TIMELY NOTES ON TOPICS CONNECTED WITH Silver Fox and Mink Farming

Mink prices at the F. C. Taylor Fur Company, St. Louis, Mo., auction were down 5 per cent as compared with the previous auction. Furs were said to be of the best quality in a long time. Buying was largely done by New York dealers although Canadian interests were represented in the purchasing. The St. Louis sale is always very strong in muskrats. Here are the prices: Large and extra large, $1.92 to $1.94; medium, $1.33 to $1.35; small, 80 to 85 cents.

Ed Stanton writing in Women's Wear Daily, states: As a result of the ban on seven types of Russian furs by the United States, this country has already lost a large number of European and Canadian customers who normally would buy furs in New York. As reported, no Russian kolinsky, ermine marten, weasel, mink, fox and muskrat are now permitted to enter the United States as of January 5th. Since no Russian muskrats now can go into the United States it would appear that United States rats would be stronger but they are not. Prices are coming down, said a leading dealer. Canada, it is further stated, is waiting to take on Russian goods just as the French, Italians English, Belgians and other Europeans are waiting for bargains. We do not feel that the Canadians will give up buying all American furs but believe that the availability of Russian goods to them with less competition will curtail the amount of fur business the United States does with Canada.

United Mink Breeders Association pelts were in strong demand at Lampson, Fraser & Huth's sale recently. An auction company reported that 73 per cent of the over 45,000 pelts changed hands. In examining the reasons for the spirited competition merchants pointed out that manufacturers did the bulk of the buying and therefore set the pace on prices. About five of the biggest mink manufacturers were noticeably active throughout the sale. More than one buyer admitted he is confining his purchases to the better quality skins and avoided the less attractive poorer colors. They assert that the medium and cheaper quality merchandise is too high priced and feel that the better goods has more of a market. Figures show a large percentage of males sold between $25 and $30 and a big amount of females in the $13 to $16 bracket.

We had no idea that wild mink were as plentiful in this Province as they are. Just recently we heard of an enterprising young man who combined another business with collecting mink and had accumulated over 600 wild mink skins in his travels through various parts of the Province. He estimates that the total take-off of mink this season would run between 3,000 and 4,000. The production of ranch mink would probably be about the same.

A bill has been introduced into the New York State Legislature at Albany to prohibit the shooting of mink. It is pointed out that the shooting of these animals is entirely waste. Wild mink pelts are worth between $10 and $30 but they must be without bullet holes which very much destroy the value of the pelts of the little animals in effective matching for mink apparel. About 15,000 to 16,000 wild mink are trapped in New York State each year and a good mink trapper catches about 50 animals a year. Farm boys under sixteen years of age who do not require trapping licenses are reported to catch about $1 million worth of wild mink annually in this State.

Women's Wear Daily reporting on the H. B. Co. sale in Montreal state that New York buyers bought the largest part of a catalogue of 14,825 white fox. Prices were little changed from October sales though in some instances slightly easier. Top prices were $14.75. Blue fox, ranch, mediums and pales, sold up to $16; Arctic pelts sold from $8.75 to $15.25. A good collection of muskrat, mostly northern, met brisk demand from Canadians with a good percentage of the 46,248 skins being sold. Top price was paid for Canada section spring, XL pt. L at $2.30 to $2.40 and Lake Superior of the same grade brought $2.10. Prices ran down from that to 95 cents for damaged pelts. Nova Scotia winter part fall, part slightly damaged, sold at $1.95. Yukon section was $1.65. Canadians were the principal buyers.

Breath of Spring and Stewart Silverblu platinum mink sold very well at the New York Auction Co. sale last week. The company reported the entire regular Silverblu offering of 20,958 was sold at a top of $48.50 for Larry Moore mink Stewarts (1800) were all sold with a top of $54 for Harold Reed's mink; Breath of Spring (5867) was 100 per cent sold with a top of $87 for Associated Fur Farmers mink. These were bought by B. Wollman & Bros. This was the firm that was quite active in buying Norwegian platinums when they made their first appearance in America. They are about tops in buying the best in all kinds of furs and cater to the most exclusive clientele.

M. Gettleman, furrier of Miami Beach, Florida, is urging planned buying by manufacturers to counter the dominating position of ranchers. He claims profits have been earned by shippers, ranchers, auctioneers and factors and that excessive Government taxation has further drained profits. These drains, he declares, have accelerated costs so that manufacturers are unable to manufacture a well-made garment at a price the retailer can afford to resell to the ultimate consumer. To balance up matters he wants the manufacturers to get together and form an association so that they can enhance their profits. It seems to us that all parties in the fur business are getting a big run around largely because of the excessive taxes imposed by the Governments of Canada and the United States.

We have been anxious to know how the sale of Sapphire mink went in New York and now we have the report. A tally of the Sapphire 40 male lots and 40 female lots showed male lots sold at following prices: 7 lots from $90 to $105; 13 at $75 to $90; 12 lots at $65 to $75 and 8 lots below $65; 19 female lots sold from $45 to $56; 15 from $40 to $45 and 6 lots below $40. Attendance was uniform throughout the day and the competition for females appeared to be just a bit more than for males. This is the reverse from last season. The 2871 Sapphires were 93 per cent sold, the top price as shown was $105. The 19,193 Silverblus sold up to $48.50.

The Sapphire mink that brought $105 was from the Wilson Mink Ranch, Somers Conn. The best females were from Larry Moore's ranch and his best males brought $102.50. A year ago when Sapphires were offered the record price was $350 for a male and it was expected that the entire offering of the season would be only 2,500 skins. This year estimates are that 20 000 Sapphires will be offered and buyers are much more careful in their bidding.

Winter Care Of Sheep

Strength and size of lambs are greatly influenced by the rations fed to ewes. Certain feeds may be satisfactory from the standpoint of maintaining the ewes in satisfactory condition of flesh but are unsatisfactory for the production of strong vigorous lambs, points out A. R. Jones of Beaverlodge Experimental Station, Canada Department of Agriculture.

Trials on Experimental Farms have shown that grass hays, when fed alone, especially during the latter part of the pregnancy period, often result in weak lambs and a scanty flow of milk. When these hays are to be used they should be fed in conjunction with more nutritious hays such as alfalfa, or other legume hays or, if fed alone, should be supplemented with whole oats or other concentrates to maintain ewes in a thrifty condition and to provide sufficient milk at lambing time.

All sheep should be fed iodized salt to prevent the birth of soft, flabby and goitrous lambs. When ewes are being fed cereal or grass hays these should be supplemented with a mineral mixture of equal parts of bonemeal and iodized salt. This should be available at all times to supply their mineral needs.

The condition of the ewe will govern whether or not grain should be fed. Handling of the individual ewes is the only sure way of determining whether the ewes are in satisfactory condition. If it is found that they are thin, it will be necessary to feed them more liberally.

Grain feeding is often necessary when poor quality roughages are fed. Recent feed trials have shown that grain feeding during the latter half of the pregnancy period gives almost as good results as feeding grain during the entire period. During the last 4-6 weeks before lambing, the ewes will usually need not more than 1-2 to 3-4 pounds of grain per head per day.

Ewes that are serious underfed during the latter part of the pregnancy period may not accept their lambs. In such cases there may be insufficient milk for the newborn lamb.

Exercise during the winter months promotes thriftiness and results in a stronger lamb crop. Feeding racks may be placed some distance away from sheep shelters, thus forcing the ewes to take more exercise.

Hybrid Vigour In Poultry

The popularity of crossbreds to obtain hybrid vigour in poultry is indicated by the fact that of all the chicks hatched last year in Canada, 32.5 per cent were crossbreds. While this trend is noticeable, the importance of good purebred strains is obvious for they remain the very foundation of the poultry industry, says L. Griesbach, Experimental Station, Fredericton, N. B.

Hybrid vigour is a term used to describe the extra something which some crossbreds possess over their parents. It is commonly manifested by faster growth during the first few weeks of life and by greater vitality. It may sometimes be indicated by increased hatchability and high egg production.

Two or more inbred strains of poultry are sometimes crossed for the purpose of producing progeny with hybrid vigour. The development of inbred lines for this purpose is a costly procedure, however, and the practice has been adopted by only a few large commercial organizations.

A certain amount of hybrid vigour may also be obtained from certain crosses between flocks, strains or breeds that have not been inbred and it is from such matings that most of the crossbreds are produced in Canada. Not all crosses produce hybrid vigour but two or more strains which give the desired results when crossed, should continue to do so year after year.

Hybrid vigour can be utilized often to good advantage in the production of broilers and fryers up to 12 weeks of age because in some instances the accelerated growth is not accompanied by a proportionate increase in feed consumption. Moreover, it is possible that high egg producing breeds, such as the Barred Rock, crossed with males from strains bred primarily for meat production may produce a more desirable type of broiler than the purebred egg producing strain and a more economical broiler than the purebred meat strain.

The Experimental Station at Fredericton, N. B., is at present testing for hybrid vigour, the crossbred progeny obtained when several strains of New Hampshires are crossed with the Fredericton Station strain of Barred Rocks. New Hampshire strains were selected for the crossing program because of their broiler qualities. Other strains, including dominant whites, will also be tested.

A good dominant white would be preferable to other varieties because all their first generation crossbred progeny would have light coloured feathers, a condition preferred by many processors. If a suitable strain of any breed is found which crosses satisfactorily with the Barred Rocks, a breeding plan will be initiated to improve the two purebred strains for the economical production of superior broilers.

STEAMY COUNTRY

Yellowstone National Park in Wyoming has more than 100 geysers and 4 000 hot springs.

Use A Cereal Variety To Suit Your Needs

What's in a variety? Quite a lot say cereal experts of the Canada Department of Agriculture. And they suggest considering the following before deciding the cereal variety most suited to your farming needs.

Is it adapted to local and climatic conditions?

Is the crop to be consumed on the farm as feed or disposed of as seed or for some other purpose on the open market?

Is it capable of resisting possible loss from disease, lodging, etc.?

Is it suitable as a nurse crop in seeding down grasses and clovers?

Does its maturity fit in with general farm operations?

Is it suitable to the modern methods of harvesting?

Does it thresh satisfactorily?

Does it sprout easily in the stook when subjected to wet conditions?

Is the quality of the grain satisfactory?

Many of these points are overlooked when choosing a variety, the cerealists say, but all may be important when full consideration is given to the dollar value of the crop per acre.

The adaptability of a variety for a particular farm should be considered in the light of what use is to be made of the crop. For example, a variety low in tillering with short straw and early maturity may be more suited as a nurse crop. On the other hand, a variety which produces an abundance of straw is desirable where straw is needed on the farm.

In some crops, ease of threshing may be considered a rather important character, particularly with wheat and barley, and maturity may be of importance in arranging for a better distribution of labour during harvest.

Plant breeders are working to develop new varieties that will meet the needs of growers in every part of the country and which will resist as many of the natural hazards as possible. Farmers should not overlook the possibility of increasing their acre value by failing to keep in touch with the development of new varieties.

MAYOR STRESSES

Continued from page 9

with the spending of $131,927.00 of the tax payers' money but they are the persons appointed to see that the children of this City receive the very best education procurable. The position on the School Board is definitely one of trust.

"The Water Dept. has continued to function in its usual high and efficient manner and we thank the Commissioners for the time and energy they have given in administration and supervision in order that the citizens of our City may receive the high standard of service for which this Department is noted.

"I would like to say here that this Council views with alarm the enormous increase in the electrical energy costs. However, this, I would assume, could only result in an increase in water rates.

"I have tried to give you a resume of the activities of the City Corporation for the year 1951.

Financial Claims

"Your Council, late in December, prepared and presented a brief to the Government setting out claims for greater financial assistance to this Capital City. Incidentally, the first brief outlining this Capital City's claims to it's superior Government, in concrete form, that has ever been presented by any City Council, and will serve as a basis for future claims between these two bodies. I am happy to say that we have received a communication from the Deputy Provincial Secretary stating when the Government brings in the 1952 estimate the consideration it receives will be reflected in them.

"As I stated in my opening remarks, time marches on, and with the passing of time many familiar figures passed to their eternal rest. We record here the names of Ambrose McGuire, Walter Wakelin John Gormley, Fred Lamb, Ernest Crockett. They have gone on—they served their City well. We extend to those left to cherish their memory our most sincere sympathy.

"Before closing my report I must extend my outstanding thanks, and the thanks of all the citizens of Charlottetown, to our most popular and undefeated ex-Mayor, B. Earle McDonald, whose term of office it has been my pleasure to complete.

"To my Councillors, to my strong right arm, our City Clerk, J. A. Fullerton, whose work throughout the year, daylight and dark, is beyond the knowledge of the average citizen, to the civic officials and all the City employees for their good work, I offer my sincere thanks."

-NEWSY NOTES-

By J. A. Clark, D.Sc.

Rural Ice Shortage

The preservation of milk and other food products during the summer is just as important on the farm as it is in the city home. The simplest and least expensive way to do this is to reduce the temperature of these foods as rapidly as possible after they have been obtained and have some means of keeping them at temperatures as near the freezing point of water, 32 degrees F. as possible.

The great majority of city homes today have electrical refrigerators, ice refrigerators or ice boxes. Many city people consider the rapid reduction of the temperature of perishable food products and the maintaining of them at low temperatures, almost as essential, during the summer, as the kitchen stove is in winter.

We have seen an estimate made 12 years ago that in the Maritime Provinces the ratio of homes having a summer supply of ice was three city homes for every farm home supplied. We think this should be reversed under present conditions so that three rural homes should have a summer supply of ice for every city home that uses ice today because, in the cities electrical refrigeration has largely replaced ice and methods of securing and storing ice in rural districts have improved greatly.

Mechanical Refrigeration

While mechanical refrigerators are very convenient and efficient their original cost and the securing of electrical current are beyond the means of most families in the country. It is true that electric current has been supplied to many rural areas, but at present on Prince Edward Island, it has reached only a very small percentage of our farms.

One dealer in electrical supplies estimates that there are between 300 and 400 electrial refrigerators on Island farms. This would mean that electrical refrigerators are in less than 3% of our rural homes There has been a very great improvement made in the construction and insulation of ice refrigerators and ice boxes, making them much more efficient and useful at a lower cost for the farm home.

Cutting Ice

The average farm can secure and store ice usually at a very normal cost. The best and most economical time for cutting and harvesting ice is when the ice is from 12 to 16 inches thick; at that time it requires much less cutting and it is much easier to cut the ice cakes in square shapes for close packing than when it is over 2 feet thick. Should the ice be thick, it is well to try and cut it to form perfect cubes as they are much easier to handle and pack in a solid mass.

A mill-pond or river is the usual place for cutting ice, but any stream free from contamination or a small artificial pond with a depth of four feet of water will provide ice. From the first of January most of our tidal rivers, which are quite salt during the summer, can be used for drinking water or ice in the winter after being frozen over for a time. We have often taken a drink from the opening made in cutting ice or from a hole fishing eels, and found the water quite fresh and good. Only pure, clear hard ice should be used. Ice made from melting snow and full of soft streaks will have very poor keeping qualities.

The average farm has most of the equipment necessary for the cutting and hauling of ice, at a time when farm operations are at a minimum. In communities where a number of people are storing ice, a horse-drawn ice-plow or a power driven ice-saw might be secured cooperatively or some one might secure the equipment and contract to cut the ice for the whole community.

Before cutting, the ice should be cleared off, carefully measured both ways so that the cakes will be square. This will save much unnecessary labour in trimming and fitting the cakes in storage. The cakes should be packed close, and all cavities filled with chippings or sawdust.

Ice Storage

One of the chief reasons for the absence of ice in summer on our farms is the erroneous idea that ice storage space and equipment must be elaborate and therefore expensive. Ice house plans can be secured without charge, from your nearest Experimental Station, or from the Department of Agriculture. The construction is simple, the essentials for good ice storage are indicated, that is, drainage, dry insulation, and adequate ventilation.

Many farmers will not require plans, as an ice shelter needs only a roof to shed the rain, rough walls to retain the insulation material and good, natural drainage. A section of the wood shed or machine house will usually provide space. In fact, we have seen an ice shelter in the woods without a roof, just four posts and enough rough boards to hold the sawdust packing about the ice.

It had an extra thick cover of sawdust, and provided a sufficient pile of ice to supply the family and many tourist guests through many summers. It may have been wasteful of ice, but the ice had been obtained at very low cost from a nearby pond.

If the site does not have natural drainage, then a foundation of broken stone, coarse gravel or cinders, with a satisfactory drainage outlet, should be provided. Dry sawdust is the cheapest efficient insulator, but planer shavings or natural grass if dry and well packed, will do. Good ice insulation means excluding heat and everything that conveys heat Moist packing should be avoided, and currents of air should not be allowed to come in contact with ice through faulty insulation.

Forty cubic feet of space should be provided for each ton of ice required. Thus a bin ten feet square by eight feet high will hold approximately 20 tons of ice, allowing for a reasonable wastage, or enough to provide the average family with 50 pounds of ice per day for the summer season. If ice is required to cool milk for a diary farm, the ice supply should be increased at the rate of about 1½tons for each cow in the herd; and if the amount needs to be doubled, the ice space will only need to be increased to 10 feet by 20 feet by eight feet high.

* * *

Water is at its greatest density at 4 degrees C. or 39.2 degrees F. and when it is either warmed or cooled, it increases in volume and will rise. When water is cooled to the freezing point, it expands so that a volume of 94 cubic inches becomes 100 cubic inches of ice, and weighs a little over 58 pounds to each cubic foot. This increase in volume and decrease in weight is the reason that we have ice on our rivers and bays that is so valuable to our transportation facilities in the winter.

If water got heavier when it froze, it would immediately sink, and our rivers and ponds would gradually fill up solid with ice to the top. Because water's greatest density is at 4 degrees C., the temperature of the water for our fish in the rivers during the winter hovers about 39 degrees F. which is apparently very comfortable for them.

WINTER WHOPPERS

FORT FRANCES, Ont.—(CP)—Reports of big fish being taken through the ice on the United States side of Rainy Lake are interesting local fisherman. One report told of a Northern Pike weighing 20 pounds.

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Charlottetown, P. E. I.

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at the

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All animals offering in the pure bred sale must be eligible, if not already registered.

Make application for entry forms to the office of the Charlottetown Exhibition Association or to the undersigned.

A. H. MUTCH,

Secretary, P.E.I. Shorthorn Breeders Assn.

Earnscliffe, P. E. I.

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No short wood
No rot or red heart
All knots well trimmed
No pasture, line fence or open-grown White Spruce.

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Mixed ..... 18c each
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Louis Wheeler, Murray Harbour, P. E. I.
Camille J. Chaisson, Tignish, P. E. I.
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