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SEED CORN GATHERING CONTEST.

In view of the need of instructive work along the line of seed corn selection, and with a further view of getting boys interested in the saving of better seed corn, several communities are planning to hold seed corn gathering contests. These contests will be held during Seed Corn Week, and are open to boys over ten and under eighteen years of age. The working plan is to have the commercial club, county fair, or some enterprising business men offer prizes for the best selection of ten ears of seed corn from some previously agreed upon field of corn. Some progressive members of the community are induced to finish the field from which the selection is to be made, but in each case a selected corn will remain the property of the field owner. The county superintendent of schools receives the entries of the contestants, and the agriculturist of the local high school some one from the agricultural Extension Division assumes the responsibility of organizing the contest, overseeing the work and receiving the final selection of the contestants. All boys entering the contest are previously informed as to the rules of the contest, the place at which it is to be held, and the date and hour at which they must appear. At the time the contest each contestant is provided with a grain sack in which to store his selection, and is properly instructed as to the selection he should make and his action in the field. The contestants will be permitted to ask questions before the contest begins, but no contestant will be permitted to receive any assistance during the contest. Each contestant must bring in every ear that is broken on the stalk, and from the corn so threshed must make his selection of ears. This selection must be properly strung for curing, and delivered to one in charge of the contest. After selections have had ample time to be made, the awarding of the prizes shall be made by an impartial judge, and judgment based entirely upon the merit of the selection the contestant has made.—O. M. Olson, Agricultural Extension Division, Minn. College of Agriculture.

SEED CORN WEEK.

The Minnesota Agricultural College will soon designate a week in September, 1912, to be observed by the selection of seed corn. Seed Corn Week, which has been observed the past two years, has done much to insure good seed corn. In 1911 all who failed to select seed corn early were reminded the spring of 1912 that the late selection of seed corn cannot be depended upon; while seed selected early and properly cared for is practically certain to grow. The corn crop in Minnesota, which is present is worth about \$30,000,000 annually, or about \$200.00 per farm, is an important factor to be considered lightly. It is often difficult to find time to select seed corn just when it should be done, but there seems to be no other way to be sure of reliable seed. In an average field of corn a man can select and store enough seed in an hour to plant from one to two acres. The task is not great, and the time spent is likely to return from 50 cents to five dollars a year later.

Seed Corn Week in 1912 will very likely be either the second or third week in September. The date will be decided upon about September 1st, in accordance with the Governor's proclamation and be ready to act.

"WHY SEED CORN WEEK?"

Seed Corn Week is designated each year by the Minnesota Agricultural College, and widely advertised to call attention to the advantages which come from the early selection of seed corn, which are:

- First. Seed selected early has an opportunity to dry out thoroughly before freezing weather.
- Second. Danger of seed corn being stored or frozen while still unhusked is averted.
- Third. Early selection enables one to select ears that have matured at the proper time; while if selection is deferred until later, ears requiring more time to mature than the average season affords may be selected.
- Fourth. Early selection enables one to select the ears from desirable stalks which cannot well be done later.
- Fifth. Early selection is a guarantee against such seed corn conditions as prevailed, throughout the Northwest, in the spring of 1912. Observe Seed Corn Week in 1912.

PACKAGE GROCERIES.

Do They Add Needlessly to the High Cost of Living?

An interesting contribution to current investigations of the "high cost of living" has been made public by the Connecticut Experiment Station, in which the claim is advanced that the general practice of enclosing beverages and foods in packages has played an important part in the advanced prices of those goods. There are advantages in the package plan, it is admitted, but there are disadvantages, too, as may be seen by the following summary in the bulletin:

"This practice has certain advantages. The most obvious of these is the protection from contamination by flies, animals and human manipulation and by the dust and dirt of shop and street. A sealed package gives the buyer a reasonable assurance that he gets the food just as it left the factory and this is particularly important for manufacturers who claim specially clean factories and sanitary methods. Sealed packages also protect from substitution and dishonest manipulation or false weights and measures of a retail dealer. They save the dealer time, trouble and sometimes loss of material, and by their attractive appearance tempt customers.

"The use of packages also has its disadvantages. As a rule it increases the cost of food to the customer. He pays for the attractive and somewhat expensive containers either by increase of price per unit of quantity or by decreased quantity at the standard price. In sealed cartons the purchaser cannot see the food before buying—a serious objection in the case of such things as breakfast foods and dried fruits, which he sometimes finds, on breaking the package, to be infested with insects. This causes trouble if not loss. The size of the container often deceives the buyer as to the amount of material he is buying. Bottles with deeply concave bottoms or paneled sides, and breakfast food cartons, especially of flaked foods, are likely to be quite deceptive."

Investigation showed that many of the goods sold in packages, though handled at the same prices obtained for them several years ago, contained less of the product. And when an attempt was made by the state law to compel producers to print the weight of the product upon the package, the law was evaded in the case of canned fruits and vegetables by merely using less solids and more liquids. In other cases the cans were made heavier. There was a general disposition, the bulletin states, to obey the law, though this did not reduce the higher prices made necessary when the manufacturers packed everything in fancy packages to cater to the whims and tastes of the buyer.

The farmer has frequently been criticized for alleged contributions to the "high cost of living," though it is recognized by farm management experts that he has too often received far less returns for his labor and investment than have been his due. The results of this Connecticut bulletin are suggestive, therefore, in having unearthed one contributory cause to high prices for which the farmer can take no blame. The extravagance and wasteful wants of the American consumer, and not the farmer producer, must answer for the short-weighted package.—Ray P. Speer, Minn. Agricultural College.

FEED LAMBS ALFALFA AND CORN.

Use Only Farm Grown Products in Finishing Mutton For Market.

It is becoming less and less customary to ship lambs or other live stock to distant regions to finish them for market. H. H. Simpson, of the Agricultural Experiment Station, Agricultural College, (P. O.) New Mexico, finds that mutton suitable for local market demands can be grown on alfalfa. The use of corn in addition shortened the feeding period and gave mutton of better quality.

With alfalfa hay alone, from 110 to 120 days were required to prepare lambs for the home market. The use of about one-fourth pound of grain per head per day reduced the feeding period by 10 days. The use of one-half pound of grain reduced it 20 days, while with the heavy grain ration of a pound per head per day the feeding period need be only from 70 to 80 days. The light (one-fourth pound) grain ration gave as great but not as rapid gains as did the medium or one-half pound ration. The more grain fed, the greater was the cost of gain.—J. O. Rankin, Editor, Minn. College of Agriculture.

EAR CORN BEST.

"Back to Nature" Method of Feeding Hogs Is Most Profitable.

Often it is the simplest method in common farm practice that is the most profitable. Unnecessary details mean more attention, and they must be subtracted when the farm profits are estimated at the close of the year's operations.

This axiomatic principle is true of hog-feeding, according to experiments conducted by the Iowa Experiment station. It has been found that the simplest and most profitable method in most cases is to feed dry ear corn. The grinding of corn for hogs, according to the figures obtained, is, as a rule, unnecessary and unprofitable, although soaking may be advantageous under certain circumstances.

The fastest and most economical gains were made by feeding hogs dry ear corn until they had reached a weight of 200 pounds. After that a change to soaked shelled corn secured the most profitable gains. Corn that was soaked 12 hours gave the most satisfaction. It proved unprofitable to grind corn.—Ray P. Speer, Minnesota Agricultural College.

DYNAMITING STUMPS.

The Amount of Dynamite and Cost Per Stump.

"Blowing Stumps with Dynamite" is the title of bulletin No. 154 of the Agricultural Experiment Station at Lexington, Ky. It yields information of much interest to those who have land to clear.

It should be remembered that this work was done under Kentucky conditions. One field has been cleared about eight years and the stumps less than 10 inches across could be readily broken out with axe and grubbing hoe. In another field a number of green stumps were broken out at from two to three times as great an expense. Fifty per cent dynamite was used in most of the work but 40 per cent proved satisfactory when used on some of the dead stumps.

Over 100 stumps having an average diameter of 16 inches were blown at London, Ky. The average number of sticks of dynamite used was 2.6, the average time required per stump 30 minutes, the average cost of material 25.7 cents and the average total cost per stump 33 cents. Nearly all the stumps were dead oak. At the experiment station farm at Lexington 9 green stumps averaging 22 inches in diameter were blown at an average cost of \$1.56 per stump, 10½ sticks of dynamite per stump being used. Of these stumps 3 black oak averaged 45 inches in diameter and were blown at a total cost of \$3.52 per stump, the average number of sticks of dynamite used being 23½.

"The amount of dynamite required to blow stumps of the same kind in the same soil does not vary directly with the diameter but more nearly with the square of the diameter, or, in other words, with the area of the cross section of the stump." In other words, if a man knows from experience how many sticks to place under a stump 6 inches across in a given soil, he may use four times this amount in blowing another stump of the same kind but 12 inches across. When a stump doubles in diameter we multiply the amount of dynamite by four. If we had a stump three times as great in diameter as the first one we would use nine times as much dynamite, and so on. Perhaps a simpler way of stating the same thing is to say that if experience has shown us that we should use one stick of dynamite in blowing a stump which covered an area of 12 square inches we would use two sticks in blowing one which covered 24 square inches, three sticks in blowing one which covered 36 square inches, and soon we increase the amount of dynamite then in proportion to the increase in area of cross section of the stump or in proportion to the square of the diameter.

Tables in the bulletin quoted state the diameter of each stump blown in the experiments and the number of sticks of dynamite used. They also state the kind of stump blown, whether it was green or dead, and the number of sticks of dynamite used. The trees ranged from 5 inches to 4 feet through. Although mainly oaks, they included some pine, gum, sugar maple, hackberry, elm, cherry and osage orange or hedge stumps.—J. O. Rankin, Editor, Minn. College of Agriculture.

HELP COUNTY FAIR.

Cooking and Sewing Schools and Other Demonstrations Will Aid.

There is no better way of making a county fair attractive to the farmers, their wives, and their children, than by the use of frequent demonstrations. It may mean success, in many instances, where failure has been met before.

Illustration by actual demonstration has become one of the basic principles employed by colleges and experiment stations in carrying accurate information on farming to the public. A luxuriant field of alfalfa which produces three crops of excellent hay in one season will have more influence in promoting alfalfa culture in any community than scores of addresses and books. Everyone in the community is certain that alfalfa can be grown with success, for an actual field of alfalfa has been seen growing successfully under local conditions.

So it is with demonstrations at a county fair. They may be of any nature, according to the needs of the locality. If dairying is one of the important industries, demonstrations may be given on testing, butter making, cheese making, and the sanitary handling of milk. If there are many chickens raised, the demonstrations may be on killing, dressing, and packing poultry for market. Cooking schools and dressmaking and millinery schools, where school girls or young women do the actual work, will interest the women greatly.

Now that Minnesota has forged her way into the great American corn belt, a very important demonstration might be conducted in the selection of seed corn, its care before being shelled, after germination in spring, and the operation of individual ear tests. If such a demonstration was conducted generally, it might lead to a great increase in the average corn yield. The transplanting, pruning, and budding of fruit trees; the laying out and planting of garden plats; the canning, preserving, and drying of fruits; and the judging of all kinds of live stock of different types will be certain to raise the educational value of the county fair. It is not too late, at any rate, for the county fair boards to think about such a plan.—Ray P. Speer, Minn. College of Agriculture.

LIBRARY IS FREE.

Every Rural Community Should Have One of Travelling Sets.

There is not a rural community, cooperative society, or farmers' club in Minnesota that should not have one of the special farmers' traveling libraries arranged by the Minnesota Free Public Library Commission for general distribution at country places. So easily is one of these libraries secured, and at such small expense, that a community cannot afford to be without one.

Twenty-five of the fifty books in each library set are written on agriculture. The remaining books pertain to subjects of general interest to the farmer. All of the agricultural books are entertainingly written; indeed, some of them read almost like fairy tales, so fascinating are the laws and principles governing many of the subjects found to be. Many a long, tedious evening in late fall and early winter may be turned into a short, pleasant one by a casual study of these books.

Farm management experts tell us that the farms in Minnesota must be placed on a business basis soon if certain and regular profits are to be gained. The difference between income and outlay is so small, in many instances, that a careful business-like study of farming operations is necessary to win financial success. Here is where a traveling library of carefully picked agricultural books may be used profitably. The careful reading of a book on feeding cannot help but make a careful feeder still more careful. The same is true of books on soils, dairying, farm crops, farm structures, and drainage.

One of these libraries may be obtained by writing to the Library Commission at the Capitol, St. Paul, for application blanks, by obtaining the signature of ten tax-payers to these blanks, by appointing a secretary and librarian, and by providing a suitable place in which to keep the library. The librarian is made responsible for the books. A fee of one dollar must be sent to pay transportation charges of the library. The books may be kept for six months.—Ray P. Speer, Minn. College of Agriculture.

LABOR ON FARM.

Seasonal Distribution of Man and Horse Labor Investigated.

The great problem of the seasonal distribution of labor on the farm is splendidly discussed by W. J. Spillman, farm management expert of the U. S. Department of Agriculture, in the 1911 Yearbook, just issued. The advantages of an efficient scheme of farm management, whereby labor may be employed throughout the year, are emphasized in this article.

Due to an ever shifting change in conditions, the types of farming have been constantly changing in the East and West. In the East, the price of feeds which has traveled faster than the price of dairy products is inducing dairymen to sell their hay and grain instead of turning it into milk, butter, and cheese. In the West, the relatively lower prices of hay and mill products and the perceptible increase in the price of dairy products has given the dairy industry a tremendous growth. Other changes in the systems of rotation in the corn belt have been worked out by natural conditions.

These changes have made it difficult for an accurate system of farm management to be worked out. Investigation has proved, however, that there ought to be a more even distribution of man and horse labor on most of the farms of the United States. So poorly distributed is horse labor on the average farm throughout the year that the horse works but three and one-half hours each day. On most farms it has been found that the rush of spring planting and mid-summer harvesting makes necessary the hiring of "rush" labor which cannot be profitably employed at any other time.

The farm management division, therefore, is working out several schemes of farming whereby the work can be better distributed through summer and winter, and enable a larger profit to be made. To that end, conditions are being investigated throughout the United States.—Ray P. Speer, Minn. Agricultural College.

NAMING THE FARM.

What's in a name? Perhaps a name for the farm is only a concession to the sentimental; nevertheless, it is becoming a custom that characterizes the owner as a man of pride. Possibly his knowing that the farm is named may stimulate him to better work on the farm. No doubt the community looks upon the name as a trade-mark for this particular farm and the things for which it is noted. It may carry discredit as well as credit, and truly its reputation will be only that which the farmer makes for it.

The name for the farm should not be hastily chosen, and should mean something. It may be made to meet some fancy of the owner, but preferably should have a relation to some distinct feature of the farm or the line of farming pursued. The entire family should be consulted in the selection of the name, and it should as far as possible be made to meet the wishes of all.

A well-chosen name is worthy of publication; and it is not only well to use it on letter-heads and envelopes, but it should adorn the gateway, in order that all who chance to pass may read. Believing that a well-selected name may furnish an incentive for better farming, we suggest the following list:

- | | |
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| Airy Hill, | Haycroft, |
| Airy Knoll, | Jerseyland, |
| Arrowdale, | Lakeside, |
| Altamont, | Lakeview, |
| Avondale, | Lakewood, |
| Brookside, | Lyndale, |
| Beechwood, | Lawnview, |
| Maple Point, | Maple Grove, |
| Brookdale, | Morning Glory, |
| Bannerland, | Meadows, |
| Branching Brook, | Northwood, |
| Clover Crest, | North Star, |
| Cloverdale, | Oak Grove, |
| Clearbrook, | Oakland, |
| Cadarcroft, | Oak Park, |
| Deer Lodge, | Oaklawn, |
| Daisy Meadow, | Overview, |
| Dairy Downs, | Osage, |
| Edgewood, | Plainview, |
| Elmendorf, | Pinehurst, |
| Echo Grove, | Pine Ridge, |
| Echo Glen, | Poplar Lane, |
| Excelsior, | Rockwood, |
| Elmhurst, | Riverdale, |
| Eagle View, | Riverside, |
| East View, | Stillwater, |
| Eureka, | Sunnyslope, |
| Elmwood, | South Shore, |
| Fairfield, | Sunset, |
| Fairview, | Sunrise, |
| Forest Hill, | The Willows, |
| Fountain Home, | The Knolls, |
| Fair Oaks, | Wildwood, |
| Fanwood, | Willowdale, |
| Glendale, | Woodland, |
| Grandview, | Woodside, |
| Grassland, | Woodlawn, |
| Hawthorn, | Westwood, |
| Hillhurst, | Willow Glen, |
| Homestead, | Willow Lane, |
| Hazelbrook, | |