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TIMELY NOTES ON TOPICS CONNECTED WITH Silver Fox and Mink Farming

The New York Auction (Minneapolis branch) sale of ranch mink sold 50 per cent and showed levels were equal to January sale. Best interest was in Platimums with males ranging from \$28.00 to a top of \$41.50. Females ranged from \$20.00 to \$27. Standard males sold from \$22 to \$30 and females \$15 to \$20. Forty percent of the 25,000 Muskrat collection was sold. It showed a five per cent decline from January. Best Illinois brought from \$2.70 to \$2.80. An offering of 2500

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silver foxes was 52 per cent sold under Standards bringing up to \$26.00 Pearls \$25.00. NEW YORK, April 5th—Best grades of pastel mink and most Aleutians fully maintained January levels, but medium and cheaper pastels encountered definite price resistance and eased off 5 to 7 1-2 per cent yesterday as New York Auction Co., opened a big mutation sale at which a total of about 80,000 skins is to be offered this week.

The auction company reported that 65 per cent of the 22,883 Royal Pastels, for the account of the Mutation Mink Breeders Association, were sold. They also reported top prices of \$67 for Royal Pastel males from the Charles Ide ranch bought by Chesner Fur Co., for Samuel Merle, retailer; and a top of \$65 for Breath of Spring pastel also bought by Chesner. A top of \$55 for Green Eye males was reported, and a high of \$30 for Stewart pastel.

Aleutians 90 Per Cent Sold
Of an offering of 8,097 Aleutian, the company reported 90 per cent sold at a top of \$71 with price fully as strong as January. Breath of Spring Aleutian reached a \$69 top. The stiffer price resistance was noted for females in the \$26-\$28 bracket and for males between \$40 and \$45.

The sale continues at 9:30 this morning when dressed white and silverblu will be offered. Top quality pastels were firm to market and inferior pelts eased an estimated 7 to 10 per cent in the opinion of some observers at yesterday's sale. The sales room estimated that about 50 per cent of the morning offering was sold, and seemed in agreement that the strength of better skins was continuing. Females, too, were quite strong, it was said. The sale got under way with Royal Pastels, with good quality pelts in fairly good demand, and the selling emphasis in the \$50-\$67 bracket for males, and in the \$29-\$33 range for females. Heaviest demand was said to come from manufacturers. London representatives of the Swedish Fur industry released the information that on April 25th at Stockholm, Sweden the offering will consist of 3,000 Silver Fox 2000 blue Fox and 7000 Mink. This is probably about the final fox offering of this season. Something new in Fox shades is now being marketed. It is a natural fox mutation, light in color and described as "Sapphire Pearl" by the New York fur specialists, Soloff and Wechsler. In the Pearl Platinum family, the fox has been bred to bring out a very light cast and is called "Sapphire" because of the clear blue tone in the under-ground. The fur does not have black tips on the guard fur like Silver fox, further emphasizing the lightness of the color. This house is now making two, three, and four skin stoles and capes in this fur and report many sales. Norwegian blue fox similarly made up is also selling well. Our Pearl platinum breeders will no doubt be interested in the above and probably produce the same types by mating the lightest pearls that have also blue underfur.

At the American National Co-op. April 6th Fox and Mink were strong. The former was much more popular than last year and Mink held to February levels. 70 per cent of the fox offering was sold with platimums bringing \$26. Full Silver, \$22.50. Standard Mink, top \$32 for Males, \$18.25 for females.

The following is from the Charlottetown Examiner of April 2nd, 1951: The meeting of the Charles Dalton Silver Fox Co. held yesterday was largely attended. The directors stated that options on the produce of young of 1913 have been taken up to the extent of \$265,000, which when fully paid in, will enable the company to pay a dividend of 40 per cent and in addition leave sufficient to take care of expenses for the coming year. Note: The options were all taken up and some were resold at profits of from \$4000 to \$6000 a pair of foxes.

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NEWSY NOTES

By J. A. Clark, D.Sc.

WHEN SHOULD SPRING TILLAGE START?

It is generally conceded that under our cool Maritime temperate climate, when yields for several years are averaged, the cereals sown as soon as possible after the land is ready to be worked have produced the most grain. It is also true that land worked before it is ready, and allowed to bake is seriously injured for that season. In order to learn how this problem has been dealt with by our farmers, several hundred have been asked the following question: "Will you tell this group how you decide when to start on the land in preparation for spring planting?" The most frequent answer given when they spoke of what they did and not what they thought they ought to do, was: "When the neighbours start." Other replies that had more merit were: "When there is no gloss on the sod from the moulting of the plow," "When the horses do not sink on the land," These meant preparation and hitching up a team. Others suggested: "When you see dry spots on the surface," "When the ground feels warm," "When the fences appear to be dancing," "When you see the grass getting green." Probably the best answer was: "Take a handful of soil, squeeze it in your hand, and if it still crumbles when the hand is opened, the soil is ready to be worked." The actual date will of course vary with the location of the farm.

Climatic Zones

Meteorological data indicates that there are three climatic zones on Prince Edward Island: The western zone, from North Cape to Mount Pleasant; A central zone from Mount Pleasant to St. Peter's Harbour and an eastern zone from St. Peter's Harbour to East Point. The climatic variation between these zones is most marked in early spring and late autumn. Precipitation that falls as rain in the western zone in March and April, frequently falls as snow in the eastern zone. In the autumn this is reversed and when snow falls during October and November in the western zone, the precipitation in the eastern zone is usually rain. Seeding of cereals in the western zone, from Montrose to West Point is usually a week earlier than in the central zone and often two weeks earlier than in the eastern zone, from Cable Head to East Point. Autumn frosts and snow occur in the western zone more frequently than in the central and eastern zones. Turnips may be allowed to grow from one to two weeks longer from Montcello to Elmira, than would be safe west of Portage. This current reversal is probably due to water currents in the Gulf of St. Lawrence.

Influence Of Sea Ice

The current along the North Shore of the province is generally from West to East. In the spring large bodies of ice from the north divide at North Cape, the smaller areas move southeast down through Northumberland Strait

and a strong northwest wind may drive them through in a comparatively short time. The main body of the ice, while it may be moved off and onto the North Shore by changes of wind, usually requires from two to three weeks to travel from North Cape to East Point. The prevailing winds during this period are from the northeast and these retard the ice movement as the sea currents move it east. The presence of this ice mass naturally affects conditions on the near by land areas, and to some extent may account for the difference in time of seeding in the zones mentioned.

Weather Forecasts

Weather forecasts have been a great help to farmers during the seeding, planting and harvesting of their crops. The accuracy of these weather forecasts has greatly improved since the forecasts have been issued from Halifax instead of Toronto, however, the presence of the three climatic zones on "The Island", when covered as they usually are, by one forecast for the whole province, will indicate why certain weather forecasts cannot fit all sections from west to east in the province. At Charlottetown the changes forecast frequently arrive several hours ahead of the time mentioned. Every farmer has really to do some weather forecasting for his own farm in order to make the best use of fine weather for planting, cultivating and harvesting his crops. The daily weather maps, that were formerly issued from Toronto and an aneroid barometer, were a great help, particularly during a showery hay-making period.

Start When The Land Is Ready

For best results, start as soon as the land is ready, don't wait for the moon or the neighbours. A field that may not be ready to work in the morning, may very often, on a bright warm day, be worked safely between noon and three in the afternoon; whereas, if left to a later period in the day, it will probably not be fit, due to capillary water rising in the later afternoon faster than the field is drying out. The evaporation of this capillary water is what makes the land cold, just as boiling water prevents any water in a kettle from getting any hotter. Once the land is ready the stirring of the surface soil breaks this capillary connection, a mulch is formed which prevents further excessive evaporation, and the field quickly warms up ready for seeding. Occasionally work may be started before the land is quite ready. Once started, if the weather is fine the work should be continued so that the group will not have a chance to bake, the soil will eventually dry the proper stage, and make an excellent seed bed. If work is not continued and the ground bakes, the clods will be like stones until frost breaks them into tillable soil again. This question of when to start tillage will be doubly important during the early season of 1951, with farm labour scarce and wages high.

Cream Of The West Flour Prize Winners

Below will be found the winners of the recent Cream of the West Flour Contest for Prince Edward Island which closed March 31. In conversation with the Guardian today, Mrs. J. P. Whitney, Maritime Manager of the Maple Leaf Milling Co. Ltd., voiced the appreciation of his Company to the housewives and merchants of Prince Edward Island who so enthusiastically helped to make this contest so successful. A total of 8521 coupons were received, and the sorting and cataloguing of this number of returns was a difficult job indeed. However, final tabulation showed the First Prize winner as Mr. Arnett Simpson of Belmont, P.E.I. One of the amazing features of the Contest was the nearness of a great number of guesses to the exact time the clock ran. Congratulations are offered to Mr. Simpson and the other nineteen prize winners, all of whose prizes will be delivered within the next few days. Prize List follows: Mr. Arnett Simpson, Belmont, P. E. I. Douglas Morris, Kinkora, P.E.I. Mr. Elmer Sutherland, Saint Peters Bay, P.E.I. Mrs. William Keizer, 321 Euston Street, Charlottetown, P.E.I. Mrs. Lloyd Keizer, 12 Pleasant Street, Charlottetown, P.E.I. Miss Marion MacKinnon, Bothwell, P.E.I. Mr. Fred Curran, Saint Peters Bay, P. E. I. Mr. William Howlett, Vernon, P. E. I. Mrs. D. J. MacLeod, 252 Euston Street, Charlottetown, P.E.I. Mrs. Frank Daley, 165 Summer Street, Summerside, P.E.I. Mr. W. S. Glover, Mount Stewart, P.E.I. Mr. Marilyn Rennie, Alma, P. E. I. Mr. Hector Buote, Tignish, P. E. I. Mr. Isaac Bernard, Saint Louis, P.E.I. Mr. Theodore Wedge, Wellington, P.E.I. Miss Kathleen Rix, O'Leary, R. R. No. 1, P.E.I. Mr. John K. MacDonald, Kilmuir, P.E.I. Mr. John Clow, Hampshire, P. E. I. Mr. Thomas Carragher, New Wiltshire, P.E.I. Mrs. Alex Jackson, Albion, Lot 59, P.E.I.



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