

UNIVERSITY FARM PRESS NEWS

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

VOL. X

UNIVERSITY FARM, ST. PAUL, MINN., DECEMBER 15, 1919

NO. 24

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

Acceptance for mailing at special rate of postage provided for in section 1103, Act of October 3, 1917, authorized July 29, 1918.

ORCHARD AND GARDEN

December 15 to 22

Have you gone over the vegetables in the cellar lately and removed any that are beginning to decay?

A small amount of liquid manure applied to house ferns once in a while during the winter will keep them growing nicely.

Keep palms and ferns clean by wiping the leaves with a weak solution of whale oil soap. This will keep down the scale.

Home plants must have good drainage in the pots and as a rule will require more water now than at other times of the year because the air of the house is drier.

An eight hour day would be fine for the market gardener, but somebody would pay more for garden produce. Vegetables cannot be manufactured rain or shine as easily as plows and wagons.

A few flowers given plenty of room in a vase are much more effective than many crowded into a small receptacle. One nice rose is often more attractive than half a dozen crowded together.

A Californian has perfected a method of preserving cantaloupes which will utilize many of the waste melons of California.

The high prices of vegetables this year should encourage many folks to grow gardens next year.

It is often a good plan to take flowers from the vase at night and lay them in a box between moist papers. This keeps the air off of them and they will often come out fresher in the morning for the treatment. This is a good treatment where one is living in a flat and has no cool place to set the vase except in a window. Flowers do not keep well in a draught or when chilled.—LeRoy Cady, associate horticulturist, University Farm, St. Paul, Minnesota.

ORCHARD AND GARDEN

December 22 to 29

Are the smooth bark trees protected from sunscald. Put a covering on the south side.

Orange and grape fruit juices are now shipped from Florida in carload lots.

California outdoor grown chrysanthemums and violets are coming on to our markets in larger numbers every year.

Now is a good time to cut cions for top working trees next year.

About 4,000,000 boxes of apples were packed in California this year, or about 60 per cent of the total crop, according to United States crop estimates.

The new strains of the old fashioned zinnia are fine additions to the flower garden. Many of these make as good cut flowers as other garden flowers.

Gather and burn all mummified fruit on trees or shrubs. This is a good time to cut out dead, diseased, or crowded branches. Burn these at once also.

Do you get the Farmers' Bulletins from the Division of Publications, Washington, D. C. There have been a lot of interesting bulletins published during the last twelve months that ought to be in every farmhouse. Send for them.

Don't expect a fern to grow in a hot dry room with a little water applied to the surface once in a while. Water the plant thoroughly clear to the root tips and then devise some means of keeping the air of the room moist and the temperature regular. Folks as well as plants will thrive better.

A St. Paul grocery store was selling big overgrown Colorado carrots at five cents a pound the other day and Minnesota grown carrots at three cents a pound. The Minnesota carrots were small and of all sizes, while the Colorado ones were large, smooth and even. While we did not sample either sort we will venture to say the Minnesota ones were the best. The grocer did not dare send them out on a phone order because they were not clean and even.—LeRoy Cady, associate horticulturist, University Farm, St. Paul, Minn.

MINNESOTA FILLY SELLS FOR \$2,300

Gloriana, a yearling Percheron filly, bred and owned by the Hurdcroft farm at Monticello, Minn., was sold for \$2,300 a record price for a mare of her age, at the International Livestock Show at Chicago after she had won over all competitors in the yearling class and had been acclaimed junior champion and reserve grand champion Percheron. This is a distinct achievement which should give impetus to the horse breeding industry in Minnesota. The colt was sold to Ed Nicodemus of Waynesboro, Pa., a director of the Percheron Society of America.

SOYBEANS AND CORN MAKE BEST SILAGE

The soybean is regarded as a coming forage plant in Minnesota by Andrew Boss, vice director of the Minnesota experiment station.

Corn silage is comparatively low in protein, hence feeds rich in this substance should be fed with it in order to obtain the best results. Soybeans planted either in rows with the corn, or grown separately and combined with the corn as they are fed into the cutting machine, provide this protein, and the total yield of green material to the acre is as great or greater than when corn alone is grown. Varieties of soybeans suited to southern, central, and northern Minnesota are available.

Yields ranging from 12 to 22 bushels of seed to the acre have been secured for a period of years at University Farm.

A. C. Army, in charge of farm crops, says: "Since the soybean is a leguminous plant, high in protein and fat, more protein may be expected than from the corn alone. Dairy cows receiving the corn and soybean silage need less protein in the form of bran and oil-meal than those receiving the corn silage. Figuring the protein at five cents a pound, and the carbohydrates at one cent a pound, the mixed crop has been found under experiments and tests to be worth about six dollars more to the acre than the corn alone."

BEST TIME TO BUY AND SELL CATTLE

In a study of prices for cattle on the Chicago market for the 15 years from 1904 to 1918 inclusive, William L. Calvert, farm management demonstrator at University Farm, finds that the highest price for fat steers usually prevails from May to September and the lowest price for feeders and a stockers in November, December and January.

"The best policy one year with another," he says, "would appear to be to buy the feeders in December, January or early February and have them ready for the May or June market. This would seem particularly desirable when silage forms a large part of the roughage. The silage does not deteriorate, while shock corn deteriorates rapidly in the late winter and early spring. If one has stalk fields or other feed that would go to waste, he would usually be ahead to buy his feeders in time to make use of this feed. Also the buyer who is on the market during the period when range cattle are being freely marketed may have opportunity to make better selection than the December and January or early February buyer. However, considerable advantage would be required to compensate for the longer feed."

Mr. Calvert feels that a farmer who bases his feeding and market practice upon a statistical study of market behavior in previous years will be a gainer in the long run, but calls attention to the fact that in a particular year markets may vary widely from the average trend.

SEED TESTS SHOW LOW GERMINATION

Seed wheat samples received up to this time for testing at the seed laboratory, University Farm, St. Paul, Minn., have germinated only 80 per cent, according to R. C. Dahlberg, in charge of seed laboratory. "This is extremely low," says Mr. Dahlberg, "even for uncleaned grain, and indicates that special care must be exercised in the selection of wheat seed for planting. The low germinating quality is the natural result of the unfavorable weather in 1919 for the ripening of farm crop seeds. No barley or oat tests are available at the present time."

Mr. Dahlberg finds that timothy is extremely low testing, 93 samples received the last three months testing only 84 per cent. "It is to be expected," he says, "that low tests would be the result immediately following harvest, but according to monthly averages there has been no appreciable improvement, although this should be the case with properly matured seed."

"Red clover is lower than usual, the average being 71 per cent with 19 per cent hard seed. This low average is in part due to the utilization of old seed of low germination, because of the very high price of red clover seed. Here is a concrete illustration: Two samples of red clover seed were received from a farmer for testing. One sample was absolutely dead, testing 0 per cent, while the other tested 44 per cent. The latter seed, while very low, will produce a stand of clover if enough is planted to the acre."

The annual short course for retail merchants will be held at the University of Minnesota Jan. 26 to 30. The detailed program is now being prepared. Problems of merchandising, under the peculiar conditions which now exist, will be discussed by experts. Particulars may be obtained by addressing the general extension division, University of Minnesota.

THRIFT WEEK NEAR; ALL CAN HELP SAVE

The savings division of the United States treasury department is maturing plans for a National Thrift Week beginning January 17, 1920. The purpose of the week, says Washington, is to start the New Year with a sound financial program for every individual and household.

William M. Lewis, director of the savings division, says in a communication received at University Farm: "We must refrain from unnecessary and extravagant spending if we are to bring prices down. Having saved money, it is essential that the individual invest safely. To this end we urge continued investment in government securities, on which steady and good interest returns are assured, with full return of principal."

It is a duty put upon all citizens at this time to cut living costs as much as possible. Children should be taught a sense of money values by sharing to some extent in the family financial problems and acquiring a knowledge of costs. Thrift should be the slogan in the factory, the business house, and on the farm. Keeping machinery repaired, housing machinery, providing good shelter for livestock, building fences on the farm so that stock can have the run of the fields, repairing and oiling harness—these are little enterprises making for thrift and success which the husbandman should not slight. Money saved now will buy more later on.

"ENOUGH BUSINESS" CO-OPERATION NEED

Farmers contemplating the organization of co-operative companies should concern themselves with the volume of business they can reasonably expect to get at the outset. "Enough business" is one of the essentials to successful co-operation emphasized by John D. Black and Frank Robotka of the division of research in agricultural economics of the Minnesota college of agriculture. They point out that a small business is conducted at high cost in proportion to the products handled. This means that private companies handling more business can undersell the co-operators. They contend, too, that the chances for success are increased when the business comes from a rather limited area and when the business is of such character that it can be operated the year round.

FARM ENGINEERS WANT OWN BUREAU

The American Society of Agricultural Engineers is urging the organization of a bureau of agricultural engineering in the department of Agriculture at Washington. Drainage, irrigation, the operation of tractors, motors and farm machines of all kinds, the erection of farm buildings and the installation of lighting, heating and water supply plants come within the scope of agricultural engineering.

William Boss, chief of the division of agricultural engineering at University Farm, heartily indorses the proposal for the new bureau. "Such a bureau," he says, "would correlate the work of the various state experiment stations and carry on such research work as cannot well be handled by state organizations. It would also take the leadership in standardization work of farm equipment as to types, sizes, rating, etc., and assist manufacturers in serving the best interests of agriculture by setting forth the essential requirements of such equipment."

"A considerable amount of the farmers' investment is in buildings, machinery and equipment, and any development that can be brought about that will enable the more economical construction and arrangement of such buildings and the selection of machinery or equipment better adapted to their purpose or will devise labor saving methods, cannot help but be of value to the industry of agriculture and to the nation."

MONEY TO BE MADE BY CLEANING GRAIN

By cleaning the bulk of their seed grain, farmers can often get a handsome return by advertising and selling a quantity of seed, provided, of course, the seed has a high germination test. Samples can be sent to the University Farm laboratory for this test. "By using a fanning mill in this way," says L. B. Bassett, of the farm management division, Minnesota college of agriculture, "greater profits are often realized than by selling the grain in bulk to the elevator and buying the seed back. Seed bought in this way may not be adapted to the locality and the farmer is always asked to pay a premium. In many cases a premium so paid would pay for the fanning mill in one season."

FARMERS CAN AID TAKING OF CENSUS

"The census of agriculture about to be taken is especially valuable," says Andrew Boss of University Farm, "in analyzing the agricultural conditions of the country, and of the farmers. Farmers often object to giving census information, believing it will be used in connection with taxation schemes which may result in greater hardships to them. The census is not in any way connected with taxation systems. It is an honest attempt on the part of the government to get at the facts about farming without any idea of increasing the burdens in any way."

"This year the United States Department of Agriculture has assisted in preparing the questions that are to be answered by the farmers. It is hoped that the farmers of Minnesota will cheerfully answer all inquiries by the enumerators regarding their business. The government desires to know whether the farmers are having a fair chance to succeed in comparison with other industries. It desires to know whether conditions are favorable or unfavorable for young men who wish to start in farming. If they are unfavorable it desires to improve conditions and make them more favorable."

"So far as possible in a census inquiry, the government also desires to learn as much as possible about the cost of production and the losses that farmers meet as a part of their business for which they do not get credit."

HOT SCHOOL LUNCH WINNING ITS WAY

Home demonstration agents in Morrison, Dakota, Olmsted, Clay, Anoka, Hennepin and other counties in Minnesota have met with success in introducing the hot lunch in the public schools. Not only do the parents and teachers approve of it, says Adele Koch of the extension division, University Farm, but the children are unanimously in favor of it.

"To have one dish at noon," says Miss Koch, "requires very little equipment. The additional work for the teacher is light, as the children take turns in helping. Cost of the food is nominal; supplies can be brought from home, each contributing its share. For the children it means eating lunch in an orderly way while seated at a desk instead of snatching a bite of sandwich or doughnut while at play. It also means that the children eat a nourishing lunch instead of forgetting to eat or preferring not to eat stone cold food. It means improved health, bright eyes and red cheeks. The children are more alert and better able to master their lessons."

The home economics service at University Farm will help to introduce the hot school-lunch in your community. Write and ask about it if you want to help improve the health and deportment of your school children.

WINTER DISPOSAL OF MANURE URGED

Disposal of manure as fast as it is produced in winter is advocated by M. J. Thompson, superintendent of the Duluth sub-station of the Minnesota department of agriculture. Double handling is thus avoided. Losses by leaching are held to be slight. The Duluth district has deep snow and low temperatures, but in five years of livestock farming at the sub-station there has been no deviation from the rule of hauling the manure to the fields promptly. Mr. Thompson says:

"The spreader is operated as late in the fall as possible. With the coming of snow a rough box with runners attached is placed at each barn, the manure is dumped into it and in freezing weather it is hauled to the field at once."

"We manure the grain stubble where hay is to follow the coming season. This insures a good hay crop even though the year may be dry. The manure is worked into the soil thoroughly before the cultivated crop follows in its turn. Likewise the weed seeds are sprouted and out of the way with the hay crop. As nearly as possible we try to apply at the rate of two tons an acre a year for each acre under the plow. Thus in a five-year rotation this would mean ten tons per acre to each field applied once in five years."

While the Russian thistle when young and tender has considerable feeding value, Andrew Boss, in charge of the Minnesota experiment station, says the thistle should not be allowed to grow. Alfalfa is much better for all classes of livestock. Farmers who are troubled by the thistle, says Mr. Boss, should turn their sheep into infested fields. Sheep will eat the thistle closely and seemingly relish this kind of pasture. North Dakota station men report that 35 head of sheep were pastured all summer on five acres of Russian thistle on the station farm at Williston.

NOVEL FEATURES FOR FARM AND HOME WEEK

Novel but practical features have been prepared for the hundreds who are expected to attend Minnesota's greatest short course—Farmers' and Home-Makers' Week—University Farm, St. Paul, December 29 to January 3.

An intimate study of the tractor, for example, will be one of these features. Opportunity for this will be given Wednesday and Thursday when the mechanics of the tractor, the tractor as a part of the equipment of the farm, and cost of operation, will be discussed. At the same time a tractor conference of managers of the farms connected with state institutions will be held.

To give all who attend an opportunity to study farm machinery in actual operation a whole series of demonstrations has been arranged. These will take place at noon hour and at the close of the regular afternoon sessions, and will cover such subjects as the operation of corn planters, and adjustment and use of disks and spike-tooth harrows, the manipulation of haying tools, plows, manure spreaders, seeding machines, potato machines, grain-cleaning machines, and all the rest.

F. S. Bauer, of Barnum, Minn., is going to tell how to make \$1,000 a year on a village lot in spare time with the aid of the capable hen.

For the women, as for the men, emphasis is to be placed on thrift—thrift in providing for the table, for clothing, for comfortable and pleasing surroundings, and for the warding off of diseases, including diseases of the contagious sort.

"Songs That Live" will make up an evening program on Tuesday. This will be given by Mrs. Rose Morgan of New York, who will not only sing but give the histories of songs that live in a way to make them more interesting than ever.

The printed program, which contains other features just as interesting as those mentioned, is about ready for distribution. Copies may be had by addressing Secretary, University Farm, St. Paul.

SOIL BUILT UP BY SWEET CLOVER

The Northwest Experiment station at Crookston strongly recommends the growing of sweet clover on a more extensive scale than heretofore. A recent statement issued at the branch station says:

"Sweet clover is not only one of the greatest soil enrichers, but is valuable feed for livestock. It adds humus to the soil because of the depth to which the roots penetrate and the ease with which they decay. Land that has been cropped with sweet clover which has been inoculated will grow a better stand of alfalfa without further inoculation."

"Sweet clover is commonly sown with a nurse crop. It is more easily plowed up than alfalfa. It is a cash crop when grown for seed and should be tried at least on a small scale by every farmer."

EDITOR'S CORNER

KNOW YOUR EDITOR

The Extension Service News of the New York state college of agriculture moves to substitute the word "editor" for the word "neighbor." Then it would read, "Get acquainted with your editor, you might like him." The News says:

"Every person who is interested in the life of his community, should have an intimate acquaintance with and sympathetic attitude toward the editors of his local papers. Too few people realize the contribution which the country weeklies make to the life of the community. Many think of the local editor only when they wish to make use of him to give publicity. At other times they are all too likely to have only words of criticism for the publisher and his paper."

"The newspaper is not so much a business enterprise as it is a local institution, and in proportion to what he contributes to the life of the community, the average publisher is as poorly paid as the country preacher or the country school teacher. He works almost as long hours as the farmer, and cannot feel that he is off duty during any of his waking hours."

CHRISTMAS SUGGESTION

Not a gift to hang on the tree, perhaps, but one which will be enjoyed 52 times a year—a year's subscription to The (name of your paper). Not many gifts costing only \$..... (price of your paper) will give as much pleasure the whole year through.