must be according to a state-wide plan and the plan must have the backing of some state organization strong enough to get a hearing from the legislature on its plans.

With a program covering the establishment of better educational facilities, especially the junior colleges in different sections of the state; the control of floods and better drainage in the northern part of the state; the reduction of the tax rate on improvements on lands; the establishment of a rural credits bank to make development of new sections easier and cooperative action of new settlers on these lands, the All Minnesota Development association ought to be regarded as an organization suitable to plan state progress and to command a hearing by state officials, business men and local associations. The association will meet at the Old Capitol building, St. Paul, January 18 and 19. The program for the two days will be open to the public.

If you can not attend, there is another way open for you to help push the wagon. Write your representative in the legislature to attend the part of the program in which you are most interested.