

FARM NOTES.

Keeping the flock free from external parasites does much toward bettering the wool product. They irritate the skin and cause the sheep so much discomfort that they do a great deal of rubbing against fences, barns and racks in an effort to obtain relief. This tangles and breaks the wool and in many cases pulls it out. The fleece is left in a broken condition, which is objected to by the buyer, and it is not possible to tie it up in attractive condition. If the flock is badly infested with ticks the good appearance of the wool is lessened by the eggs and dead bodies of the parasites, and their presence would lead the buyer to suspicion of the condition of the wool.

The most common external parasites in farm flocks are ticks and lice. These can be kept down to a minimum by regular and careful dipping. To be most effective dipping should be practiced twice a year. The whole flock should be dipped a few weeks after shearing, and again in the autumn before the weather becomes cold enough to make the wet sheep suffer.

To have the wool strong and even in size the animal must be properly fed. If the food supply is reduced to a point below the normal demands of the animal's body, the wool fiber is reduced in diameter and a weak place is the result. This greatly reduces the commercial value of the combing wools such as prevail in most section where farm flocks are kept. In the process of combing the fiber breaks at the weak place and the wool has to be put to some use of less value. It is therefore necessary for the owner to provide feed sufficient to keep his flock well throughout the year.

Carelessness in feeding causes a great deal of foreign material to be deposited in wool. Racks for roughages such as hay fodder and straw should be constructed so that chaff cannot fall out and lodge on the shoulders and necks of the sheep. Barns and lots should be arranged so that it is unnecessary to pass among the sheep in carrying loose straw to the racks.

Care should be taken to keep dirt and dung out of the wool. Neither of these damages wool as much as burrs, chaff and litter, but they do some damage, and they most certainly make it less attractive to the buyer and add to the shrinkage in the process of scouring. Sheep should not be forced to lie in mud, nor should they be allowed to lie in dusty places.

The sheep industry is one that every farmer who is properly situated, should look into. Several of the State experimental stations in the West are now making expensive investigations, and are sending out valuable data, especially on the subject of marketing.

Naturally, successful marketing is dependent upon the proper growing of the wool. In order that a good price may be obtained an offering of wool must be uniformly good, which means that it should be even in structure, length and strength of fiber, and that it should be as nearly free as possible from foreign matter, such as dirt, chaff or litter, burrs and tar or paint marks.

If the wool is to be fairly uniform in structure and length the individuals in the flock must be similar in breeding, is the opinion of the Illinois Experiment Station. It further says that by using pure-bred rams of the same breed for a series of years, any flock can be graded up so that the type of wool will be sufficiently uniform in the particulars mentioned to satisfy the demands of the market, provided proper attention is paid to the fleeces of the rams purchased and of the ewes reserved for breeding. The ewes should be alike in fleece characteristics. In addition to other very necessary requirements aside from wool, they should carry fleeces even in quality, density and length. This is not meant in an absolute sense, for such is next to impossible. It is well known that the wool is almost never as fine on the thighs as on the shoulders, and that it is rarely as long on the underlines as it is on mid-side.

Some years ago the Colorado Experiment Station issued a bulletin containing interesting suggestions concerning the character of soils and particularly pertaining to the great variety of life forms that appear in soils.

The most of us think of the soil as a mass of very small particles of rocks and some moisture which furnishes physical support and sustenance to plants that grow in it, and nothing more. We do not think of it as teeming with life, but it is. Some of this life is beneficial to the growth of the cultural plants which furnish us our food and pleasure, but some of it is indifferent or perhaps prejudicial. Most of us have, during the past few years, heard of the part played by certain germs, which, acting in succession, effect the conversion of organic nitrogen, vegetable or animal, into nitric acid, forming nitrates in the soil, in which form the nitrogen is taken up by the plants. This change of organic nitrogen, either of vegetable or animal origin, into nitric acid or nitrates, is called nitrification, and consists, as intimated, of several separate processes. This is not the only process going on in the soil which is dependent upon the presence of germ life, or micro-organisms. Among others, is one which has to do with the building up of nitric acid or the formation of nitrates. The preceding process, nitrification, depends upon the vegetable or animal matter in the soil for its supply of nitrogen and there are three steps in the process of converting it into nitric acid, but in this one the source of nitrogen is the atmosphere and the agent which takes the nitrogen from the atmosphere and converts it into nitric acid, respectively nitrates, is also a germ that lives in the soil.

It should be added that this process of nitrification can only be carried on when the soil contains a reasonable supply of moisture, and it cannot be carried on under any circumstances when the soil particles are absolutely surrounded by free water. This is why so many soils are greatly improved by the drainage, even though they may never appear to be very wet at any season of the year. In most cases the drains increase the yield of crops, simply because they make it possible for the germs in the soil to lead a more active life, and consequently to liberate more fertility for the benefit of the crops.

WORTH KEEPING IN MEMORY

Garnered Wisdom That Has Been Handed Down Through Generations of Housewives.

When making sweet croquettes add a little sugar to the crumbs in which the croquettes are to be rolled. Cold water is preferable to warm for scrubbing doors because it does not sink into the wood and so dries quickly.

Holding tomatoes over the gas flame will cause skin to burst and come off easier than when scalded, and the tomato will be less mushy than when scalded.

Neglected brass may be polished with a paste of powdered bath brick and oil. Take two pieces of the brick and rub together. This makes a finer powder than if scraped with a knife.

Cut hams may be kept from molding if the cut end is wet with vinegar each time after cutting. Vinegar will also keep beef fresh for a time when you happen to be without ice temporarily.

To frost over a window without darkening the room, dissolve Epsom salts in hot water and paint over the window while the water is hot, then allow to dry. This is easily removed and is entirely opaque white.

Fringed cloths are often quite ruined in appearance at the laundry. They may be made to look like new for an indefinite period if, when they are starched, a little care be taken not to starch the fringe. Fold each cloth in four like a handkerchief and then rather the fringe of each part into the middle only into the starch. When the cloth is dry shake the fringe well and comb it with a specially kept toilet comb, and it will fall as softly and prettily as when new.

BROUGHT OVER FROM SPAIN

Three Recipes That Have Found Favor Because of Their Really Excellent Qualities.

Chicken Spanish.—Chicken cut into small pieces and fried brown in its own fat and half cup olive oil; add clove garlic, medium sized onion, half cup tomatoes, pepper, salt, five cloves, two dozen allspice, one bayleaf. Stew slowly one hour, adding a little water if necessary. Thicken with flour and water just before serving.

Spanish Summer Squash.—Fry in butter an onion and three green peppers chopped fine; add three ripe tomatoes and stew well, seasoning with salt and teaspoon of sugar. Add summer squash, sliced, and fry until soft.

Spanish Shrimps.—Large onion, six green peppers chopped fine and fried in butter; add two large tomatoes and cook well; then add a pinch of soda and cup of cream; then chop shrimps.

Kitchen Line.

A convenient clothesline for the kitchen or other place where a clothes drying line is sometimes needed, is rolled into an oxidized copper reel case about five inches in diameter. This reel screws to a wall or casing and a hook is put up in a casing on another wall. When the line is wanted it is stretched across the space between the two and is fastened by a ring over the hook, the reel meanwhile catching it automatically and keeping it from slipping. When the line is not in use it is out of the dust in the reel casing. The line is 24 feet long. It would be a convenience for the kitchen veranda or porch of the summer cottage.

Making Nut Muffins.

Two cupfuls of flour, half a teaspoonful of salt, three teaspoonfuls of baking powder, one cupful of milk, half a cupful of chopped nut meats, two eggs, two tablespoonfuls of sugar, three tablespoonfuls of melted butter and half a teaspoonful of vanilla extract. Mix and sift the dry ingredients, then add the beaten yolks of eggs, butter and milk. Beat well, add the vanilla extract and the stiffly beaten whites of the eggs. Divide into buttered and floured gem pans, bake in a hot oven for twenty minutes.

Sit While Ironing.

There is an old-fashioned prejudice against sitting down while ironing. Our grandmothers would probably have condemned the woman caught in this practice as hopelessly lazy—but why not do so, especially when standing at the ironing-board means tired, blistered feet and a frazzled temper? It might not be practicable to sit while ironing a dress skirt or anything requiring a long reach of the arm, but handkerchiefs and such small pieces can easily be managed while sitting.

Safeguard Against Moths.

Gather wild yarrow, commonly called tansy; sprinkle freely among fur garments of any sort, as well as woollen material. Lock your wardrobe; feel perfectly safe that when opened next fall your furs are unharmed by moths. Equally good for the buffalo bug; never fails.

Nut Leaf.

Mix one cup bread crumbs with one cup of ground nuts. Wet with one cup sweet milk and one beaten egg; season with salt, pepper, sage; grate in some onion; bake 25 minutes; fine for lunch.

To Clean Clothing.

Take light bread and rub where there is a grease spot and it will remove it without leaving a mark, from men's hats or any kind of clothes.

HER DAY OF TRIUMPH

SOCIAL FUNCTIONS IN HONOR OF THE GIRL GRADUATE.

Here Are a Few Seasonable Dishes for Such Occasions—Cold Chicken Bouillon Always a Part—Good Combination Salad.

Just as the new bride is feted with little social functions of all sorts, so is the girl graduate given her own special festivity. One of the prettiest social functions given in her honor is a party luncheon, to which are invited all the girls of her class. If there are twelve maids a long table will be used, but with a numerous company a number of round tables are preferred. The tables are got up in a very "partyfied" manner—dainty china, a profusion of flowers, burnished silver and sparkling glasses giving them quite a wedding air. New favors for these charming functions are small, stiff bouquets made up like the old bridal nosegays. The flowers for these are artificial, the daintiest that can be had, and about the paper horn that holds them there is a frill of some pretty cheap lace.

The long stem of the bouquet is wrapped with tinfoil. The menu of the banquet may be as grand or as simple as one considers consistent with such gala fixings, but the usual spread includes some delicate appetizer, bouillon, an entree in season, broiled spring chicken, a green salad, ices and cake. Sautéed almonds or peanuts and little dishes of bonbons are scattered over the tables.

Here are a few recipes for seasonable dishes for such functions: Cold Chicken Bouillon.—Get good broiling chickens and remove skin and fat when cleaning them. Put them on in cold water, adding at the same time one leek to each chicken, two tender carrots, one onion and a sprig of parsley. Let the chicken barely simmer until it falls to rags. Take it off the fire, remove superfluous grease and then strain. Clarify the bouillon with the whites and shells of two eggs and then strain again. Put on the ice until needed and serve in broad tin tea-cups or, better still, bouillon cups. Many persons prefer the bouillon hot.

Combination Salad.—Wash a head of romaine salad in several cold waters. Then take large shears and strip the leaves into pieces about an inch wide. Clip green peppers in the same way, cutting these almost to threads. Put these in a large bowl, add some canned asparagus tips carefully drained of liquid, two tablespoonfuls of chopped chives, and four tender beets cut in thin slices, and then throw in the tender hearts of two bunches of celery, these split into four. Use French dressing, olive oil, salt, pepper and lemon juice. This salad should be kept cold as ice before serving.

Sautéed Almonds.—Shell two pounds of almonds and then boil them five minutes; remove skins while still warm. This is how the almonds are bleached. As soon as they are peeled, sprinkle lightly with fine table salt.

Some Uses for Flour-sacks. How many know that flour sacks make nice "nighties" and summer underwear for children? Under skirts and waists for grown-ups can also be made. They make good pillow slips and quilt linings, and can be used for anything that requires good muslin. Restaurants usually sell them at 25 cents per dozen for the fifty-pound size and 50 cents for the larger ones.

Worn out hosiery can be made into good play drawers and under skirts and hose for children. For under skirts simply cut open and sew as many as needed to reach around waist, small end up; the flare makes enough fullness. The feet in hose can be made of contrasting shades of hose or of fine knit underwear, bottom of foot cut on double fold.

Left-Overs Used.

Use the left-over potato from a previous dinner in cakes with a smaller cake of sausage on top and bake until they are browned. The sausage sold loose at good markets is most convenient for the cakes. The potato should be mashed and seasoned with a little butter, salt and pepper. One housekeeper uses a little bacon fat in place of butter on the potato. Left-over fish may be flaked, covered with cream and mixed with grated American cheese and be heated in the oven and served on toast.

To Cook Brains.

Soak the brains in cold water, changing twice in an hour, and to the last water add a little vinegar and salt. Tie the brains in cheese cloth and cook in boiling water seasoned with a small blade of mace, one bay leaf and a few cloves. Cook twenty minutes, drain and blanch in cold water and remove any coarse fibres. Have a rich hot cream sauce made and add the brains to it. Season with one teaspoon of kitchen bouquet.

Brown Bread.

Two tablespoonfuls butter or dripping, half cup brown sugar, two tablespoonfuls molasses, add a pinch of salt, two cups of sour milk or buttermilk, one cup flour sifted with one teaspoon soda, three cups graham flour. If desired, add one egg, beaten, at the last.

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