

**TIMELY NOTES ON TOPICS  
CONNECTED WITH  
Silver Fox Farming**



Mr. J. B. Lewis of Owassa, Michigan, was a visitor to Charlottetown this week, returning home on Thursday. He was much pleased with his company's foxes at the Marshfield ranch. The total production of his company's farms this year is in the neighborhood of 3,000 and of these only a small proportion are darks, that type of pelt bringing very little in the U. S. A.

It is interesting to note that the best stock in Mr. Lewis's ranches are the offspring of seven pairs of Prince Edward Island foxes of a particularly high class strain that were removed to Michigan some nine years ago. He is a firm believer through experience in the necessity of careful selection of breeding stock.

Mr. Lewis is absolutely wedded to the wire bottom pens. The usual type in his ranches are six feet wide with a one foot board along each side, four feet being one-half inch mesh wire. The small pups and in fact the older foxes too, usually run along the boards on the sides and take plenty of exercise that way. The pens are eighteen inches off the ground. The boards are cleaned by spraying from heavy force pumps and the refuse under the pens raked out from time to time to keep them sanitary.

I mentioned to Mr. Lewis that some of the breeders here found the wire floors caused rubbed hips. He said he did not notice any difficulty of that kind in Michigan—perhaps it is because they use the boards around the sides.

Discussing feed prices and cost of ranching foxes with Mr. Lewis I found that for the same number of animals that we are ranching his cost is only two-thirds of ours for feed, being only eight dollars per pup per year with all the costs of feed placed on the pups. In our ranch it costs over \$12 a year. The difference on that item alone for 1500 foxes is \$30,000—a nice profit. No matter how we go about it we cannot feed our foxes as cheap as the Michigan or Wisconsin breeders. They can buy tripe at two cents per pound and boneless horse meat at four cents per pound, other meats in like proportion, while

most cereals are also from 20 to 33 1-3 per cent cheaper.

There is not so very much difference in the price obtained by the average American fox rancher for his pelts and that received by the Canadian fox rancher except where the farmers pelts run to pales and extra pales and are clear colored, then the prices soar. Pelts of that description that we would obtain \$60 for here would bring \$90 across the line. On the other hand the mediums, dark silvers and slightly silvered skins bring much less than we get for them.

As far as statistics go it seems that the total production of American ranches that can be traced for 1935 is 135,000 skins, but it seems improbable that these figures can be correct because Fromm Bros., produce 15,000 pelts, Nieman and associates 25,000, leaving only 95,000 for all the rest of the ranchers in the United States, which just does not seem right. The figures are more probably 175,000 skins total production, about on a par with Canada. Then too, there were quite a few skins brought in from Canada and Norway last year. The Norwegian shipment that was sold in New York did not create a great furor although heavily advertised. The skins were evidently not up to those offered at auction in London. Up to this year the marketing of pelts was mostly done through the American National Fox Breeders' Association, but Ed Fromm became dissatisfied and has withdrawn, setting up his own auction last Spring at Hamburg. The Association still has the Nieman's with a production of some 25,000 pelts, and about 60 per cent of the independent ranchers.

Captain Thierry Mallett, President of Revillon Freres and considered one of the best judges of fur in North America, states that there are no mink caught in Labrador and that the term Labrador mink is incorrect. Labrador is a bleak, treeless strip of Atlantic coast and the so-called Labrador mink are trapped by Indians and half-breeds several hundreds of miles in the interior of the peninsula of Ungava in Northern Quebec. These skins are brought down the rivers in the Spring and part of the collection—which is always small—

**Pelting Demonstrations**

The Provincial Department of Agriculture has arranged for Pelting Demonstrations at various points on Prince Edward Island. One of these demonstrations will be conducted at the Charlottetown Fox Show on Wednesday, November 18th immediately after judging for the day has been completed. Another demonstration will be held at the Borden Show. In both cases expert pelting and demonstrators will take charge. Breeders wishing information in this respect should attend these important features. Other announcements will follow later.

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finally reaches the Labrador coast.

Four men were convicted as fur smugglers at Burlington, Vermont, and each sentenced to serve a year and a day in jail. The charge was conspiracy in violating the tariff act by bringing in \$12,000 worth of silver fox furs from Canada without paying Customs duty.

Selfridge and Company Limited, whose retail store is one of the largest in London, have in co-operation with the British Fur Breeders Association, conducted an exhibition of fur bearing animals on the Company's store roof in mid-September. Fifty animals in all took part in the display, coming from all parts of Great Britain and including silver fox, mink, nutria, fitch and marten. It is said to have stimulated the sale of furs tremendously.

The visit of P. S. Andrew, Hubert Payne and Gilbert Landry of Bathurst, N. B. to this province recently with a view to interesting fox ranchers here in mink raising, has, we understood, resulted in some sales. The gentlemen have been ranching mink as a hobby for about ten years and now have about 250 mink. A total of 5000 mink were raised last year in Bathurst and vicinity. They are of dark colored native New Brunswick stock.

The diet used by the mink breeders of New Brunswick consists usually of about 80 per cent fish, the remainder cereal and meats. During the mating season on they feed mostly tomcod and flat fish, which are very cheap. They do not have difficulty raising their mink, averaging four or five to the litter, the important thing being as mentioned in these notes last week to keep plenty of straw in the dens and clean them out frequently during the cold or damp weather.

The O. W. Thompson fox ranch, four miles out of Powassan, Ontario, is nearing completion. It will have 300 pens for breeders covering between three and four acres of ground. Tons of special galvanized woven wire were imported from England, 50,000 feet of spruce was used for the frame work and 40,000 feet of pine for the kennels, etc. The cost will be in the vicinity of \$15,000. It is rumored that Mr. Thompson will be a visitor to this province next week during the fox show, with the intention of purchasing some new breeding stock.

Health Bowness of Kensington, who has been acting as field man for the Canadian National Silver Fox Breeder's Association in Alberta, has visited a large number of the 530 fur farms there and is convinced that the quality of the fox stock compares very favorably with that of other provinces in Canada, while the production is equally as good. "The greatest advantage the Alberta fur industry has is the cheap food, because of proximity to large packing plants and a cheap source of meat which costs four cent a pound less than the Maritimes." Mr. Bowness states that the Association marketed over 47,000 pelts during the 1935 season, a large percentage of these came from Alberta.

Export of rabbit skins from Australia during the fiscal year ending June 30th, 1936, totalled 10,294,000 skins. The greater part of the shipments went to the United States, probably over seven millions.

Fur breeding in Poland is still in the experimental stage, with the exception of silver fox in which the annual production is between 500 and 600 pelts. This is only a small fraction of the number consumed in that country. It is estimated that nearly 15,000 silver fox pelts are imported annually. There are about 40 fur farms in Poland and 22 of these specialise in silver fox.

Silver fox tails are now being used effectively in a scarf arrangement by Parisian designers, six tails making one scarf. Silver fox heads and tails are also used as trimming on hats, scarves and handbags. Three cheers for those designers, they should help out a

The big silver fox show at Charlottetown gets under way on Monday. Foxes will arrive from all parts of the province, be classified and placed in their cages by that evening. On Tuesday morning at nine o'clock judging will start. Every detail is ready and Secretary W. R. Shaw is convinced that this will be the greatest show of all time both in quality of entries and in general interest. Indications are that many buyers and visitors will attend from other provinces.

Tuesday night will be banquet night at the Canadian National Hotel and any fox men who can, should take the opportunity of being there. The Hotel will provide an excellent repast and the entertainment committee will supply good music, good singing and lots of fun. Interspersed with the program will be short snappy speeches by prominent foxmen.

The American National Fox and Fur Breeders Association taking a leaf out of the Canadian National Silver Fox Breeders' Association's book, have a corps of field men visiting the different fox ranchers in the United States. One of the functions of the group is to advise ranchers on ranch problems and each inspector has been furnished with a list of 4,000 possible questions and their answers to facilitate them in their advisory work.

The United States Department of Agriculture through its Bureau of Animal Industry, is deeply interested in breeding experiments which may mean that ultimately American farmers can produce fur for which the American fur trade paid more than two million dollars last year. The three types of fur all popular in the clothing trade today that they desire to have the farmers develop are broadtail, Persian lamb and karakul. The three are a general type but different in appearance and have a wide quality range.

The criticism of the venture from fur specialists is the variability of the market. Such fur may be in fashion one year and out the next, but perhaps, they say, the sale of wool and lambs would possibly take care of the expense in

(Continued on page 10)

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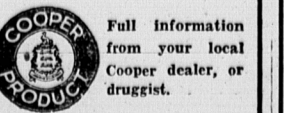
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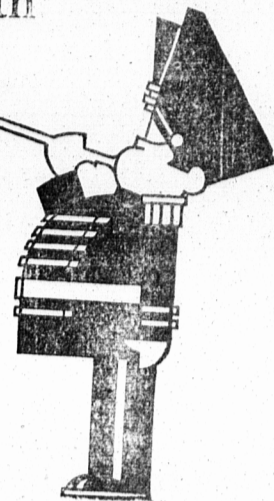
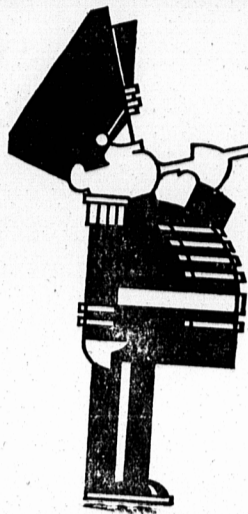
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This Exhibition is the talk of the silver fox world and will be visited by many prominent fur men, fox ranchers and others interested. You cannot afford to miss this show either as an exhibitor or spectator.

There are Classifications for darks up to 25 per cent, dark mediums, mediums, pale silvers and extra pale silvers, subdivided into adults, yearlings and pups, males and females. Classes for herds, senior yearling, junior sire and three of his get, dam and two of her progeny, best matched pair male and female, adults, best matched pair male and female, pups. Nine Championships and Grand Championship for best fox in show. Prizes awarded on the basis of number of entries, one to six entries three prizes, eleven to twelve entries six prizes, over twenty-five entries twelve prizes. First prize \$12, second \$9, third \$6, remaining qualifying entries \$4 each.

A unique feature of the Exhibition this year will be the awarding of a silver cup to the exhibitor winning the greatest number of points in the Show. Many other features not offered by other exhibitions. Open to foxes registered in Canadian National Silver Fox Breeders' Association.

**GRAND BANQUET CANADIAN NATIONAL HOTEL**

Big foxmen's banquet will be held on Tuesday, November 17th at the Canadian National Hotel and will be the highlight of the season. Only 140 tickets will be sold so as to avoid crowding and assure every guest of a pleasant and highly entertaining evening. Don't overlook this event. Music, mirth and an unexcelled repast. Short, snappy speeches will be given by leading men and prominent authorities on Silver Fox ranching.

**SILVER FOX AUCTION**

Requests have been made for the Executive Committee to hold a silver fox auction in connection with the fox show. This has been arranged for and providing the exhibitors are willing will go through. It is a step in the right direction and should lead to great things in the future. Hundreds of ranchers are anxious to improve their breeding stock. They are looking for opportunities to purchase quality animals. This sale gives a chance to both buyer and seller to come together with public competition fixing the price.

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