

Summerside Mayor Stresses Value of Fur Auction

Mr. B. W. Robinson, Mayor of Summerside, and a director of the Prince Edward Island Silver Fox Exhibitors Association, is very enthusiastic over the Silver fox auction which is to be a feature at the Fox Show this week.

Mayor Robinson considers that it is a very forward step in the history of the silver fox industry. It will create a greater interest in the show and will bring a larger number of visitors to the exhibition.

The biggest factor, however, will be that ranchers will be able to buy foxes of proven stock as no fox can be put up for auction unless he

has been placed. As a rule fox ranchers wishing to purchase good breeding stock have great difficulty in making a suitable choice when going from ranch to ranch. With an auction sale such as this, they will be assured of good stock, certified by competent judges, thoroughly conversant with the required qualities of foxes for breeding.

With foxmen the world over stressing the importance of producing only the best silver fox pelts, this method of purchase will do more than anything that has yet been suggested to eliminate the poor pelt and raise the standard of our Island foxes.

Inheritance Of Silver Band In Silver Fox Furs

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

In previous years many fox breeders contended that the narrow silver band was preferable to the wide band while others took the exact opposite viewpoint. At the time when half silver furs were in demand it might have been debatable whether there was not a large number of wearers who might prefer a neckpiece with a narrow silver band, other conditions being favourable, but for a wise fox breeder it was never even questionable from a breeding standpoint. Since the market in recent years has swung to pale silver fox furs it has become very apparent that the narrow silver band can be considered as one of the curses of the industry. While some fox breeders have recognized this and by judicious selection of the wide band and a ruthless elimination of the narrow band have developed a type of foxes showing a decided improvement in the width and clarity of the silver band, yet other fox breeders by indifferent and haphazard mating have reached a stage where their ranches are overrun with foxes having narrow silver bands of a more or less muddy appearance, with the result that the majority of the pelts that are being placed upon the market lack proper silver characteristics.

Cites Experiments

In arranging the matings at the Experimental Fox Ranch I have given due consideration to the different types of silver bands that we had in the ranch and some very interesting and crucial information has been obtained. This definite line of experimental work is still being investigated so that it should be understood that a definite conclusion has not yet been arrived at. The results obtained so far would indicate:—

- (1) In the first outcross with inbred foxes having similar types of silver in the offspring the silver band was an improvement on the means of those of their parents.
- (2) In the first outcross with two different types of silvers in the offspring the silver band was somewhere near the mean of those of their parents.
- (3) In the second and third outcross of different types of silver bands in the offspring the silver bands were narrow and in many cases muddy.
- (4) In any different groups of foxes selecting the wider bands and outcrossing them in the offspring there was a decrease in the width of the silver band, but in the same groups of foxes even where the narrower bands were selected and inbred there was an improvement both in the width and clarity of the silver.
- (5) Outcrossing in the second and third generations with different types of silver bands the offspring appeared to have favourable silver characters, a fairly wide band of a fairly clear colour, but in each succeeding year the band became narrower and acquired a more muddy appearance.
- (6) With foxes inbred with a

desirable type of silver in the offspring there was a decided improvement in the silver character as the foxes grew older and each year it was very noticeable that the band was not only wider but had a brighter and more metallic appearance.

Results of Inbreeding

A microscopic examination of the silver band shows that where the foxes have been inbred and a favourable type of silver has been produced there is no diffusion of the black pigment into the silver area. On the other hand, where there has been a crossing of different types of silver the microscopic examination shows that there is a marked diffusion of the black pigment into both extremities of the silver band which varies both in area and intensity with different foxes, and in general is directly proportional to the muddy appearance of the silver.

A vast amount of work is involved in the study of the inheritance of the silver band. It is not only a question of carrying out a vast array of breeding experiments under various conditions but it also involves recording the exact measurements of the silver band during different times in their life history. Fox breeders have been aware for many years that the foxes from one ranch will not blend with foxes from other ranches and there are many cases on record where pale silver foxes from outside ranches when mated to medium or pale silver foxes produced litters, the majority of them being either black or very dark silvers. This was undoubtedly a case of trying to breed two distinct and different types of silvers together; independent of the fact that both of them had wide bands they failed to blend. On the other hand, there are very notable cases where foxes that were in no way related from separate and distinct ranches were mated together and produced offspring with an improvement in the silver character. This was undoubtedly a case where even though the foxes were outcrossed it was breeding together the same types of silver. In those cases as the fox grew older there was an improvement in the silver character. There is abundant evidence to indicate that if as the foxes grow older there is an improvement in the character of the silver from year to year that the offspring were produced by a workable mating system. On the other hand if the silver band should decrease in each succeeding year that can be taken as evidence of an unwise method of mating, generally indiscriminate outcrossing.

Why Not Try And Produce More Silvers

Even today, after many years of silver fox breeding, many breeders continue the old methods with no thought of experimenting or changing.

Most breeders mate their foxes for life. If these matings produce pups they are satisfied even if half or a quarter of the litters are blacks. A good breeder is never satisfied. He is always trying to produce better results. I believe there are a good many male and female combinations on ranches that can be made to produce good silvers.

Why not try some mating experiments every year and see if you cannot make combinations that will produce silvers?

To produce good silver foxes you must have a starting point, that is, one good pair of foxes. Now if you are lucky enough to get this pair to produce say, 5 pups, all silvers and not 2 silvers and 3 darks you are all set. If you get darks you might as well stop right there.

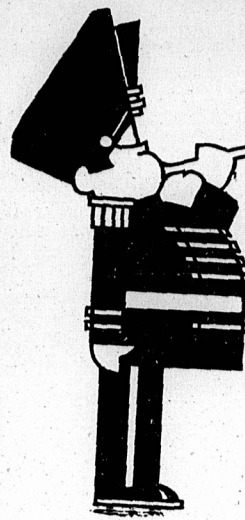
If you get all good silver pups in a litter the next step is to determine whether the male or female side is responsible. To do this you must in-bred, mother to son or father to daughter. Then select the pups from the first combination, that is, silvers, if you are fortunate enough to produce all good silvers out of one of these combinations.

You are then on the right road and your foxes should produce silvers. Try and get these combinations that will produce silvers and then mate together and you can soon build up a good herd. Be careful however to see to it that the silvers are good quality before inbreeding.

THE SILVER FOX WORLD'S GREATEST EVENT!

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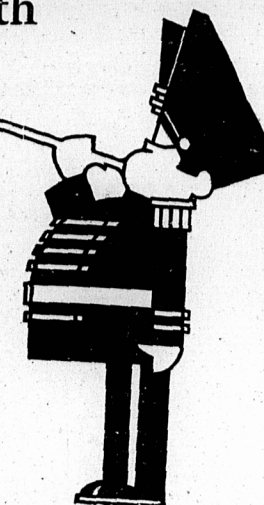
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This Exhibition is the talk of the silver fox world and will be visited by many prominent fur men, fox ranchers and others interested. You cannot afford to miss this show either as an exhibitor or spectator.

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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E. S. COFFIN

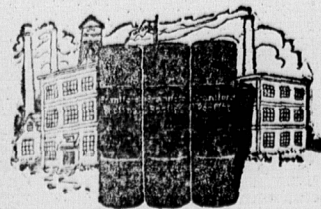
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