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ORCHARD AND GARDEN NOTES

February 15-22

Some early garden and flower seeds may be sown now.

Test all seeds on hand. Flannel and blotting paper are good materials to use.

Don't forget to include some of the Spencer type of sweet peas in the flower seed order.

To grow a good crop of onions requires rich soil, free from weeds, and thorough cultivation.

An interesting bulletin on tomatoes has just been received from the Georgia Experiment Station. It is No. 112.

Nasturtiums will do well in almost any soil, but if they are planted on very rich soil, too much growth of vine results at the expense of flowers.

The bush Lima bean is worth growing in any garden. The tall Lima bush requires a longer season to mature and often does not ripen in Minnesota's short summer season.

The potted bulbs of hyacinths, daffodils, etc., should be brought into heat now. If a few at a time are brought in, the flowering season will continue well through the spring.

Brussels sprouts are splendid vegetables, but are not very successfully grown in this state. Some types of cabbage are easier to handle, and better than poorly grown sprouts.

Branches of pussy willows brought into the house now and set in water will soon open up. They make good bouquets.

Some of the early fruits, as Compass cherries, may also be made to flower by putting them in water in a warm place.—LeRoy Cady, Associate Horticulturist, University Farm, St. Paul.

ORCHARD AND GARDEN NOTES

February 22-28

Get ready to spray the orchard.

Golden Bantam sweet corn is still one of the best early sweet varieties.

Lettuce, radishes, and onions may be sown in the hotbed as soon as it is ready.

Go over all garden and field equipment and see that everything is ready to use.

Cuttings of coleus, petunias, and other bedding plants may be made now.

Double portulaca, annual delphinium, calliopsis, African daisy and stock are good annuals to plant.

Plum and nut seeds, that have been stratified and stored in the cellar, may now be brought up, thoroughly watered, and placed outside to freeze.

Tuberous begonia bulbs should be purchased now and potted. They may be set outdoors after danger of frost is over.

A few fall-bearing strawberries may be planted for home use to advantage. The Progressive is probably as good as any.

Plant a few herbaceous perennial flowering plants this spring, such as pyrethrum, boltonia, iris, or even some of the lilies, such as Liliun elegans.

A few King raspberry plants do not take up much room or require a great deal of care, but they do furnish a very pleasing fruit in their season.

Plant a few trees along the road this spring. They may be either fruit, nut, or elm trees, and should be set at least fifty feet apart.

Include in the shrub order some plants that will flower or fruit in the fall. Snowberry, highbush cranberry, Viburnum lantana, wahoo, and the bitter sweet vine all carry bright colored berries in autumn.

Practical tree surgery is discussed in a bulletin put out by the Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C. This gives excellent directions for the pruning and the care of trees.

Hotbeds may be started now, unless the weather is unusually cold. See that about eighteen inches of well-tramped heating manure is in the bottom of the frame. Bank the frame well with straw or dry manure.—LeRoy Cady, Associate Horticulturist, University Farm, St. Paul.

ALUM IN BAKING POWDER HARMLESS

"Alum baking powders are no more harmful than any other baking powders," says Julius Hortvet, Chief Chemist of the State Food Department, who has just joined the Information Bureau of the Minnesota Public Health Association. "Moreover, no baking powder now on the market, whether it contains alum or not, falls into the list of harmful foods, so as to justify action against it by food officials. Nevertheless, the idea that alum makes a baking powder objectionable is firmly implanted in the minds of many conscientious housewives. Several domestic science teachers in all good faith also support this idea, but scientific investigation fails to find it true, despite the very vigorous propaganda against alum by baking-powder companies whose products do not contain it. The 'alum peril' is merely a commercial talking point. Scientific men have long been satisfied that there is 'nothing to it.'

"The fact is that no argument based on the possible harmful effects of alum itself on the human system is worth anything, for any alum present in baking powder is entirely broken up in the baking process. There is, therefore, no alum whatever left in the bread or cake which is finally eaten. The substances into which the alum is broken up consist in part of laxative salts; but the ingredients of the baking powders which do not contain alum are likewise broken up into laxative salts. Therefore, any choice there may be between the two kinds is merely the choice between bread, containing laxatives of the sulphate group, derived from alum, or bread containing laxatives of the tartaric acid or phosphate groups, derived from those baking powders which do not contain alum.

CHRONIC RHEUMATISM IS CAUSED BY GERMS

"Exposure, cold, and wet does not seem to produce rheumatism, according to studies of the soldiers on the firing line in Europe," says Dr. H. W. Hill, of the Minnesota Public Health Association. "This seems a radical reversal of popular belief, but is quite in line with some very fine laboratory studies made during the last two or three years in Chicago. German and American physicians thus agree, although studying the subject under different conditions.

What does cause rheumatism then? Many pains called rheumatism are not rheumatism at all. What purports to be sciatica or lumbago is quite often caused by a fall or a jar which partly dislocates the frame work of bones which support the loins and lower part of the back. Many a case of supposed rheumatism in the feet is really caused by a giving way of the arch of the foot. Long, hard marches even cause actual fractures of little bones of the foot at times. Eliminating all these as not true rheumatism, a majority of the cases remaining are found to be true infections by the rheumatism germ. Acute inflammatory rheumatism has long been known to be caused by a germ, but the war has brought out emphatically the point that so called chronic rheumatism is also often due to a germ although of a much milder type.

FARMERS' ELEVATORS DO A BIG BUSINESS

Farmers' elevators in Minnesota, in handling the crop of 1912, did a business of \$24,000,000. Of this amount \$22,000,000 represents the value of grain marketed and the other \$2,000,000 the value of supplies, such as coal, feed, and twine, purchased for members.

These figures are taken from a bulletin on "Statistics of Cooperation Among Farmers in Minnesota," by L. D. H. Weld, Chief of the Division of Research in Agricultural Economics, of the University of Minnesota.

The number of farmers' elevators in Minnesota is 270, according to Mr. Weld's statistics, and the aggregate membership in these companies is 34,500, or an average of 128 to each company. In all of these 270 companies farmers own a majority of the stock, and in all but 5.5 per cent of them each stockholder has but one vote irrespective of the number of shares owned. In other words the elevators are not only owned by the farmers, but they are controlled democratically by them.

PLAIN CAMPAIGN AGAINST MOSQUITO

The open season for the pestiferous mosquito is approaching. Now is a good time to plan an offensive campaign against him. How this can best be done is interestingly told by C. W. Howard of the Division of Entomology, Minnesota College of Agriculture, in Extension Bulletin No. 55, just from the press.

MINNESOTA LEADS IN COOPERATION

Minnesota has more cooperative enterprises than any other state in the Union, according to a bulletin on "Statistics of Cooperation Among Farmers in Minnesota," by L. D. H. Weld, Chief of the Division of Research in Agricultural Economics of the University of Minnesota. The farmers of the State are much more thoroughly organized than is generally realized. On January 1, 1914, there were 2,013 cooperative organizations in the State and in the year 1913 these did a total business of nearly \$61,000,000.

The organizations include creameries, elevators, stock shipping associations, stores, fire insurance companies, telephone companies, cheese factories, potato warehouses, fruit shipping associations, cow testing associations, lumber yards, cattle and horse breeding associations, and many others.

FARMERS CONTROL BUTTER INDUSTRY

Minnesota has nearly twice as many cooperative creameries as any other state in the Union, and nearly one-third of the total number of cooperative creameries of the United States. The number, according to a bulletin on "Statistics of Cooperation Among Farmers in Minnesota," by L. D. H. Weld, Chief of the Division of Research in Agricultural Economics of the University of Minnesota, is 614, which is 72 per cent of all the creameries in Minnesota. Forty-two percent of all the farmers in the state are patrons of these creameries. There is no other important dairy state, says Mr. Weld, where the butter industry is controlled to such an extent by the farmers themselves. A majority of the creameries are operated on a no-profit basis, deducting from their gross receipts enough to cover expenses, and distributing the remainder from month to month according to the amount of butter fat brought in by patrons.

These creameries in 1913 made 74,934-940 pounds of butter. This was an average of 122,044 pounds for each creamery. For the butter fat the farmers were paid \$19,988,321. The average amount paid to the farmer by each creamery was \$32,554. The total running expenses for the cooperative creameries was \$1,682,931. The average number of cows for each creamery was 822.

ESTIMATES MADE OF TUBERCULOSIS CASES

"Exaggerated statements as to the tuberculosis situation are often heard," says Dr. H. W. Hill, of the Minnesota Public Health Association. "If these exaggerated statements were true, the hope of abolishing tuberculosis would be vain.

"The situation can easily be calculated for any Minnesota community pretty closely, thus:

"For each 1,000 of the population there are: one death per year, two living infectious cases, and three non-infectious cases, which, however, under present conditions, will become infectious within from one to three years and die within from one or two years more.

"This one-two-three formula applies pretty well in all communities of more than 10,000. Thus a county of 20,000 population will show yearly about 20 deaths; 40 infectious cases, and 60 cases not yet infectious but sure to become so if they are not discovered and treated.

"Everyone who sees these figures for the first time usually jumps to the conclusion that, to abolish tuberculosis, the best method is to find the 60 cases not in the infectious stage, and treat them so that they may never reach it. Unfortunately, many of these cases cannot be discovered. Those who are found are, of course, gladly treated and as individuals are generally saved. But the only cases that are found in any large proportion are the infectious ones. Practically all of these can be discovered. By preventing them from spreading the disease to new cases, tuberculosis is cut off at the very roots. Minnesota is beginning to do this now through county sanatoria.

AIDS IN BUYING OR SELLING SEEDS

The Minnesota Field Crop Improvement Association issues annually a good-seed list, which contains the names of a large number of farmers, known to have good field-crop seeds for sale. Anyone wishing seed, or having seed for sale, will find it to his advantage to get in touch with C. P. Bull, Associate Agronomist at University Farm, St. Paul, who is secretary of the association.

JUNIOR WEEK BOYS WILL WORK HARD

The class schedule for the fifth annual Junior Week at the Minnesota College of Agriculture, April 5-9, has been arranged. The mornings will be devoted to class study and practice, the afternoons to trips to nearby points of interest. Each forenoon will be divided into two periods of 90 minutes each and one of 60 minutes. For the first two periods the boys may choose two of the following subjects: Dairy cattle, beef cattle, and corn-growing. For the third period each boy must take poultry, horses, potatoes, or gardening. The girls will take sewing and cooking for the first two periods, but must study gardening, poultry, or horses in the third period.

The boys and girls who attended last year will be given more advanced work.

It is suggested that, where schools have opened for the spring term, the teachers excuse pupils and give them credit for the work in the Junior Short Course.

BOYS SEEK PRIZES FATTENING CALVES

The calf club! This is the latest in boys' and girls' clubs. Winthrop high school has the honor of bringing it out.

E. S. Olson, agricultural instructor in the high school, conceived the idea, and with the cooperation of a dozen boys, formed the club.

Each member last spring secured a calf. This calf was carefully weighed on April 1, and since that time the boy feeder has kept an accurate account of all of the feed consumed. All of the calves will be weighed again April 1 of this year, and a prize fund of \$50 will be distributed among the boys whose calves make the best showing.

POTATO CONTEST FOR NORTHERN MINNESOTA

Northern Minnesota will have a potato contest for boys and girls this year. Announcement to this effect has been made by T. A. Erickson, of the Extension Division of the Minnesota College of Agriculture, and of the United States Department of Agriculture, who is in charge of boys' and girls' club work in Minnesota.

The contest is made possible through the cooperation of county school superintendents, high school agricultural instructors, and county agents with the Northern Minnesota Development Association. The main reason for this contest is the fact that the boys in Northern Minnesota are at a disadvantage in the corn contest. Potatoes, not corn, is the chief crop in their section.

Any boy or girl between 10 and 14 years may enter. The southern boundary of the district is the south line of Wilkin, Grant, Douglas, Todd, Morrison, Mille Lacs, Kanabec and Pine counties. Each lot must contain one eighth of an acre or more. The variety planted must be of the Rural New Yorker or Carman type.

Final awards will be based on yield, economy of production, quality of an exhibit of fifteen pounds to be made at the annual meeting of the Northern Minnesota Development Association, and a story of how the potatoes were grown.

TOWNSHIP MUTUALS CUT INSURANCE COST

"Township mutual" fire insurance companies in Minnesota on January 1, 1914, were carrying insurance amounting to \$342,223,319, on which the annual premiums were \$696,732. The average cost for each \$100 of insurance in force was 18 cents, as compared with an annual charge of 46 cents per \$100 on three-year contracts by "private" insurance companies. This meant a saving to the farmers of the State of \$957,600. It has been estimated that the total saving for 35 years up to 1910, allowing for the effect of competition in reducing the rates of old-line companies and for compound interest on the premium charges saved from year to year, has probably been about \$20,000,000.

These figures are taken from Experiment Station Bulletin 146 on, "Statistics of Cooperation Among Farmers in Minnesota," by L. D. H. Weld, Chief of the Division of Research in Agricultural Economics of the University of Minnesota.

Fire insurance companies of this type were among the first permanently successful cooperative enterprises organized in Minnesota, dating back to 1867. In 1878 the insurance in force in such companies was \$923,678. The losses incurred were \$425. In 1911 insurance in force was that given in the foregoing. The losses incurred that year were \$513,973.

MINNESOTA APPLES ARE TO BE "PUSHED"

The Agricultural Extension Division of the University of Minnesota is planning to push the apple-growing industry in Minnesota. The 1913 crop showed possibilities of development in apple-growing and it is believed the crop of 1915 will be as large as that of 1913, or even larger. The aim of the Extension Division is to see that apple-growers get the largest possible returns from the good crop in prospect. By means of press articles, circulars, lectures, and demonstrations, growers will be encouraged to follow the best methods in pruning, spraying, thinning, picking, and packing. Moreover, the Minnesota State Horticultural Society, the Southern Minnesota Horticultural Society, county societies, development associations, shipping associations, farmers' clubs, commercial clubs, and all sorts of organizations will be urged to cooperate in advertising and in using Minnesota apples. Again the Extension Division will secure lists of growers producing apples for the market, and lists of firms, clubs, or persons wishing to buy apples, and, by bringing producer and purchaser together, endeavor to create a good market.

SHORT COURSE FOR STATE'S VETERINARIANS

The Veterinary Division of the Minnesota College of Agriculture will give a short course for veterinarians, at University Farm from Monday, February 22, to Friday, February 26, 1915. At morning sessions will be discussed "Live Stock Sanitation," "Histology and Physiology of Reproduction," "Hog Cholera," "Physiology of Nutrition," "Abortion and Sterility," "Parasitic Diseases of Live Stock". The afternoons will be given up to clinics by Dr. John W. Adams, Professor of Surgery, Veterinary Department, University of Pennsylvania. Evening program will include the judging of horses and other live stock, and discussions of problems relating to the care of dairy cattle and to farm management, and of the work of the Live Stock Sanitary Board.

If the course offered this year is successful, a similar course will be offered next year.

RULES ANNOUNCED FOR PORK CONTEST

Rules and regulations for the 1915 state-wide boys' club pork-production contest, the first general contest of the kind to be held in Minnesota, have been announced by T. A. Erickson, of the Agricultural Extension Division of the Minnesota College of Agriculture.

"The object of this contest," says Mr. Erickson, "is to stimulate interest in breed improvement, in the use of more efficient methods in feeding hogs, and in swine-raising in general.

"Boys between the ages of 10 and 18 years may enter. Each boy must feed and care for one pig for a period of six months. He may raise a whole litter of pigs, if he wishes, but can enter only one. The pig, when he takes it over must be between one and two months old. Each boy will also be required to grow not less than one-eighth of an acre of some field crop, as clover, alfalfa, or corn."

The awards will be based on the rate of gain, cost of gain, quality of the pig, and an essay on "How I Raised My Pig."

The South St. Paul Union Stock Yards has provided for prizes as follows:

Northern, north central, and central zones—first, \$15; second, \$10; third, \$5, and fourth \$3. Southern zone—first, \$15; second, \$7, and third, \$3.

Pure-bred pigs donated by the leading breeders of swine in Minnesota will be presented as club prizes. Each club, in order to compete, must have five or more members.

TO OFFER COURSE IN COOPERATION

Plans are being made to add to the work now offered at the Minnesota College of Agriculture a complete and practical course in the management of cooperative business institutions.

"We are working on this proposed course at present and, as soon as we have it outlined satisfactorily, we will offer it in the college," declares A. F. Woods, Dean of the College.

The United States Department of Agriculture has issued a report summarizing the soil survey which it recently made of Goodhue County, Minnesota. This report describes the 25 different types of soils found in the county and suggests the farm purposes for which each is best adapted. A large colored map locates the schools, churches, public roads, railroads, and water courses.