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ORCHARD AND GARDEN

December 22-29

Go over the ferns and house plants carefully and remove scale or other insects. Keep the plants clean if you would be successful.

Now is a good time for town improvement associations to begin to plan for better streets, more trees, and prettier homes in our towns and villages.

A potted plant or box of flowers makes a good Christmas present.

About \$50,000 worth of vegetables were raised in the Minneapolis school gardens this year. The value of the produce per acre was about \$785.

If in doubt as to the best varieties of fruit to plant next spring write to the experiment station, or to the secretary of the State Horticultural Society, 207 Kasota Block, Minneapolis, for a list recommended by the society.

Put up sheafs of wheat and bunches of suet for the birds now.

The flower show at the St. Paul hotel early in November netted the Red Cross upwards of \$5,000.

This is not a good year to stop planting and caring for fruit plants and trees. Homes which are without fruit plants should set out a good supply next year and the owner of a good orchard or fruit plantation should take every precaution to insure good results next year and years to come.—LeRoy Cady, associate horticulturist, University Farm, St. Paul, Minn.

ORCHARD AND GARDEN

December 15-22

Butternut and hickory trees not only give shade, but supply nuts. Why not plant a few on the home grounds?

It is a good plan to mulch lawn shrubs lightly with manure. This can be spaded into the ground in the spring. It will keep the snow about the shrubs this winter.

Apple cions for next season's use should be cut now and put in a cool cellar in sawdust or other material which will keep them from drying out or growing.

Have you organized a farmers' club or a reading circle in your community? Lots of enjoyment, as well as profit, may be obtained from an organization of this sort.

The principal onion growing states of the Union are Ohio, New York, Texas, California, Indiana, Illinois, and Massachusetts, totaling about 35,000 acres. Minnesota grows a little over 1,000 acres a year. It could well increase its acreage.

The custom of displaying a candle in the window Christmas Eve is one worth observing, especially in towns and cities where there are many people on the street. This year it is suggested to display the light back of the service flags in the windows. Let us all light our windows this Christmas Eve. It will perhaps cheer some passerby.—LeRoy Cady, associate horticulturist, University Farm, St. Paul, Minn.

MUSKRAT A DAINTY DISH FOR THE TABLE

The enormous numbers of carcasses of muskrats which are thrown away after the pelts have been removed is a waste of food. The muskrat is an animal of most cleanly habits, is most discriminating in choice of food, and is a very acceptable addition to the table.

The writer can speak from personal experience to the effect that when cooked as rabbits are cooked the meat of the muskrat is extremely palatable. As a matter of fact, muskrats are sold for food in some of the eastern markets and some hunting clubs in the east have annual banquets in which the muskrat forms the chief dish. In some places this animal is known as the "marsh rabbit."

It is to be hoped that this means of reducing the cost of living, although slight, may not be overlooked.—F. L. Washburn, Minnesota Experiment Station.

LEGUME HAYS AS OFFSET FOR GRAIN

One hundred and seventy-five pounds of good alfalfa or clover hay is worth as much as one hundred pounds of the ordinary grain feeds. With the present prices for feeds ranging from \$35 a ton for bran to \$85 per ton for corn, the average cost for 100 pounds of grain is about \$2.75. The cost of its food equivalent in the form of 175 pounds of legume hay is \$2.15. This much hay will produce 200 pounds of milk and effect a saving in feed cost of 60 cents, which is at the rate of 30 cents for each hundred pounds.

The utilization of such hay partly solves the dairyman's problem in these days of high feed cost and milk investigations.—G. E. Weaver, University Farm, St. Paul.

5,000,000 MORE HOGS IS NATION'S NEED

The United States Department of Agriculture is organizing a national campaign for 5,000,000 more hogs, or a 15 per cent increase in hog production next year. The officials in charge say the campaign will succeed if every state will do its share. From Missouri, which is asked for 50 per cent more hogs, to West Virginia, to which is allotted only a 5 per cent increase, the state quotas have been carefully and logically worked out according to the corn and other feed supplies of the states.

If the states do not reach the quotas set for them, a more acute shortage of pork products than now prevails will result, extremely high prices for hams, bacon and lard will prevail, consumers will suffer from the high prices and the shortage of necessary animal fats, and only a few will benefit. Prices to the producer should be remunerative under the assistance pledged by the food administration, and prices paid by consumers should be reasonable.

VALUABLE PROGRAM FOR FRUIT GROWERS

The program for the fourth annual conference of fruit-growers at University Farm, January 1, from 1 to 5 p.m. is as follows:

"Control of Small Fruit Insects," S. A. Graham, University Farm.

"Making Sweet Cider from Wealthy Culls," J. F. Bartlett, Excelsior.

"Rabbit Injuries to Young Trees and Some Control Measures I Have Tried," J. P. West, Rockford, Minn.

"A Comparison of Ever-Bearing and June Bearing Strawberries," J. V. Bailey, Newport, Minn.

"A Comparison of the Commercial Value of the Wealthy and Northwestern Greening in Southern Minnesota," D. C. Webster, La Crescent, Minn.

"Results of Strawberry Variety Tests," R. Wellington, University Farm.

"Growing Red Raspberries in the Staked Hill System," Stanley Felt, Hopkins, Minn.

"How to Select Fruit for Exhibit," F. F. Farrar, White Bear.

"Results of Pruning and Vinegar Experiments," W. G. Brierley, University Farm.

BOARD OF HEALTH OUTLINES REGULATIONS

Because there is much misunderstanding as to quarantines the state board of health says that under the regulations now in force in Minnesota, persons who have recently been successfully vaccinated or have recently had the disease are permitted to enter and leave the house where a case of smallpox exists. In a community where there are several cases of smallpox, or where the disease appears among the pupils or teachers in a school, all unvaccinated persons are required to be excluded from school for three weeks unless they are vaccinated within three days after having been exposed. If exposed persons are vaccinated within three days, there is no need for closing the schools.

In dealing with practically all contagious diseases, it is better to have the schools open and the pupils under proper medical observation than to turn them loose allowing them to mingle in their play and transmit infection. Moreover, mild cases that are capable of infecting others are much less likely to be recognized and properly isolated, when the children are not under observation.

FARMERS' CREAMERIES PAY BEST PRICES

A. J. McGuire, dairy specialist of the extension division, Minnesota College of agriculture, says farmers in Minnesota make from \$7 to \$15 a year more per cow by selling their cream to a good co-operative creamery than by shipping to centralized plants. Mr. McGuire made a comparison of prices paid to farmers for butterfat by the best co-operative creameries, the poorest co-operative creameries, the individual creameries, and the centralized creameries of the state from March 1916 to March 1917. The average price paid by the best co-operative creameries was 40.09 cents a pound as against 32.3 cents per pound paid by the centralizers. Even the poorest co-operative creameries did better than the centralizers.

FOLDER TELLS WHAT IS LEGAL TENDER

The University of Minnesota, through its general extension division, has just issued a little folder entitled "Legal Tender." This little folder in two pages gives a compendious statement of all the forms of United States money which fall under the heading of legal tender. A copy of this folder will be sent to any inquirer on request.

BEANS IN DANGER OWING TO MOISTURE

The bean crop, harvested in Minnesota this summer, is in danger announces A. C. Army, University Farm, St. Paul. Much of the crop of field beans, says Mr. Army, was injured by frost before maturity. This prevented normal ripening. Continued damp weather in October prevented the beans from drying out normally. For these reasons, beans in storage at this time carry an undue amount of moisture. Unless they are spread out and dried by artificial heat discoloration and in some instances mold will set in and lower their market value very greatly.

An additional danger lies in the fact that if the moist beans are frozen their power of germination will be reduced and their value as seed for next year will be greatly diminished.

DOES GRADING OF YOUR SEEDS PAY?

The division of agronomy of the Minnesota experiment station has shown by some recent work that there is a great gain in using plump seed. On nine wheat plots the average yield for three years was 29 bushels an acre. The lowest average was 23 and the highest average was 35 bushels an acre. The seed sown ranged in degree of plumpness from 40 to 80 per cent. It was found that the yield per acre varied directly with the plumpness of the seed. In other words, seed of 40 per cent plumpness gave an average yield of 23 bushels an acre, while seed of 80 per cent plumpness gave a yield of 35 bushels an acre. Here is an increase of 12 bushels per acre which at \$2 per bushel is a gain of \$24 per acre in favor of the plumper seed.

It pays to grade the seed before planting and this is doubly important at the present time when every acre of land should be made to produce maximum yields.

POULTRY IN WAR TIMES, ON PROGRAM

Special emphasis will be placed on "Poultry under war-time conditions," in the poultry courses during Farmers' and Home-Makers' Week at University Farm, December 31 to January 5, says A. C. Smith of the poultry division. Plans are being made to have chalk talks by W. H. Card, secretary of the Rhode Island Club of America, and lectures by E. C. Branch of the Missouri experiment on "The Influence of Poultry Show Associations on Poultry Culture" and other subjects.

The Minnesota Poultry association will hold its annual meeting the same week, giving those who desire it an opportunity to attend the poultry show.

DUROC JERSEYS FROM RED RIVER VALLEY

Prof. R. C. Ashby, specialist in charge of swine at University Farm, St. Paul, on his first visit to the Red River Valley recently, was so impressed with some of the Duroc Jersey pigs at the Northwest experiment station, Crookston, that he bought a sister to the sire of the pigs from C. C. Heath of Beltrami; also an aged boar for \$250. These two animals were considered by him to be the best in the state and are to be foundation breeding stock for University Farm. The Northwest experiment station has promise of the choice boar pig from this mating next year for a herd boar.

SEAL SALE PLAN.

The National Association for the Study and Prevention of Tuberculosis has officially recommended the plan of the Minnesota Public Health association for Red Cross seal percentages and nurses.

Minnesota furnishes a nurse for school health work, for a tuberculosis survey, or for infant welfare work, for one week for every 7,000 seals sold by any community; or 50 per cent of the seal receipts may be used locally for approved health work. Ten per cent is sent direct to Red Cross headquarters; the other 40 per cent is spent under Red Cross supervision on state and county tuberculosis war problems.

SAVE LIVESTOCK BY PREVENTIVE MEASURES

Preventive rather than therapeutic measures will help farmers to conserve more livestock, says C. P. Fitch, head of the veterinary division, Minnesota College of Agriculture. Any animal should be segregated as soon as any symptoms of illness are noticed. If the trouble appears at all serious a veterinarian should be called.

LUMBERJACKS HELP TO CONSERVE FOOD

The lumberjacks of the north woods have entered into the conservation movement. A. D. Wilson, federal food administrator for Minnesota, conceived the idea recently of extending the save-the-food campaign into the woods, where great quantities of food are consumed daily, and give the woodsmen the opportunity to join with their fellows in saving wheat, meats, fats and sugar for the soldiers and people of the war-stricken countries. Posters were sent into the camps outlining the need of substitution. One week later Mr. Wilson and his executive secretary, J. A. Vye, went into the woods to spend a Sunday with the men and found that conservation had already been inaugurated. In one week it was figured that in the chain of camps in the region of Cussons, 6,000 pounds of sugar had been saved, while the Cloquet camps reported a 50 per cent saving also. The lumbermen, themselves, are entering heartily into the movement and the camps promise to be among the greatest of the conservation centers.

SERIOUS SHORTAGE OF SEED IS PREDICTED

Indications point to a shortage of practically all farm seeds, says C. P. Bull, of the Minnesota experiment station. Oats, wheat, and to a less extent barley, are being sought by Montana. Corn, clover, and millet will be needed in North Dakota. Corn, oats, wheat, clover, alfalfa, and millet will be sought by northern Minnesota farmers. Northern Wisconsin is in need of corn, clovers and alfalfa. In addition to these roughage crops, especially hay will be demanded.

Men who have been fortunate and have ripe corn, or seed of any kind, should consider it their patriotic duty and their opportunity, to report the fact to the Minnesota Crop Improvement association, that their names may be included in the seed list. Men who have ripe flint corn of any variety should save it all for seed to supply northern Minnesota, North Dakota and northern Wisconsin.

An advertisement in one's local paper also may find a purchaser on the one hand or a man who has seed for sale on the other.

GOVERNMENT URGES RAISING OF HOGS

Joseph P. Cotton, chief of the United States food administration meat division, has forwarded to A. D. Wilson, federal food administrator for Minnesota, the following statement relative to the prices of hogs:

"The main purposes of the food administration as to hogs are four: To see that the producer at all times can count on a fair price for his hogs as a source of profit; to see that the farmer increases the number of hogs bred; to limit the profit of the packer and the middleman, and to eliminate speculation.

"These things are necessary in order that the ultimate consumer may get an adequate supply of hogs at the lowest feasible price.

"The prices to the farmer, so far as we can affect them, will not go below a minimum of about \$15.50 per hundred weight for the average of the packers' droves on the Chicago market until further notice."

NEW COURSE FOR NEW FRUIT GROWERS

A fruit-growing course for beginners or amateurs will be held every day at 8 a.m. during Farmers' and Home-Makers' Week, January 1-5, in the Horticulture building at University Farm, to consider elementary principles and outlines of workable methods for fruit-growers. Monday, December 31, at 1:15 a pruning demonstration and a grafting demonstration will be given as a preliminary feature.

This course will be given by W. G. Brierley and A. G. Ruggles. Mr. Brierley believes that many city growers in order to become familiar with fruit culture will take the course.

WINTER WHEAT AND RYE AREA LARGER

C. P. Bull, associate agronomist in charge of co-operative seed production and distribution, Minnesota College of Agriculture, estimates the increases in acreage planted to rye in Minnesota this fall at ten per cent; and he says there is probably an increase of 8,000 to 10,000 acres in winter wheat. Plans are being laid for as large an increase as possible in the spring grains and extra efforts will be put forth to conserve livestock and all classes of material during 1918.

STATE'S FARMERS TO HAVE ANNUAL CONGRESS DEC. 31

The annual congress of Minnesota's farmers and home-makers will be held this year from December 31 to January 5, at University Farm, St. Paul.

This annual congress has grown from an attendance of a few hundred four years ago to from 1,500 to 2,000. The meeting is, therefore, regarded by A. V. Storm, director, as one of the most significant of Minnesota's annual meetings.

The farmers make a special study of farm crops, farm management, and soils; of livestock and dairy husbandry; of horticulture, botany, and entomology; of agricultural engineering; of poultry and bees; of veterinary problems; and of other subjects of special interest, each making his own selection. The home-makers choose their subjects from foods and cookery, home-management, textiles and clothing, child welfare, the home care of the sick, and similar fields.

Among the conferences of various groups and organizations are those of the Minnesota Federation of Farmers' Clubs; of the state's livestock breeders including those who specialize in Holsteins, Guernseys, Jerseys, Ayrshires, Herefords, Aberdeen Angus cattle, Red Polls, horses, sheep, swine or poultry; of creamery managers; of crop improvement men; of potato-growers; of fruit-growers; of vegetable-growers, and of the housewives who are members of the Housewives' league and the woman's congress.

War taxes, the problems of grading and marketing and milling wheat; the milk supply; the present crisis with an address by President M. L. Burton of the University of Minnesota, and the war and the citizen, with addresses by several of Minnesota's leading citizens, including Gov. J. A. A. Burnquist, will be the general subjects for the five evening mass meetings.

WOODSMEN EVOLVE CONSERVATION FOODS

Two north woods cruisers of experience and reputation—John Raine and Edward Canute—spent the first week in December learning the new conservation cooking, as students of Miss Mabel McDowell, bread expert of the home economics division, Department of Agriculture, University of Minnesota. The men went away with much up-to-date knowledge for the camp cooks throughout the northern part of the state, but they left much good knowledge of camp cooking in return.

The men applied the science learned to the materials used in camps, and evolved some conservation recipes. Two of these have to do with the baking of milkless, eggless and butterless cake and doughnuts.

Cake
1½ cups water; 1 cup sugar; ¼ cup fat; 2½ cups barley; 2½ cups white flour; ½ teaspoon nutmeg; ¼ teaspoon salt; 2 rounded teaspoons baking powder.

Doughnuts
1½ cups sugar; 1 cup water; ½ cup fat; 1¼ cups white flour; 1 cup barley; 2 teaspoons baking powder; ¼ teaspoon nutmeg; 1 teaspoon lemon extract; ¼ teaspoon salt.

ENORMOUS WASTE OF MILK IN U. S.

Three and one-half billion pounds of milk are practically wasted in the dairy states every winter. This makes 21,000,000 pounds every day. The foregoing is a startling statement but R. M. Washburn of the division of dairy husbandry, Minnesota College of Agriculture, says it is true. The farmer feeds most of his skimmilk to hogs. This milk, fed to hogs, produces only 20 per cent of its energy value in edible pork. Eighty per cent of its energy value is lost. Mr. Washburn says, though, that some milk is necessary to start pigs off strongly.

Much more of the energy value of the skimmilk will be saved if it is made into cottage cheese. Every 100 pounds of skimmilk, says Mr. Washburn, is equivalent to 20 pounds of ordinary meat, and will make 15 pounds of cottage cheese. The cheese contains about one-third more protein and one-third less energy than meat, and is therefore, essentially equivalent to meat.

FARMERS' INSTITUTES MAY BE ORDERED YET

The secretary of farmers' institutes, University Farm, St. Paul, announces that a limited number of applications for additional institutes can be taken care of this winter. He urges business men and farmers who are interested in having a live meeting of one or two days, conducted by practical farmers for the bettering of farm conditions and for the increasing of crop production so much needed at this time, to take advantage of this opportunity.