



MODERN FARMER

TIMELY NOTES ON TOPICS CONNECTED WITH Silver Fox and Mink Farming

A few days ago we had the pleasure of a conversation with George E. Brown, formerly of Margate but now a resident of this city. It is unnecessary to introduce him to our readers, everyone who has been connected with foxes knows what a great contribution he has made to fur farming and what a splendid citizen he has been all through his life. Mr. Brown is well over eighty years of age and is a well preserved man, but for an attack of arthritis a few years ago he would be as active as ever, of course that slows one up a bit. Mr. Brown and associates purchased their first pair of foxes from Frank Tuplin in 1911. The price was \$5,000 and Frank was to ranch them. In 1913 he paid Mr. Brown \$15,000 for the original female fox and by that time they were well on the road to success.

In the early 1920's Mr. Brown bought foxes from Carruthers and Lanz. Charlottetown. These were of pure Jim Tuplin strain and it was that strain that really clicked for them. In 1929 at the first Fox Exhibition ever held in this Province, at Charlottetown Mr. Brown won the Grand Championship and several other awards and it was not long before buyers were making a beaten path to his door. A great deal of the success attained by upper Canadian breeders — particularly Ontario breeders — was due to importations of the get of Bonnieview 42B and other famous foxes in the George E. Brown ranch. Mr. Brown's son William, started a ranch in Charlottetown shortly after World War I and with his father's strain very soon became one of the leading breeders in the province, being particularly active at shows, winning Grand Championships and many Championships. Both father and son are still holding on to some foxes and we trust will be again to the forefront when good times come back.

Looking through volume 2 of the Record Book of the Silver Fox Breeders Association of Prince Edward Island we note where J. Pierpont Morgan, Raquette Lake, New York, registered several foxes in 1921. He had bought them from Borestone Company in Maine, who in turn purchased most of their breeding stock from John E. Roper of Sherwood, near Charlottetown, owner of the famous Reid and Lala, the progeny of foxes bought from Captain J. C. Ellis, who in turn had purchased his breeding stock from Charles Dalton and James Rayner. This particular strain was really priceless and the Borestone Company soon became the foremost prize winners in the United States.

No doubt that attracted the attention of Mr. Morgan who is considered by most to have been the greatest financier of all time. It was he who organized the stupendous United States Steel Com-

pany with what at the time was considered capitalization undreamed of — over one billion dollars. It was the same Mr. Morgan who in 1929 as he had done in a previous crisis, stepped into the stock market to prevent a financial collapse. What strikes us as curious though, is that such a man would be beguiled by the profits to be made out of silver foxes, or it may be it wasn't that, it probably was a bit of a hobby. No doubt that farm at Raquette Lake was his escape place from the great cares and anxieties of Wall Street and we can picture him in the fall months gazing admiringly on the beautiful dark and medium silvers, the progeny of foxes that had their origin in tiny little P.E.I.

During a short trip to New York recently where we were ensconced in the Waldorf Astoria Hotel, we saw a great many furs worn and a much larger proportion of silver fox, platinum and white face fox capes than we expected. They were mostly very nice in quality and looked very becoming on the wearers. They certainly outshone most of the other capes we saw worn there, which included pearl platinum and blue fox capes, made from Norwegian blues. Of course there were many beautiful mink capes in evidence, the one that caught our attention most was similar to the sapphires that were shown at the exhibition in Charlottetown by George Meyers. They no doubt were not true sapphires but certainly had the appearance. In several stores we saw fox and mutation capes displayed with prices remarkably low we thought for the quality. We believe there is a tendency for silver fox to come back and it may not be more than a year or two before there will be a real upsurge in the industry.

In a letter received from the Canadian National Silver Fox Breeders Fur Marketing Department, we learn that the proposals submitted to the government to have them approve a proposal for the payment of premiums on the three top grades of ranch raised fox pelts have been turned down. We do not think that very much can be found with the government for doing this. They have assisted us for several years and have probably come to the conclusion that the best thing to do is to leave us to our own devices. There is also no fault but much praise to be found for the Canadian National Silver Fox Breeders officials, P.E.I. Fur Pool, Ltd. and its President P. G. Clark and others who took so much trouble going to Ottawa and urging on the powers that be the necessity for further help. Ottawa's turning down the proposals must to some extent have been caused by the adverse criticism generated in Western Canada regarding the government's fur marketing aid plan. Just why the parties did get sour on it we cannot figure out.

Below we submit the report of the recent Hudson's Bay Company's auction in Montreal compiled by George A. Callbeck, manager of the Fur Marketing Department, C.N.S.F.B.A. It speaks for itself...

General furs of the short-haired types were in good demand, while the longer haired types were most difficult to sell. Mink prices on the whole continued firm with satisfactory clearances being made, the greater part of the offering being purchased for U.S. accounts. Average prices were not released by the Company. We give you the following table of quantities offered and percentage sold, compared with the Company's January sale.

	% Sold	% Sold January
Wild mink	11895	73%
Sid. Ranch Mink	17244	63
Sid. Ranch Mink (2nd)	1473	no comparison
Silverblue	7817	78
Fasels	899	51
Misc. Mutations	972	100

The fox catalogue contained 12,207 skins. Buying power in this section of the sale was not as strong as in recent auctions resulting in a smaller clearance of 48%, with prices on the whole slightly easier than in the Company's January sale, the average being \$13.53. A good proportion of the skins sold were secured for European accounts.

The following tabulation gives the average prices realized, and a comparison with prices in the Company's January sale.

Standard Silvers	Av. Mar.	Av. Jan.	Pearl Platinum	Av. Mar.	Av. Jan.
Selected fulls	17.48	17.00	Selected	21.60	20.25
Regular fulls	14.55	15.25	Regular	16.55	17.50
Interior fulls	10.67	11.18	Interior	11.86	13.50
Selected 1/4-3/4	21.23	23.50			
Regular 1/4-3/4	16.74	18.25			
Interior 1/4-3/4	12.53	13.25			

Platinums	W. Mkd. Silvers
Select	16.66
Regular	12.76
Interior	8.35
Standard low grades	Av. \$9.04
Mutation low grades	Av. 4.35

CANADIAN NATIONAL SILVER FOX BREEDERS' ASSOCIATION
Summerside — Prince Edward Island

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Seed Damping-off Can Be Avoided

Some garden lovers have quit starting plants inside and many others are sadly disappointed when seedlings of flowers and certain vegetables fall over, rot off at the ground level and die. This disease caused by fungi present in most soils, known as damping-off, can be prevented without resorting to soil sterilization that is almost impossible for the home gardener.

Since 1945 damping-off of seedlings has been eliminated at the Dominion Experimental Station, Scott, Sask., says Superintendent G. D. Matthews, by using acid peat sphagnum moss usually available from the nearest seed house.

First the moss is broken down on a wire screen to leave the strands about a quarter inch long. Moss can be used to fill the flat or shallow box. If the supply is limited, a layer an inch thick can be spread over a sandy soil mixture so that the top of the flat is filled with moist moss. The surface is pressed down to half an inch below the rim, and an additional thin layer of shredded moss about one-eighth of an inch thick is applied and sprinkled lightly. Seed is sown by sprinkling on this layer either broadcast or in rows if desired. If several kinds of seed are sown in the same flat divisions are made with a thin line of dry sand because wooden strips would disturb the moss. Usually the seed is not covered but a light sprinkling of fine moss may be used on large seeds. The seed is given a very light sprinkling, preferably with an atomizer, and covered with a pane of glass. It is better to have the glass rest on an inch-high wooden frame. Placing these flats in a strong sunlight is to be avoided.

When germination appears to be finished the glass and frame are removed and regular watering is started. Another advantage becomes apparent because overwatering is not a problem with the peat moss. It will be found that the seedlings are readily transplanted from the moss.

Canning Crops Are Big Business

Crops grown by Canadian farmers for commercial fruit and vegetable canning and processing are an important item in agricultural production. In 1947, material used in 502 processing establishments in Canada amounted to \$89.3 million. Only ten years previously, in 1937, materials used were valued at \$30.6 million.

The canning and processing industry has made great strides in the last quarter of a century. Though the first canning plant was opened in 1878, at the turn of the century, 20 years later the number had only increased to 80. At that time most of the work was done by hand, both the processing and packing of the food and the manufacture of the cans. Soon the handmade cans were superseded by machinemade containers, but the lids were still soldered on manually. In 1910 the modern canning machine which sealed the container arrived, and the preparation and processing of the commodity, too, became more highly mechanized. Methods for the manufacture and packaging of jams, jellies, pickles, catsup also increased their tempo; slower hand methods giving way to the increasing use of machinery.

From that time on there has been a steady development of the industry in Canada. By 1930, there were 311 plants turning out products valued at \$43 million, and except for a slight decline in the early thirties the value of the finished product has increased steadily through the years. In 1947, 502 establishments turned out products valued at nearly \$153 million, a threefold increase over 1937. The 1949 valuation may be as much as \$175 million.

The development of the canning industry has been a boon to the housewife by giving her out-of-season fruits and vegetables the year round. It has extended the market for farmers enormously and quite large areas where climatic conditions are favourable produce extensively for the canning and processing industry. Additionally, it provides employment for many workers at the canning establishments. In 1947, over 17,000 workers were so employed who received over \$22 million in salaries and wages.

Woodlots Can Be Profitable

Many farms in Canada have something approaching a long-term asset in the woodlot; a fairly well paying addition to the farm which does not require a great deal of care. Most of the care it does need, can be given when cutting fuel or logs.

Most farm woodlots need what is called an improvement cutting in which comparatively useless species or malformed and dying trees are removed to make way for the growth of better species and more thrifty trees. The wood from this improvement cutting is usually neither large nor merchantable as logs; but on the local market it can generally be sold to advantage, if it is not all required for fuel.

The woodlot should be made to produce both high quality and low value products. Yellow birch, maple, pine and spruce, when grown to maturity, will yield high quality logs for which there is a ready market. If the farmer needs lumber, he can have the sawing done at low cost.

The tons of both mature hardwood and softwood trees will yield a large amount of fuelwood which should be harvested when the logs are cut. At this time, any young or small trees broken or injured in felling the mature timber, should also be cut.

Stand improvement of the farm woodlot at the time of harvesting is a logical step in woodlot management. This need not be done all at once. When felling such mature trees, the stand for a good distance around should be culled to remove useless members of the stand. In time the whole woodlot will be in proper condition to encourage the greatest growth.

NEWSY NOTES

THE SHARP-TAILED SPARROW

Our variety is properly the Acadian Sharp-tailed Sparrow, a distinction from the varieties found in other parts of the continent. Francis Bain (1891) mentions it briefly: "The sharp-tailed Sparrow and (the) Seaside Sparrow are common birds. The former is reported from Cascoupec, and I have seen the latter sporting through the meadows on the border of the great Tracadie marshes. It is a lively fleet-winged bird that loves to breast the rude seabreezes and sport its bright yellow-trimmed dress where the fields of purple grass blow."

Here it must be remarked that Bain was in error in supposing that he had seen the Sea-side Sparrow, since all varieties of that species are confined to the southern coasts of the U.S.A. It is dingier in hue than its sharp-tailed cousin, but has much the same habits.

An ornithologist called Dwight observed the Sharp-tailed Sparrow at Tignish in 1892 and mentions it in his "Summer Birds of P. E. Island," published in The Auk, January 1893. This is the only reference to the Island species, apart from Bain's as quoted above. It is reasonably certain that the species is still to be found here, but is too dull-colored to attract general attention.

Acadian Sharp-tailed Sparrow. AOU 64b. Summer Resident. Plumage: Crown brown laterally, with an indistinct bluish-gray median stripe; a buffy stripe over the eye, and another down the side of the throat, their ends enclosing gray ear coverts. Upper parts brownish olive-green, feathers of the back margined grayish. Edge of wings yellow. Underparts pale buffy, streaked on the breast with washed-out blackish marks. Tail not notched, feathers pointed. Length of adults 4.5 to 5.7 inches.

THE ECHO CLUB

When I was a lad I was greatly interested in the poetry of Henry W. Longfellow. I had read many of his poems before I went to school, and I still find enjoyment in them. The ballads and stories appeal to a youngster's imagination, and the philosophy (when there is any) is of the lightest. His description of the seasons and the scenery is not too deep for a lad's understanding. Longfellow himself acknowledges, in his poem "Wapentake," that Tennyson is his master in English song, but I had not yet come to that conclusion.

The middle of the nineteenth century was the Golden Age of the later poets, and their imitators. One Bayard Taylor was the author of a clever and amusing work called "The Diversions of the Echo Club." This club was supposed to consist of a few persons of literary taste, who met to criticize the various poets and to give imitations of their manner but not of their matter. Nevertheless they must be considered parodists! Here is the echo of Longfellow—

The grand conglomerate hills of Araby,
That stand empanopled in utmost thought,
With dazling ramparts front the Indian sea,
Down there in Hadramaut,
The cockatoo upon the upscreams,
The armadillo fluctuates o'er the hill;
And like a flag, incarnadined in dreams
All crimsonly I thrill.

To perpetrate a successful parody requires ingenuity: to compose a book full of these gems implies genius or near it.

CHRISTOPHER'S CROSS SCHOOL
Honor roll for February:
Grade IX—1, Leo Handrahan; 2, Leonard Broderick; 3, Norma Sheas.
Grade VII—1, Geraldine McHugh; 2, Wilma McHugh; 3, Paul Handrahan.
Grade V—1, David Harper; 2, Charles Broderick; 3, Mona Handrahan.
Grade IV—1, Ruth Harper; 2, Wendell Harper; 3, Ann Broderick.
Grade I (a)—1, Alice Harper; 2, Frances Ann Gallant; 3, Henry Gallant.
Grade I (b)—1, Bernard Broderick; 2, Philip Harper; 3, Winston Keough.

ARGYLE SHORE SCHOOL
Report for February:
Grade X — 1, Eisle MacDougall.
Grade IX — 1, Mona MacPhail.
Grade VIII — 1, Mary MacPhail.
2, Anna MacPhail and Elaine MacPhail.
3, Audrey MacPhail.
Grade VII — 1, Lorraine Williams.
Grade VI — 1, Lorna MacPhail.
2, Stewart Seller.
Grade IV — 1, Eardly Beaton.
2, Margaret Shaw. 3, Marion MacPhail.
Grade III — 1, Morris MacDougall.
Grade II — 1, Sterling MacPhail.
2, Neil MacPhail. 3, Burrows MacPhail.
Grade I — 1, Hope MacPhail.
Teacher — Sylvia Simpson.

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In the cells of earth,
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Dutch Bacon For U. K. Market

Holland is gearing-up its pig industry to meet a long-term market in the United Kingdom for Dutch bacon. This has been assured for at least the next four years by the contract of 1949, under which the Netherlands have agreed to supply 10,000 metric tons of bacon in 1949, between 25 and 40 thousand tons in 1950, between 36 and 60 thousand in 1951 and between 45 and 80 thousand tons in 1952. The greatest quantity of Dutch bacon exported to the United Kingdom in pre-war years was 55 thousand tons in 1928.

The Dutch pig industry in October, 1949 reached its highest peak since 1930—a total of two million head. The export objective for 1951 represents between 730 thousand and 1.1 million pigs, while that for 1950, between 900 thousand and 1.6 million. The export in 1928 to the United Kingdom represented about 1.1 million pigs on the present basis of 20 pigs being the equivalent of one ton of bacon.

A floor price equivalent to 24.3 cents a pound dressed weight has been set, and the Netherlands Government has stressed its intention of providing security for the efficient producer but not of encouraging inefficient production. Pig breeding is encouraged—and is developing—in the sandy soil areas, where much of the rough fodder such as roots and potatoes are grown on the farm.

Condition Horses For Spring Work

It's not too far from seeding time to give some thought to having the horses in good condition. Lame horses, and horses with bad shoulders cause expensive delays during seeding time.

During the winter months horses get soft and their feet often become broken to such an extent that lameness occurs when they are put to regular work. The feet should be trimmed and straightened up early, so that when the time comes for heavy work the horse will be ready for it.

Horses should be broken in to heavy work gradually and even before work starts feed should be gradually increased to put on some extra weight and tone the horse up gradually. Have the hames snug into the collar, as that brings the draft closer to the neck. Rest the horses frequently in the field and run down their shoulders if wet. Nothing causes sore shoulders more quickly than a dirty, loose-fitting collar grinding dirt into wet shoulders. Bellybands should be kept tight.

A few simple extra precautions when breaking horses into the first of the spring work will be amply repaid by the good condition during the rest of the season.

A Good Hobby For The Summer

During the war quite an army of city dwellers developed into wartime vegetable gardeners. Time, and many an aching back has taken its toll, and many a space in the backyard garden is back in grass or is growing perennials — flowers which require the least attention. But some still find vegetable growing a healthy hobby and continue to supplement the dinner table with homegrown supplies.

It is surprising the quantity of vegetables that can be grown on the smallest of backyards, but where space is naturally limited, it is best to keep to those most easily grown. Beans, beets, lettuce, radish, carrots, onions, spinach and tomatoes make a good list.

The best place for the vegetable patch is where it will receive full sunlight. Digging in the fall is best, but it can be done in the spring just as soon as the ground is dry enough to work properly. A common mistake is to dig too deeply. The best part of the soil is generally the top-soil which the builder used when grading, and for this reason spading should not exceed eight to ten inches, so that the better soil still remains on the top. Well rotted manure is a great help in plant growth, but it is not always possible to obtain it for city gardens. Where this is so, ready-mixed commercial fertilizer may be used to advantage. Scatter the fertilizer over the surface of the garden after digging, at the rate of 4 pounds per 100 square feet, and work it into the top-soil with a rake. If it comes into direct contact with roots or tops, it will cause burning of the young plants.

Good seed can be obtained from the local seed store; it can be relied upon as it conforms to established Government standards. But it is a good plan to ask your supplier to give you the varieties best suited to your particular locality. Often a crop does not do well because a variety of seed was used not suited to the district.

Canadian Garden Service 1950

By Gordon Lindsay Smith

Whether or not 1950 marks the end of the half century it does bring the world back to normal production of garden seeds again. During the war years and for some time afterwards not only were there actual shortages, because of the cutting off of imports from Europe and Asia, but there was also drastic curtailment of the introduction of new varieties. Now it takes a little time to produce and distribute a new variety. It must be thoroughly tested to make sure it is really new and valuable, and also that it is suited for the rather vigorous climate of Canada. Then it must be grown two or three years in quantity to build up sufficient volume of seed for general distribution. Now new introductions are flowing freely again.

In Canadian seed catalogues this year will be found new flowers, or new colors of old familiar varieties, new types, shorter or taller than their predecessors or harder or perhaps earlier in blooming.

They Grow Faster Now

And in the vegetables too there have been some substantial changes. To anyone who hasn't looked at a seed catalogue for several years there will be a lot of things there at Canadian seaboard, for shipment to Great Britain. While negotiation of all details respecting bacon shipments to Britain in 1950 have not been completed, the announcement was made so that hog producers and the packing industry might have the information before hog prices were established.

Since cheese deliveries for the 1950 season will not begin before May, negotiation of the details of the cheese contract have been deferred until early in 1950, but cheese producers, Mr. Gardiner announced, may feel assured that there will be a cheese contract with the British which will take care of the expected surplus.

FARMERS

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MEAT STOCKS

The total of all meats in stock at January 1, 1950 amounted to 88,946,000 lb. as compared with 75,723,000 lb. in December and 80,982,000 lb. a year ago, according to Dominion Bureau of Statistics.

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WHY HAVE SORE FEET?

JUST RUB IN
MINARD'S
SORE FEET OINTMENT

It was announced recently by the Right Hon. James G. Gardiner, Minister of Agriculture, that effective January 2nd the Meat Board will be authorized to pay \$22.50 per 100 pounds of bacon, basic Grade A. Wiltshire sides delivered

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