

FOR FARMERS, STOCKBREEDERS AND GARDENERS

NEWSY NOTES

BY AGRICOLA

CENTRAL SCHOOL FAIR

On the last day of the School Fair a paid ticket visit was made with all I saw. The Fair was a great success and more...

MORE ABOUT OUR ANCESTORS

The oldest book in my possession is a small volume printed in Paris in 1831. It is the "Bibliotheca" of Diodorus Siculus, a Greek historian...

CREAMERY OPERATIONS SURVEY

An analysis of the operations of approximately 100 creameries in Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta is being undertaken by the Dominion Department of Agriculture in co-operation with the Departments of Agriculture in the three provinces concerned.

Supervision of the work is being handled by the Economics Branch of the Dominion Department in co-operation with the Dominion Dairy Branch in Ottawa. The co-operating units in the provinces are the Dairy and Economics Divisions of the Departments and Colleges of Agriculture.

TIMELY NOTES ON TOPICS CONNECTED WITH Silver Fox Farming



Mr. J. B. Lewis of Owasco, Michigan, visiting this Province and looking over his fox interests at the International Fox Farm, Marshfield, Mr. Lewis has been connected with the Silver Fox Industry since the war years and was for some time a partner with Mr. Callbeck, Summerside. Some of the foxes bred by this gentleman were among the finest of the breed and their progeny have contributed many prize winners.

At the 1920 Silver Fox Exhibition held in Montreal Mr. Callbeck displayed of pup the parents of which were bred by Lewis and Callbeck and that pup subsequently became the foundation of almost all the good silvers, or at least 70 per cent of the prize winners from the Viny Ranch. The parents owned by Lewis and Callbeck were bred by Lewis and Callbeck and that pup subsequently became the foundation of almost all the good silvers, or at least 70 per cent of the prize winners from the Viny Ranch.

Another famous fox that we recall is the three legged Oulton female. She escaped from the ranch one time and was caught in a trap losing part of one leg and was afterwards known by the above appellation. This female was a most remarkable one and became the foundation of many of the best foxes in Jim Tuplin's Ranch and also the best blood in the George Tweedy Ranch. Old timers will remember those celebrated Tweedy foxes and the fact that very frequently Mr. Tweedy topped the C. M. Lamson & Company Sales at London.

But we have wandered very far afield from what we started out to tell and that was regarding our interview with Mr. Lewis the early part of this week. We discussed with him the probable number of silver foxes that could be raised in captivity in the United States this year. Mr. Lewis stated he thought about 100,000. We were rather incredulous, but being in a better position to secure information than we are, we made a few inquiries. It appears that during the last few years there has been a considerable thinning out among the fox ranches—a survival of the fittest, as it were.

At present Massachusetts has a very negligible quantity of foxes. New York State has not nearly as many as a few years ago. Maine has very few. The big fox raising States in the United States are Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, with some ranches located in Ohio, Dakota, Wyoming and Colorado.

The most successful ranchers and the largest in America are Fromm Brothers, Greenfield, Wisconsin. They report over upwards of 10,000 breeding pairs last year. John Niemen and Sons, who were formerly associated with the Fromms, have 7,000 breeding pairs. These two firms will have over 3500 pairs to market this year, and Niemen's are adding 1,000 pairs to their ranches.

The next largest ranch in the United States is the Langefeldt Fox Company, an offshoot also of Fromms, with 1,000 pairs. Other large interests controlling foxes there are the Milligan & Morrison organization, which will have upwards of 5,000 pairs to dispose of this Fall; the Rocky Mountain Association of Colorado, which will handle pairs for many of the breeders in that State. They will probably market about 5,000 pairs. Of the total estimate of 100,000 pairs...

Plant Flower Seeds This Fall

Plant annuals this fall and save a lot of work next spring. You will also have your annuals in bloom at least a month earlier. Nearly all the annuals except the very tender ones may as well be planted this fall as next spring. Many of them had better be planted now. Plant hardy ones in the open ground. Put the tender ones in the cold frame, planting later than in the open so they will not germinate too quickly.

It will do no harm if Shirley poppies, centaureas, and annual larkspurs germinate this fall. They will survive the winter unharmed. On other annuals it is best to wait until the last moment before the ground freezes. Plant exactly as you would in the spring, giving the seed beds a mulch to prevent the seed washing from heavy rains.

In the cold frame plant snapdragons, which will be in nice growth next spring. This is one of the best and easiest ways to grow snapdragons in the garden, as they need an early start to get into early bloom. Pinks can be sown in the cold frame. They are best to wait until the last moment before the ground freezes. Plant exactly as you would in the spring, giving the seed beds a mulch to prevent the seed washing from heavy rains.

for the United States, Fromm Bros. and Niemen will probably furnish 35 percent.

We talked with Mr. Lewis regarding pen construction. He said that the breeders of the United States do not, as far as he was aware, use many sheds. They rely on wire bottom pens, raised some 18 inches off the ground, to overcome the hook worm and lung worm menace. New pens which we are constructing, said Mr. Lewis, will be 25 feet long, six feet wide and three feet high, and will be 18 inches off the ground. The bottom wire will be one inch mesh. There will be a large house or den attached to the pen. That pen will be used for breeding purposes and also for raising young pups.

Asked whether the constant running on the wire would not injure the pads of the foxes feet, Mr. Lewis said that they had been using that type of pen for five years in many of the Ranches and had no bad effects. He claims that the foxes fur out well and are healthy when reared on the wire bottom pens.

Contrary to the general custom in Prince Edward Island, Mr. Lewis, in common with most of the breeders in the Western United States, feeds only once a day. The amount of feed consumed by adults and pups the present month averages 9 3-4 ounces of dry feed. Mixed with water for feeding it would probably weigh about 14 ounces. He feeds positively no milk.

We discussed with him the cost of feeding a fox for a year and he stated that he figured it would be between \$6.00 and \$7.00 for the season of 1934. The better the conditions and the more the foxes are fed, the more they will produce. He stated that he had a fox which he had fed on a diet of 10 cents per month than ours.

Perhaps you cannot follow the way we compute the cost per animal, so a little explanation will be in order. For instance, if you had 500 pups and adults on the last day of September and your feed had cost you a total of \$2,500 for the nine months, your average would be \$5.00 per fox, which, divided by nine months, would be 55 cents per month. To get your total for the month of September you would divide your total adults and pups into your total cost for September. With us it averaged 80 cents per fox for the month of September. With Mr. Lewis it averaged 65 cents per fox.

TAKE TWO TWELVES On the 31st day of December add up your total cost for feed of all kinds. Divide that by the total number of adults and pups you had on the day you began petting. That will give you the average cost of feeding a fox for a year.

If you want to find out the cost of food necessary to produce a full grown pup, you will divide the number of pups you have alive up to the date you start petting into the total cost of feed for adults and pups. The reason for doing this is that you must have adult breeding pairs in order to produce your pups. To find out the cost of producing a pup, divide the total number of pups you produced and raised up to say November 15th, when you will either mate them or pett them, into the total cost of operating your ranch for the year. That will give you the prime cost of production. To that you must add 5 percent of the cost of the construction of your ranch buildings for depreciation unless you have spent a lot of money on the ranch during the year, in which case you can deduct same or add it on as the case may be, and lastly you must charge 6 per cent interest on your investment.

In regard to the cost of operating, we are reliably informed that the biggest and most successful foxes in America are producing foxes at an average prime cost of less than \$20.00, to which must be added depreciation and interest on the investment.

In the writer's ranch we are feeding to adults and pups a small quantity of ground Kelp every day. Mr. Lewis says that, certainly, a big fox ranching firm in the United States buy it in carload lots and he was kind enough to give us the analysis of California dried and ground kelp. Its minerals are: iodine, iron, copper, manganese, calcium, phosphorus, sulphur, sodium, potassium, magnesium, chlorine. If you intend feeding it, we would say that we think about one-third of one per cent would be O.K. In feeding it you could probably dispense with the iodide of potash as it is rich in iodine.

Silver fox sales are on this week in London and New York and advice from Frederick Huth & Company's sale in New York are fairly good. The London figures have not yet been received but we hope to have them for inclusion for these notes in publication Saturday.

The Silver Fox Show which opens on November 5th is certainly getting away to a good start as far as publicity is concerned. We were very much struck with the splendid opening ad and reader. The price list is most generous one and fortunate winners of a fine prize this year will receive \$12.00 instead of \$4.00 last year, with correspondingly good prizes for the next in line. Over \$2,000 will be distributed in cash while the champions will receive 17 trophies to divide among themselves. It will be the greatest array of silverware and cash that has ever been offered by any Fox Show in the world.

Our friends in Norway have a curious custom in that they give anywhere from 5 to 8 first prizes. We do not know the origin of this rather unique way of rewarding quality, but perhaps it is to save the judge from the wrath of the exhibitors. It is so much easier to have 5 or 8 leaders all receiving first prize than to place them 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, etc. However, it is not much of a criterion of one's ability to place a fox. We have never in our experience seen 5 or 8 foxes of equal quality shown in any one class.

P.E.I. TUBER CROP SLIGHTLY BELOW AVERAGE

Bank Crop Report Shows Island Grain Yields to Be Up to Standard.

(C. P. By Guardian's Special Wire)

MONTREAL, Oct. 4.—Threshing has resumed in many districts of the Prairie Provinces after interruptions by rains and snow and with good weather threshing should be completed in Saskatchewan and Manitoba within 10 days, according to the weekly crop report of the Bank of Montreal released here today.

Conditions are more backward in the northern Alberta and Peace River areas, the report states, as completed in Saskatchewan and Manitoba within 10 days, according to the weekly crop report of the Bank of Montreal released here today.

In Quebec weather has been favorable for harvesting and crops are up to average, exceptions being apples and to some extent tobacco. In Ontario, the report points out, root crops have been further advanced by recent good weather. Pastures generally are "now in excellent condition" and an average-to-good crop of corn is being cut.

In New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island crops are reported as proving satisfactory and in Nova Scotia field crops are short, due to drought but late crops promise a fair average crop.

Harvesting in British Columbia is continuing under favorable conditions and it is said crops generally have been good.

Maritime Provinces

In Prince Edward Island grain yields are satisfactory and of good quality. The potato crop will be slightly under average. Turnips and pastures would be benefited by rain. Throughout New Brunswick an average crop of oats and barley is being harvested; potatoes are yielding well and a normal crop of other roots is expected. Pastures continue in fair condition, in Nova Scotia the quality of grains harvested is good but yields will be less than average. Due to drought, only a fair yield of potatoes and other roots is anticipated. Late apples are colouring well but need more rain to help the string; the crop will be a fair average one. Pastures are still very dry.

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(Continued on Page 13)

Problems Connected With Raising Silver Foxes In Captivity

(By G. Ennis Smith, Superintendent Experimental Fox Ranch, Summerside, P.E.I.) (Continued)

Fox breeders were aware that foxes that were fat when the fur was prime had very desirable fur qualities with regard to length, texture, lustre, etc. On the other hand, when the foxes were thin and underweight, the fur was invariably dry and coarse. It was the general practice of fox breeders to feed large quantities of fats and oils in the hope of getting their foxes to put on weight, more particularly when the foxes were thinner than usual. The results of the expert mental work have shown that this is a very costly practice and defeats the very object that the breeders were trying to achieve. When foxes are fed large quantities of fat, the system does not make any attempt to store up the fat and the amount of fat that a fox will put on during the fall months is dependent upon the condition of the animal more so than the presence of fats and oils in the ration.

Fox breeders were led to believe from what they had read in literature and what had been told them by recognized authorities that cod liver oil was the "open sesame" for the proper growth of the pups and for the normal development of foxes. The experimental work shows that when cod liver oil is fed to foxes during the growth of the fur it inhibits the production of black pigment and the fur acquires a most pronounced brown shade. Cod liver oil contains vitamins whose functions are closely allied to the rays of light. When foxes are in ideal condition, the hair follicles contain large amounts of black pigment. The better the condition of the foxes the greater the amount of black pigment in the hairs and the more will be the absorption of the rays of light. It would appear that when animals are fed substances rich in the vitamins allied to the rays of light, then as far as foxes are concerned, the mechanism to absorb the rays of light. In other words when foxes are fed bottled sunshine internally, they do not take the trouble to fit themselves to absorb it externally. The results of the expert mental work during the winter months, more particularly during the breeding season, those vitamins whose functions are allied to those of the rays of light and in this respect foxes are very similar to cod fish, who store up in their systems those vitamins that the rays of light penetrate the water so as to be available during the time of year when light does not penetrate the water. Hence, the foxes should not only store up in their systems the maximum amount of these vitamins, but also should produce the mechanism to absorb the maximum rays of light at the time of year when sunlight is at a lower ebb. The experimental work has demonstrated the vital necessity of the vitamins associated with the rays of light during the initial stages of the development of the fox pups in the foetal state, in order to insure a proper development of the bone and breeding organs of the foxes, and the results have demonstrated the imperative need of cod liver oil during the time the female is carrying her young, and the proper feeding of cod liver oil is one of the most critical factors in raising silver foxes in captivity.

When the experimental work was first initiated a large number of reports were received of fatalities amongst the foxes after the use of remedies for worms, fleas and other internal and external parasites. The Experimental Fox Ranch has carried out a large number of experiments on the efficiency and physiological effects of different trade remedies sold and used for the eradication of internal and external parasites and for several years disseminated this knowledge throughout the industry. Whereas numerous fatalities used to occur after the administration of remedies for both internal and external parasites, fox breeders now confidently use the various remedies recommended by the Experimental Fox Ranch.

It is very questionable if it would be possible to raise silver foxes in captivity without cow's milk, which is the most complete food that can be produced in quantities economically, yet when fox breeders commenced to feed it to their adult foxes and pups, it led to very grave and serious disturbances and fatalities, which caused many breeders to taboo it entirely. Cow's milk is especially objected to by the foxes, who digest the food entirely in the stomach, whereas the vixen's milk is digested for the main portion in the intestines of the fox pup. As a result of the experimental work the Experimental Fox Ranch found that favourably milk could only be produced in quantities that were defined so as to avoid a formation of an unfavourable cheesy clot in the stomach with the addition of beef tripe, that contains large quantities of pepsin, the natural digestion secretion of cow's milk. These conditions are not to be desired to an advantage to the ration of foxes in captivity. There were numerous cases where the entire crop of pups had been spoiled by the feeding of cow's milk. Since the results of the Experimental Fox Ranch have been published, cow's milk is being fed to foxes extensively with favourable results.

Foxes in captivity are very susceptible to scurvy, more particularly new born pups to infantile scurvy which was the direct cause of a large percentage of the pups who died in born pups. The Experimental Fox Ranch recognized this condition and was able to recommend fox breeders how to counteract its occurrence. One of the most outstanding symptoms of scurvy was the sloughing of sections of the tail either in pups or in adults. Previously in every ranch a large number of bob-tail foxes could be seen and there were still a larger number that had lost part of their tail. Since the fox breeders have made general use of the recommendations of the Experimental Fox Ranch in order to counteract the occurrence of scurvy, the occurrence of bob-tail foxes and of foxes losing part of their tails is very rare, and the losses of new born pups, due to infantile scurvy, has been reduced to a minimum.

Besides the problems previously referred to, the Experimental Fox Ranch has studied the following problems:— The inheritance of the silver colouring, constitutional vigour and other inherent traits; The function of impervious floors for controlling lung worm infections, and how worm infections; The function of sheds and shaded pens in connection with the production of a dense black colour and other characteristics of the fur; The use of aphrodisiacs; Polygamous mating; Factors influencing the growth and texture of the guard hair and underfur; Food requirements during the gestation period; Food requirements during the lactation period; Food requirements of the growing pups; The vitamin requirements during different seasons of the year, besides many other problems that have a direct bearing on silver fox ranching.

Definite results have been obtained on all the problems, which have placed the Experimental Fox Ranch in a position to make clear cut recommendations to fox breeders, and which have been widely adopted not only by Canadian fox breeders, but also by fox breeders throughout the entire world. Since the breeding stock used for establishing the silver-fox ranching in Canada was purchased from Canadian breeders these countries have considered the Experimental Fox Ranch as their authority on ranching methods, and scientific men have been sent by the European and American governments to obtain first-hand experience of the methods of the Experimental Fox Ranch.

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(Continued on Page 13)

BROOKVILLE Ground Limestone

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From the leaves I went over to the collections of native woods. These small half-bills were arranged in a variety of ways that spoke highly for the ingenuity of the exhibitors. Many of the collections were arranged in the fashion of a typewriter, when I tried to evoke a type with my pencil, they did not respond!

I enjoyed the collections of insects, they were good but I was a little disappointed with all forms of insect life. The first and second prize cases contained some insects I had not seen before. May I be permitted to suggest a standard size for the cases, and a certain number of specimens in each? This would make for fairness and would, I think, help the judges too.

What becomes of the insects when the Fair is over? I noted specimens of the rarer kinds and think these should go to a provincial collection, each with a label giving the donor's name, the place and date of collection and any other particulars deemed noteworthy. There is a nice little collection at the Laboratory of Plant Pathology, and donations of this kind would extend its usefulness.

One or two of the exhibitors had not studied the rules of the Fair very closely, for they included dragon-flies and beetles, in their collections, which were, of course, at the bottom of the list.

I was pleased to see that an attempt had been made, in most cases, to name the species, though this was not specified in the instructions. The Doubleday Co., of Garden City, New York, publish an inexpensive "Butterfly Guide" by Dr. W. J. Holland, which will be most useful to students of those insects. The moths are more difficult to name, and as far as I am aware, there is no similar guide book to them. A large number of our moths are full-colour, parents of the cutworms, and resemble each other so much that only an expert can distinguish them.

As my time was very limited (we were potato picking!) I hurried over the cut-flowers. The gladioli is coming to the fore as expected, and, as there were some good bouquets, I noticed one light blue colour—except the yellow. One of the best dark violet-blues is called Velichanban and a bouquet of these mixed with clear "canary yellow" blooms ought to win!

The Fair is bringing out the artistic talent of our young folk. There was a surprising amount of good work in plasticine modelling, painting, drawing, and designing. From all sides I hear good accounts of the exhibition, but what about the singing?

NEW PLANTS THIS YEAR Very few new plants have been added to our Island list this year. That, of course, is to be expected, since the Province had been pretty well "combed out" previously. Professor Groh, of Ottawa, found *Pentstemon intermedia* L., while visiting the Illustration Station at New London. Mr. H. A. Messervy reports *Cynusca dumosa* (Andr.) Tet. at Black Bay, and *Veronica G. G. G.* in the Birds-eye Speedwell from Brackley Point Road. The writer of these notes found *Habenaria diloba*, var. *media* (Hyde) Ames, late in July, on the banks of Smelt Creek.

Since writing the above I have been permitted, by the courtesy of Professor R. R. Hurst, to examine a most interesting natural hybrid between two berry-bearing plants, *Berula arbutifolia* var. *strepurpurea* (Chokryberg) and *Berula silvestris* (L.) (Larpe's "Blackberry"). The leaves were imperfectly pinnate, and the flowers were in the Baltic. Some of his

diction is worse than a cross-word puzzle!

BERRIES ARE SPIKENARD A box from "S. H. Jones, Pownall" was found to contain a portion of a shrubby plant laden with black berries, and a letter accompanying it asked for its identification. I have great pleasure in complying with the request, the more so because this correspondent has some kind things to say about the "Newsy Notes." The plant is *Aralia racemosa* L., the American Spikenard or Indian Root. It is a herbaceous plant, growing from 3 to 5 feet high, in rich woods. Gray's Manual of Botany says "Well-known for its spicy-aromatic root." The 1916 edition of "Medicinal plants and their cultivation" in Ottawa (Ottawa) states that the dried root was employed under the National Formulary of the American Pharmaceutical Association, and is worth from 13 cts. to 17 cts. per lb. to the collector. On the north side here, our commonest *Oxalis* is *A. hispidula* Venk. The British Spikenard, the berries of which are made into a native "wine," supposed to have alternative properties. The Spikenard is not unlike the much-sought-after Ginseng, *Panax quinquefolium*, to which it is related.

My correspondent will find the Island *Aralia* listed in the Pamphlet "Plants of Prince Edward Island," a copy of which may probably be had from the Provincial Dept. of Agriculture gratis.

Very interesting data with reference to the time of picking Gravenstein apples in relation to spot scald disease are reported in a recent issue of Scientific Agriculture, as a result of investigation by pathologists of the Dominion Laboratory of Plant Pathology at Kentville. For example, they observed that Gravensteins, picked at the time when most of the starch had disappeared from the apple and there was still an appreciable amount of starch, developed the least amount of spot scald. The amount of sucrose and total sugars present in the fruit had little or no effect on the prevalence of the disease, but harvesting the apples when most of the starch had disappeared from the fruit was the best method of preventing the disease, but harvesting the apples when most of the starch had disappeared from the fruit was the best method of preventing the disease, but harvesting the apples when most of the starch had disappeared from the fruit was the best method of preventing the disease.

The existing trade in heritage seed is largely a trade between neighboring countries, for instance, Canada with the United States; New Zealand with Australia; Great Britain with the Continent of Europe. At the same time these confines may be broken, as with clover from Canada, white clover from New Zealand, or alfalfa from South Africa.

Over seven hundred McIntosh apple and Bartlett pear trees were set out five feet apart, in the Dominion Experimental Station at Summerside, B.C., this year, in order to secure information regarding the influence of grade and variety of root stock on the growth and behaviour of the tree.

The most successful ranchers and the largest in America are Fromm Brothers, Greenfield, Wisconsin. They report over upwards of 10,000 breeding pairs last year. John Niemen and Sons, who were formerly associated with the Fromms, have 7,000 breeding pairs. These two firms will have over 3500 pairs to market this year, and Niemen's are adding 1,000 pairs to their ranches.

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Plant annuals this fall and save a lot of work next spring. You will also have your annuals in bloom at least a month earlier. Nearly all the annuals except the very tender ones may as well be planted this fall as next spring. Many of them had better be planted now. Plant hardy ones in the open ground. Put the tender ones in the cold frame, planting later than in the open so they will not germinate too quickly.

It will do no harm if Shirley poppies, centaureas, and annual larkspurs germinate this fall. They will survive the winter unharmed. On other annuals it is best to wait until the last moment before the ground freezes. Plant exactly as you would in the spring, giving the seed beds a mulch to prevent the seed washing from heavy rains.

In the cold frame plant snapdragons, which will be in nice growth next spring. This is one of the best and easiest ways to grow snapdragons in the garden, as they need an early start to get into early bloom. Pinks can be sown in the cold frame. They are best to wait until the last moment before the ground freezes. Plant exactly as you would in the spring, giving the seed beds a mulch to prevent the seed washing from heavy rains.

Our friends in Norway have a curious custom in that they give anywhere from 5 to 8 first prizes. We do not know the origin of this rather unique way of rewarding quality, but perhaps it is to save the judge from the wrath of the exhibitors. It is so much easier to have 5 or 8 leaders all receiving first prize than to place them 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, etc. However, it is not much of a criterion of one's ability to place a fox. We have never in our experience seen 5 or 8 foxes of equal quality shown in any one class.

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(Continued on Page 13)

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