

MODERN FARMER



TIMELY NOTES ON TOPICS CONNECTED WITH Silver Fox and Mink Farming

The New York Auction Company yesterday offered a very large collection of ranch mink—approximately 50,000 skins. They are owned by the United Mink Breeders Association, the strongest body of breeders of mink in the United States. It will be the last of the season's offering from them and the collection is described as fine fresh goods. They were put on show last Monday and attracted the attention of a large number of prospective buyers. It is considered that the offering comes at a time when factors for mink popularity are on the up and up.

Designers are coming up almost every week with new styles to make up silver fox, blue fox, mink and other furs. Some of them are very attractive and we are particularly taken with the ingenuity in working two and four skins silver and mink together into capes, wrap arrounds and other styles.

Irving Denson of Los Angeles, California, is the leading specialist in that state in the handling of fox furs and he has made a feature of small pieces with split skins worked in tiers. Through the use of half skins rather than full pelts and handled horizontally the fur appears to be less bulky and lends itself to smaller pieces and a more flattering silhouette. This house shows cape styles that come to just above the waist line in back and hang about nine inches below the waist line in front. For dressier wear capelets are deeper or are ribbon tied at the neckline minus the stole front. Silver, Platinum and foxes are all very attractive made up in the above styles.

Ranch mink was strong at Lamson, Fraser & Huth's auction last week. Prices for the approximately 40,000 skins offered for the Great Lakes Mink Association were firm and the sales room took a large percentage of the collection. Section One, 18,500 skins extra dark and dark was 94 per cent sold at a top of \$23.50. Section Two, 12,500 Starlights was 86 per cent sold at a top of \$32.50 for mediums. Section Three, 5,826, average goods, was 76 per cent sold at a top of \$16; 1,328 low grades were 70 per cent sold with a top of \$12.50 for good skins. The attendance of buyers was good and bidding active and the sales room took a large percentage of the collection. Section One, 18,500 skins extra dark and dark was 94 per cent sold at a top of \$23.50. Section Two, 12,500 Starlights was 86 per cent sold at a top of \$32.50 for mediums. Section Three, 5,826, average goods, was 76 per cent sold at a top of \$16; 1,328 low grades were 70 per cent sold with a top of \$12.50 for good skins. The attendance of buyers was good and bidding active and the sales room took a large percentage of the collection.

Finland, which is becoming an important fur producer with large fox and mink ranches, and is also the habitat of many wild furs, exported five times as many raw furs in 1949 as in 1948, but dressed furs were smaller in quantity. The country has at present about 2,000 fur farms mostly in the coastal district where fish at low prices are available. The 1949 crop is estimated by the Federation of Fur Breeders as follows: (1948 crop in brackets)—mink, 35,000 (26,000); silver fox, 15,000 (10,000); blue fox, 15,000 (12,000); Platina fox, 2,500 (2,000). The exports are controlled by the Bank of Finland and barter transactions are now permitted only for farm furs. Mink must be sold exclusively to dollar countries and it is stated that 30,000 mink have been exported to the United States this year. A few years ago—and we presume he still holds the position—the chief inspector of fur farms in Finland, Carl Petersen, was a diploma graduate of McClure and MacKinnon Silver Fox Farms, Ltd.

Lamson, Fraser & Huth's held

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Seed Good Seed Reap Good Crops

As spring approaches, farmers all over the country are preparing for seeding. This means the preparation of millions of bushels of cereal grains for seed. The yield and quality of the crop harvested this fall will be greatly influenced by the character of the seed used. Good seed has certain definite characteristics. It must be of suitable variety and pure as to variety and kind. It must also be free of weed seeds and of disease, and it must be of good germination.

In choosing a suitable variety, the recommendations published by each province should be consulted and followed. These variety recommendations are based on the results of tests made throughout each province every year. Only varieties of good quality and of high yielding ability, and which possess the most satisfactory characteristics, are recommended. Purity means freedom from grains of other varieties and from other kinds of grain. Better yielding varieties will outyield poor yielding types by several bushels per acre. The inclusion with the seed of some poorer yielding types will naturally lower the yield. Grades may be lowered from mixtures of late and early maturing types by producing both over-ripe and immature or greenish kernels; in addition considerable losses may result from the shattering of the over-ripe kernels. Uniform ripening is especially important today when the combine is used almost exclusively to harvest cereal crops.

Freedom from weed seeds needs little comment. Weeds bring extra cost and labour and are the chief means by which hard-to-control perennial weeds get established on a farm. Germination is important because a good crop is largely dependent upon healthy plants. Such factors as frost, immaturity, heat, weathering and disease, tend to weaken or destroy the germination of grain seeds. Weeds, wire worms or root rots are troublesome, it is important that the grain germinates and grows quickly and vigorously. Diseased seed tends to weaken germination, by killing the seedlings or weakening them so that they fall to grow into normal plants. Planting diseased seed practically ensures the perpetuation of the disease; this is especially true of the smuts.

To get a start with good seed, it is necessary to buy only a few bushels of Registered or Certified seed and increase it on good clean summer-fallow. If care is taken when seeding and harvesting to prevent mixtures, these few bushels may be increased into a source of reliable seed for the entire farm.

QUALITY IN OATS

OTTAWA, April 18, 1950—Chemistry is stepping into the picture more and more as the decisive agent in establishing the real nutrition values in farm products and their effects on animals, man included.

This fact has been demonstrated recently in the Canada Department of Agriculture where tests have been made on oats grown in widely separated areas and of different varieties. The results show promise of better guidance for the future in establishing balanced diets for farm animals—and porridge lovers.

Popular conception of a good variety of oat is usually one with good yields, high weight per bushel and thin hulls. Such a variety may have a good feeding value, but not necessarily. Chemical analysis gives a much better idea of protein and fat content, for instance. Results of such analyses at the Central Experimental Farm, Ottawa, are very striking.

Oats varieties varied from 14 to 17 per cent in protein—Victory gave 15.45 and Cartier 17.15 per cent. This means that 111 pounds of Victory would be required to equal the protein of 100 pounds of Cartier. Some varieties contained twice as much fat as others—Rexton, 5.48 and Exeter, 2.70 per cent, that is the same amount of fat in 100 pounds of Rexton as in 203 pounds of Exeter.

The varieties used for these tests were grown at Agassiz, B.C.; Scott, Sask.; Winnipeg, Man., and at Ottawa. The average protein content of all varieties tested was lowest at Agassiz and highest at Winnipeg and Scott. The fat content was higher in the Scott test than at any other three points.

It may not be generally known that we have Locust trees in this Province, though I suspect they are not native. John MacSwain, in his Supplement to Sprout's Botany (1907), lists the Common, and the Clammy Locust trees, both belonging to the genus, Robinia. I never came across the Clammy species but noticed a

ATTENTION

ALL BREEDERS OF SHORTHORNS

We have inquiries for Bulls and Heifers open or bred. Last immediately anything you like to sell with the undersigned.

All Shorthorn owners are cordially invited to join our Association. Don't delay, we can help you.

Write to:
JOHN PASQUIER
St. Peter's Bay,
President

or
A. H. MUTOCH,
Earncliffe,
Secretary.

ATTENTION FARMERS

THE PRODUCTIVE LAND OF SPAIN comprises nearly 114,000,000 acres, about 90 per cent of the total area, but only 66,000,000 acres are under cultivation.

TYRANT'S END

Adolf Hitler, is said to have died on April 30, 1946, in his underground bunker at the Reichsbanner, Berlin.

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- NEWSY NOTES -

"The Song Sparrow," says Bain, "is the first to tune his notes round our doors in the spring. In fact the lively bird, in some cases has been here all winter, hiding in the sheltered nooks of a barn or a stack-yard. But now he is out with his clear musical ditty and his social ways, to warn us that the season of love is coming with the softening sky and the budding willow and the Robin's loud call in the grove. The nest is built on the ground, sheltered by a clod or stick, and composed of grass and hair. Sometimes it is placed on a low bush. If the intelligent bird has been often disturbed on the ground." The earliest date of the Song Sparrow's appearance in my locality was March 19, 1939. This bird is increasing here wrote Mr. Frank J. Sterns of Souris, in 1966; and Vesper Sparrows (in that order) are all of the "seed-eating" class, but the seeds they eat are of plants that could well be dispensed with. In the summer, the adults feed on insects, and the young are fed entirely on them till they leave the nest. In the fall, after breeding season is over, and before they migrate to warmer climates, they again resort to weed patches too often left on our farms. In this way, spring, summer and fall, the Song Sparrow works for the farmer—who mostly doesn't appreciate the help he is getting!

Eastern Song Sparrow — AOU 561. Summer resident; increasing. Plumage: Head, reddish brown, with a greyish median line a greyish supercilial line, and a black line behind the eye. Back, wings and tail, reddish brown. Underparts whitish, throat and breast heavily streaked, blackish, the streaks coalescing to form an irregular central spot, often of a wedge-like shape. The tail is not "cut square" as in the Vesper Sparrow, but is slightly notched; the bird "tatters" it noticeably, as it flies. Length of adults, to 8.75 inches.

THE CAROB TREE

What were the locusts that St. John the Baptist ate, (Matt. 3: 4)? Were they animal or vegetable? I had supposed this question answered long ago, but the controversy is re-opened in the pages of a popular magazine and the victory remains with those who favor the animal diet. There is no gainsaying the fact that the original Greek word, AKRIS means "cricket, grasshopper, or locust" and that the translator has got the right idea. Still, I think readers will be interested in the locust-tree.

The Locust, or Carob tree, bears pods whose contents are principally sugar and starch. It belongs to the order Leguminosae, and its name is Ceratonia siliqua. These three words tell the botanist quite a lot! The long word places the tree in a group that is of great value both to man and beast; and in particular, among the peas, beans, and the "pulse", which you will remember did such a good job of fattening those Hebrew lads in the palace at Babylon. The two names of the tree point to the "horn-like" color and appearance of the pod (or silique).

Now, when I was a schoolboy there was no packaged chewing-gum on sale; on had to walk to the chemist's shop a mile away, where one might buy a penny-worth (or even a "happorth"), of liquorice-root, "caramel's-rut", (that is, calamus-root), orris-root, or locusts. The last were dried bean-like pods three or four inches long, and an inch wide; they were brown, varnished and rather horn-like, but in taste, extremely sweet and a very good substitute for gum.

The Locust tree is a hardy evergreen, growing to the height of about fifty feet. It is found in southern Europe from Spain eastwards along the Mediterranean coast into the Levant. The bean was used as food for cattle as a rule, but in time of scarcity, it furnished a nutritious aliment for the poorer people. One ancient writer has it that the beans were the husks that he swine did eat, (Luke 15:16). Historians state that the locust beans formed the principal food of the British cavalry horses in the Peninsula war of 1811 and 1812.

It may not be generally known that we have Locust trees in this Province, though I suspect they are not native. John MacSwain, in his Supplement to Sprout's Botany (1907), lists the Common, and the Clammy Locust trees, both belonging to the genus, Robinia. I never came across the Clammy species but noticed a

THE SNOW FLEA

In the Family Herald of April 5, there is a good drawing of a Snow Flea, showing the "mechanism" by which it makes its jumps. It has been injured, for it is short on legs! The Order Thysanura, to which the Snow Fleas belong, comprises insects with three pair of legs and with other peculiarities.

The Snow Flea (or Springtail) is placed in the sub order, Collembola, as indicated.

I have only seen Snow Fleas once, and that was in April, 1931. There was an immense multitude of the little creatures on the "banking" round the house, at time covered with snow. And weren't the little fleas having the time of their lives, seeing you could jump highest! I sent a few of them to the Dominion Entomologist, who kindly identified them as Achorutes Socialis Uzel.

There is another insect of the same Order, called the Silver Fish-moth, a household insect found in the U. S. A. Has it been found here? It is also common in Britain.

Spring Care Of Lawns

A little extra attention to the garden lawn in the early spring will often improve its appearance throughout the year. As soon as it is reasonably dry from winter snow, it should be well raked with a bamboo or flexible steel grass rake. A garden rake should be avoided as it is too drastic a treatment and tends to tear up the roots. Delay the raking if the ground is found to be so soft that footmarks are noticeable; high heels in particular will leave depressions which may remain a long summer.

Rolling is not as essential as many people think, and is necessary only in those regions where heavy results from the action of the frost. Although rolling is not usually harmful on light soils, it causes heavier soils to compact a condition detrimental to the growth of grass. A more effective and desirable method of smoothing small depressions in the lawn is top-dressing.

Early spring is a good time to fertilize. The most common cause of poor lawns is low soil fertility. Since grass is constantly growing and producing new leaves, a suitable fertilizer is one high in nitrogen. It is important that the fertilizer be spread evenly. It is a good plan to divide it into equal parts and to spread each half uniformly over the entire lawn, in opposite directions. The lawn should be dry at the time of application and the fertilizer should be thoroughly watered in immediately after to avoid burning the foliage.

priority whether it be for children or adults.

(2) Dairy industry in Canada is perhaps the best guarantee of stability for the large majority of our farming population—the cow is the home market for grasses and grasses are a "must" in soil conservation.

(3) Canadians are inclined to take for granted the abundance of our dairy products and use them loosely whereas we should take advantage of those abundant supplies to bring our diet into a better balance and improve our standard of living.

(4) For the same amount of money, the consumer cannot get the same essentials from other products—calories in butter and protein in milk are cheaper than in most other farm products.

(5) Butter itself takes almost half of our milk production and constitutes one of the best changes—in some cases the only change—through which milk produced from small farms located far from consuming centres can be marketed.

(6) Cheese is a high protein food, the consumption of which could be increased if our population had a better knowledge of this product—our average consumption is 4 or 5 pounds a year whereas it is between 16 and 20 pounds in such countries as Denmark and Switzerland.

These are only a few among many reasons which justify the Department fostering a movement for a more thorough knowledge of dairy products on the part of the consumers as well as of the producers themselves.

NOTICE

Advertiser wishes to contact producer organization capable of supplying one hundred or more cases of Graded Eggs weekly. Strictly cash business. Also interested in Dressed Poultry when available.

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The necessity of making use of liberal quantities of Chemical Fertilizer in modern farming, and the HIGH cost of Chemicals used, constitute an annual twin problem for farmers. A Formula that would partially solve this cost has been sought for a long time. We believe we now have the solution.—Read on.—

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58 Fitzroy Street
Charlottetown

Start Spading Garden As Soon as Soil Crumbles

If you want your garden plot to be well prepared, spade it yourself. Weeks may slip by waiting for a plowman to do a job which, by the proper approach, can be reduced to enjoyable and beneficial exercise.

The secret is to take it easy. Spading is not hard work if done a little at a time. A space 30 by 50 feet can be spaded in a leisurely way in eight hours. One hour a day for eight days, and the job is done.

But first, be sure the soil is in condition to spade. Never work soil which is too wet, and if the soil is heavy, don't wait until it has become too dry. There is a point between extremes when even heavy clay can easily be lifted, and will crumble under a blow from the spade. You can tell this point by using the "mud pie" test.

Mould a ball of earth in your hand, and pat it to make a mud pie. If the pie holds together, the soil is too wet to spade. If it crumbles, then you can go ahead.

Systematic spading makes the job easier, and more complete. Here is one way to do it: Set a definite task for your first day's work, say a strip six feet wide, running the shortest dimension of the garden. At one end dig a ditch say one foot wide and the depth of the spade, removing all soil from it. Fill this soil near the opposite end of the strip.

Now begin to spade with the blade not parallel to the trench, but at right angles to it. This enables you to lift the soil more easily, and deposit it in the trench. The spade should be driven down, not on a slant, but perpendicularly to its full depth. Take a small slice of the soil so your back is not strained. Lift it up, turn the spade over, so that the top soil falls underneath and bottom soil on top. In filling the first trench, you have opened a second.

If you wish to spade under manure, spread it evenly over the area, except for the top of your initial trench, when this first trench has been dug, clean the manure from the top of the next trench and throw it into the bottom of the first; then proceed with your spading, piling the soil on top of the manure.

When you have finished your day's quota, you will have an empty trench, which should be filled with the soil you removed from the initial trench.

ATTENTION FARMERS

I wish to advise that I have taken over the Selling Agency for the OLIVER FARM MACHINERY such as Tractors, Plows, Hay Machinery, Binders, Etc. Also have in stock a large assortment of spare parts. Phone and Mail Orders will receive prompt attention day received. Your Patronage will be greatly appreciated.

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