

MODERN FARMER

TIMELY NOTES ON TOPICS CONNECTED WITH Silver Fox and Mink Farming

The following quantities of Norwegian furs have been announced for the coming season:— 90,000 silver and platinum foxes, 50,000 blue foxes, 5,000 white foxes, 60,000 standard mink and 10,000 mutation mink. Our comment on the above is that the Norwegians have not cut down on their production of silver and mutation foxes—in fact we believe they have increased their breeding stock as we are confident that they did not sell 90,000 foxes last year. In other words they are not playing the game with the rest of us.

John Wanamaker's store in Philadelphia is showing two huge muffs in the French import fashion show held in the ballroom of the Hotel Warwick. Both muffs are from the French designer Christian Dior. One is of blue and black fox and retail for \$295. It is believed that muffs can make a comeback in the fashion world and if so they will use up quite a large quantity of fox both red fox, which will be dyed, and black and silver fox as well as mutations.

Lampson, Fraser and Huth report on their sale of ranch mink last week said that 76% of the 11,623 ranch mink was sold with 25% of the wild mink sold. Ranch mink had a \$40 top for a lot of extra dark and dark skins, 76% sold, very strong demand at very strong prices. Wild mink had a \$53.50 top for a lot of average Red Rivers. Dressed mutations brought the following prices: Royal Pastel \$52 top; Aleutians \$50 top; Breath of Spring, Silverblue \$44 top; Silverblue \$35 top; Whites \$27.50 top; Blue Frost \$14.50 top; Starlights \$13.50 top.

Following the sale of ranch mink the Company offered silver fox and mutations and stated that silver fox advanced 15% from their previous auction. Platinum advanced 10% and white marked and blue fox were firm. Full silvers had a top of \$18 top for a lot of large clear, end of season collection. White marks had a top of \$30. For a lot of large clear end of season collection. Platinum had a top of \$25, for a lot of large clear end of season collection. Blue fox had a top of \$13.50 for a very poor offering. Red fox had a top of \$4.25 for a lot of north westerns.

Hudson's Bay Company in their report on their recent auction in London state that silver fox advanced 10% from the previous sale. The darker phases sold well. Pearly platinum, paler colors were in good demand, others were mostly withdrawn. Platinum good quality, paler colors, sold well, following the H.B.C. sale. Anning, Chadwick and Kiever, Ltd., sale of silver fox and mutations had the following results: Silver fox dark (Canadian money) \$24.50, quarters \$31; halves

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Urges Great Care in Handling Potatoes

The need of handling potatoes with extreme care at or subsequent to harvest time, in order to avoid serious losses during the storage period, is again emphasized by Mr. S. G. Peppin, district inspector, Seed Potato Certification.

"If an elevator type digger is used," Mr. Peppin says, "it should be so adjusted that the moving parts will cause as little bruising as possible. The blade should be set deep enough so as not to cut the tubers and to carry plenty of soil right to the top of the elevator. The machine should be run as slowly as possible, some say not faster than 1-2 miles per hour; 150 feet per minute. Beater diggers also should be set so that the beater will not bruise the tubers.

"All pickers, handling crews, and especially the truckers should be shown how to handle the potatoes with a minimum of bruising. The sacked potatoes should be placed, not thrown, in the trucks, all sharp edges such as the ends of trucks, waggon, railway car-door thresholds and so forth should be well padded. A little care all along the line will help materially in reducing unnecessary damage. Haste makes waste.

"Potato storages should be sprayed before harvest with a solution of two pounds of bluestone in each ten gallons of water. This will kill the disease organisms which would otherwise cause storage rot.

"The storage should not only be well insulated but well ventilated to prevent moisture condensation which would eventually rot the structure. An exhaust fan which draws heat and moisture out is a good investment in large storages. Finally, in these days of keen competition it is the stock which arrives in the consumers hands in top-quality condition which will repeat in repeat orders. Seed potatoes particularly should be most carefully handled from the time they leave the ground right through to the final destination. Fall shipments of seed potatoes are frequently held in common or per haps poor storage for several months before being used. Such seed stock, therefore, should be as near perfect at time of loading as possible, otherwise serious complaints and requests for rebate will result.

"Bruised and cut potatoes are natural breeding places for the development of several kinds of storage rot. Care in handling, particularly during the harvesting period, will reduce these losses to a minimum."

Experiment Underlines Uses For Surplus Straw And Other Waste Material

A new experiment has just been initiated at the Dominion Experimental Station in Charlottetown. The object, as outlined by Superintendent R. C. Parent, is to determine the value of various types of organic matter for the maintenance of soil fertility. In this experiment the value of straw, shavings, seaweed, swamp mud and other products will be or another.

"It is felt that this experiment will be a valuable one because the results of many soil analyses indicate that our soils are low in organic matter and in many cases are becoming more deficient," Mr. Parent states. "The importance of using every bit of waste material around the farm cannot be too strongly emphasized, and every particle of straw should find its way back to the soil in one form or another."

Heavy Yield This Year
"In Prince Edward Island we are fortunate this year to have an abundant grain crop and a heavy yield of straw. It is regrettable, however, to see quite a few farmers burning their straw piles following threshing and others blowing the straw into the woods or swamp with the intention of leaving it there. In other words this is treating the straw as if it were of no value. Nothing

some loose, white string tied here and there will scare them

Why We Cultivate
Killing weeds is only one of several reasons for cultivating flowers and vegetables. Even if it were possible to have chemical weed killers, which would destroy all but the flowers and vegetables, we would still need to cultivate. This stirring of the soil with a rake, hoe or whatever is used is essential to let in air, to absorb moisture and to distribute plant food. In dry parts of the country it is also essential to keep the soil from drying out. A good practice is to cultivate gardens or hoe crops regularly after every good shower. Wait, of course, a few hours or so until the soil is just dry enough to work.

Soak It Well
Having water available for the garden is a big advantage. If the supply is limited to what can be pumped by hand from a well or cistern then it is well to confine it to a corner of the kitchen garden where the lettuce, onions and a few short rows of beets and carrots are concentrated and also, of course, to a few favorite flowers. But if there is a hose and lots of water then the whole garden and lawn will benefit, and in dry weather soak. Light sprinklings are of little use. They will just keep down the dust, which is of doubtful advantage, or when applied to the lawn will encourage shallow rooting. It is far better to soak thoroughly once a week in dry weather. This encourages the roots of grass, flowers and vegetables to go down deep where they will find more plant food.

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Farm Notes

This May Scare Them
In many sections of Canada, and not necessarily away out in the country either, rabbits, groundhogs, coons and other four-footed animals do a lot of damage. Sometimes even on the edge of the big cities they are troublesome. Where one has scruples against sterner measures an experiment in the writer's garden last summer may be worthwhile. A family of coons started from the corn patch, and knowing from previous experience that only a few of these raids would mean no corn roasts that season, a light cow-bell was rigged up with long strings to several stalks of corn on the outside row. Even a light wind made the bell ring, and the coons if they were not very careful would do the same. In any case the raids on that patch ended. Whether the same scheme will work again this year is another matter.

An electric fence would probably check these robbers, and also groundhogs and rabbits, and often

could be farther from the truth as straw is a valuable bedding material for all types of live stock and poultry; and when applied to the soil, either in the raw state or in a semi-decomposed state, is a valuable source of humus and fertility.

"Prince Edward Island soils are not rich and most of them are lacking in organic matter; therefore any means that can be adopted to add organic matter should be followed. Some farmers state that they burn their straw to destroy the weeds; this is really an excuse. It is impossible to free a farm of weeds by burning a few weed seeds in the straw. There are many more in the soil.

"In cases where there appears to be a surplus of straw the following are suggestions as to ways and means of using it to best advantage; the best use of straw is as bedding for cattle, hogs or poultry. It is an excellent material for absorbing moisture and preserving the valuable liquid manure which contains the greater percentage of nitrogen and potash. Liquid manure, charged with many bacteria, is a valuable aid in decomposing straw or other bedding material.

"There are very few farmers who use straw in their stables to full capacity. Dairy cattle, in most instances, could be given much more bedding than they normally receive. Extra bedding will not only help to keep the cows clean and thus aid in producing a higher grade of milk but it will also help to prevent injury to the udders and possibly lessen the occurrence of severe cases of mastitis. Again, it is simply amazing how much straw a little of pigs will trample and convert to valuable manure for farm crops.

Straw On Pastures
"If one has more straw than he can possibly use under his live stock it will pay him to spread the balance thinly over the large areas. Perhaps the best place to spread straw is on a pasture field, particularly on hillside where it adds humus and aids in preventing the rapid run-off of water and the accompanying loss of soil by erosion. Straw may be spread on pastures at any time of the year but early spring or late fall is probably the best. If spread evenly at one to two tons per acre it will soon disintegrate and the grass will come up through it without hindrance.

"Straw may be spread on any sod field several weeks before ploughing. The fall is the best time for this. If large quantities of straw are ploughed under in the spring the land may become too loose and the crop suffer from dryness. Normally, an increase in yield can be expected from the application of straw. This increase is usually more pronounced the second year. Experiments conducted at the Prince Islet Potato Experiment Station indicate that profitable increases in yield of potatoes are obtained following the applications of straw.

"Surplus straw may be made into compost and the following plan has been found workable at the Charlottetown Experimental Station; first, place a layer of straw about fifteen inches thick and on this apply a complete commercial fertilizer, such as, a 5-10-10 at the rate of 150 lbs. per ton of straw; next apply a layer of barnyard manure; follow this with straw; then fertilizer; then manure, continuing until the pile is six to eight feet high. This compost should be kept reasonably moist and after a few months the straw will be rotted and the whole mass can be spread without trouble."

NOT THE MAYFLOWER
A reader in Vancouver, B. C. writes (in part) as follows: "Dear Agricola, it is now many years since I left 'The Island' but for years I have remembered the sweet smelling 'May Flowers' that we used to pick in such quantities at such places as Southport and Keppoch. As I recall they pushed up through the snow in bushland? and were about a foot high with deep pink, bell-shaped blossoms. I relaxed it, got it into shape, and mailed it to Prof. F. M. Cannon, at the Entomological Laboratory, Charlottetown. Prof. Cannon kindly identified it as Sphinx gordius, but it seems to have no popular name: 'This I take to be in consequence of its rarity. I hope to contribute a note on the Sphinx moths shortly

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NEWSY NOTES

By Agricola

THE NASHVILLE WARBLER
This Warbler was seen at Tignish, by ornithologist Dwight, who spent the summer of 1892 studying the Island birds. We have no later record but that does not imply any scarcity of the bird, though it does of observers. Dr. Taverner identifies it as "a yellow and green warbler with a grayish head and a more or less concealed chestnut crown patch." There are, however, some variations in the coloration. The head may vary in grayness, and the plumage in the intensity of yellow. The chestnut head patch may even be absent. With these reservations, here is the description:—
Nashville Warbler. AOU. 645. Summer resident. Plumage, head with top and sides bluish gray, a partly concealed chestnut patch in the centre of the crown. Back and rump bright olive green; wings and tail edged with the same; no wing bars; underparts bright yellow white on the belly. Length of adult 4.75 inches.

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DESCRIPTION OF A DRESSER
The country home where I was "brought up"—i.e. reared—had a large kitchen with a flag-stone floor covered with brown matting woven of cocco-nut fibre. Opposite the big open fireplace the whole side wall was occupied by a dresser that reached almost to the ceiling. A dresser, be it known, may be described as a kitchen sideboard, but even so, it still requires some explanation. The lower part was a cupboard with a top like a table; it had drawers for cutlery, spoons etc. Stretching upward above this cupboard was a series of narrow shelves that held a row of big oval plates suitable for displaying joints of the Roast Beef of Old England. These were of the blue "willow pattern" type, adorned with chinese scenery. The highest shelf held a row of big pewter platters which were

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