

AGRICULTURAL HINTS

Temperature in Testing Milk.

A difference in temperature when testing cream of, say from 15 to 25 percent butter fat will make a difference of one-fourth of 1 percent in reading; in cream of from 25 to 35 percent fat it will make a difference of one-half of 1 percent. In cream of from 35 to 45 percent the difference will be close to 1 percent. In some experiments recently I found that with cream running from 45 to 55 percent fat the difference ran from 1.2 percent up to 2 percent.

This is certainly a subject that needs investigation. It is a matter of dollars and cents to both shipper and receiver of cream. It also means that all testers ought to be filled with a thermometer so that the temperature, when testing, can be watched. Also, some sort of damper arrangement and steam inlet are needed, so that the temperature can be regulated while the test is being run. This matter of the regulation of temperature is one to which sufficient attention is not usually paid. To prevent errors and to get tests out accurately it must be carefully attended to.—A. C. Beebe, in Randa and Range.

Spraying the Poultry Houses.

Spraying the poultry houses with a solution of sulphuric acid, one pound to 20 gallons of water, is an efficient remedy for lice, mites and all disease germs, if it is put on so as to cover walls, ceilings, floors, roosts and nests, and forced into cracks and crevices. It is better than some other sprays, as it is not necessary to keep the fowl out more than an hour or so, and it will destroy the eggs as well as the developed insects if it touches them. Do this before the weather reaches down to zero, as the hens should not be let out of doors when it is as cool as that. The moulting of a bright, pleasant day is the best time for such work, as then the hens can be kept out. The night before it is done, or before kerosene is used to kill lice, we like to go over every bird, and holding them by the legs, put insect powder all through their feathers, taking particular pains to get it around the head and vent, and under the wings, as that is where they most frequently are found. This drives them off to the roosts, where the spraying or painting with kerosene will kill them the next day.—The Cultivator.

Grazing on Wheat Fields.

A cattle grower of Ellis county, Kan., says: "There are thousands of cattle now grazing on the wheat fields in that county and are in first class condition. However, I think the plan of leasing the wheat fields to the stockmen will hardly be so remunerative to them as it will be to the farmers. The latter are now getting 75 cents to \$1 a month for a single steer. The cattle make excellent gains and wax fat upon the wheat, but the flesh is not hard as in the case when they feed on straight grass.

This causes them to shrink greatly when taken off the wheat suddenly and put on the markets. I have known 1000-pound steers shrinking as much as 100 pounds in the time between their leaving the wheat fields and going on the scales at the markets. If the animals would eat a little hay immediately after leaving the wheat, this shrinkage would be eliminated to a great extent, but they will not go back to dry feeds after having reveled in wheat for a few months. About all of the wheat cattle in our county are now ready for market, and between the middle of the month and the holiday season shipments from our section will be heavy."—Indiana Farmer.

Treatment of Foot and Mouth Diseases.

Considerable interest attaches to a circular said to have been issued by the Italian war office to the veterinary surgeons of the Italian army. The circular recommends to their attention a new treatment for the so-called foot and mouth disease of cattle. The treatment was announced some little time ago by Professor Bacelli, and consists in the intravenous injection of a solution of perchloride of mercury and sodium chloride. The intravenous injection of powerful antiseptics for specific diseases is, of course, not new. Quite recently intravenous injections of formaldehyde were used, apparently with success, in the treatment of human pulmonary tuberculosis. We have not up to the present had access to the actual communication either of Professor Bacelli or of Dr. Guzzi, who appears to have been the first to actually use the remedy in question; but it appears that the injected fluid consisted of 1 gramme of perchloride of mercury, 75 grammes of sodium chloride and one litre of water, and that of this solution first 30, then 50, then 70, and subsequently 100 cubic centimetres were injected.

As the body weight of the animals in question is unknown, an accurate estimation of the dose given is impossible. The ultimate remedial agent is the aluminated mercury. The addition to the injecting fluid of the sodium chloride renders this substance more soluble, and also tends to prevent the precipitation of proteids by the perchloride, and hence the formation of an embolus. The animals treated all appear to have been cured of the disease. From the general standpoint, these results, if accurate, are of interest in that they afford another instance of the possibility, by the intravenous injection of an antiseptic, of destroying, or at any rate influencing, the materies morbi without injuring the host.—Nature.

Keeping the Winter Vegetables.

Whether for later markets or home use, it pays to store the winter vegetables with due regard to their keeping qualities. The hardest thing on winter vegetables or fruits is the frequent change in the temperature. The first condition aimed at is, therefore, a uniform temperature. It matters not if this temperature is very low, almost to the freezing point, so long as it is maintained. Alternate freezing and thawing will spoil the best of vegetables. Usually winter vegetables are stored in cellars, pits, barns or sheds, and they keep somewhat indifferently in any one, unless special attention is given to them. Most cellars are too damp and warm to suit vegetables. A lower and dryer temperature is needed, and this can be obtained by giving better ventilation. Cellars that have no ventilation cannot have pure air. The air becomes heavy with the moisture that evaporates from the vegetables, and this in turn affects the stored goods. An outside ventilation is absolutely necessary for a good vegetable cellar. When the weather is wet this should be closed, or when the temperature is very low. In this way the moisture and cold can be regulated to suit the needs of the goods.

Most root crops, except onions and potatoes, should not only be kept in such a dry cellar, but they will do better if packed in bins or barrels and covered with dry sand. Turnips, carrots, beets, parsnips and similar vegetables will in this way retain their plumpness and juiciness. Indeed, they can be kept so that they will practically be as good as when first dug from the earth. Now all these vegetables in the middle of winter are in demand, and command good prices, but most of them are so shrunk and shriveled that they do not pass muster. It is by storing them properly that we are able to meet the requirements of the market at our own profit. Cabbages in particular need to be packed away in dry sand or earth immediately after digging, so they will lose none of their good qualities. They should be kept where the temperature cannot vary a degree until taken up for the market. In some respects onions are the most generally small and shrunken of all winter vegetables. This is due to the fact that they are kept in too warm places, where they dry out and even begin to sprout. They should be stored away where they will stay almost to the freezing point until ready to sell. Then they will command winter prices for fancy onions, which are the best and highest that can be obtained at any time of the year.—William C. Bellott in American Cultivator.

Growing Melons Commercially.

For early melons I plant seeds in inverted sods, placed on horse manure in a sort of hot-bed or cold frame. This cold frame has a tight cover, which I put on during cool days and at night. When the weather is warm enough I transplant by placing the sods very carefully on a stone boat and take them to the field. They are placed in hills, which are prepared as follows: I plow my cherry orchard very early in spring, turning the furrows away from the trees, thus forming a back furrow midway between the rows. When it is about time to transplant my melons, say the middle of May in this latitude, I again plow, turning the furrows the other way, leaving an open or dead furrow where the back furrow was located. I fill this with manure, then cover by plowing two furrows in either side. The ridge thus formed is rolled down very firmly and gone over with a drag containing a large number of fine teeth. My rows of cherry trees are 20 feet apart. I put only one row of melon vines between two rows of trees. As I have so much space on either side of the row, I can plant melons close together, say six feet.

The sods containing the young plant are placed carefully in holes on this ridge, and the ground is firmed about them. They scarcely seem to mind the change, but keep right on growing. I hoe and cultivate often while the vines are small, and continue to plow and drag down the ground between the rows of trees after the melon vines begin to start their runners. When they become well grown all that can be done for them is to pull the weeds which may spring up and keep the ground around the trees well cultivated. Melons delight in hot weather and seem to rather enjoy a drought, provided weeds are kept down and the ground not covered with vines kept well stirred.

Melons are very easily prepared for market. In fact they require no preparation. A little experience is necessary to know just when melons are ripe, without opening them. To do this it is necessary to have a fine sense of sight, hearing and feeling. I have found nearby towns the best markets. Shipping to larger centres has not proved very satisfactory. The past season I began selling melons August 9 and continued until November 29. Of course, this was an extraordinary season, as the frost held off giving plenty of time for ripening of a second setting, which started after the rains in July. This second lot grew large and ripened well after the first crop was marketed. In our northern latitudes quality is valued more than size. It is impossible for us to compete with southern melon growers in producing a large specimen, but we do not consider this desirable. There is more profit in a load of uniform melons which will weigh about 15 pounds each and which will sell for \$1 per dozen than there is in a load of larger ones.—J. A. Symes, in American Agriculturist.



Butter for the Tea Table.

If you want your butter to look really inviting, have it done in tiny rolls, one for each person. You can buy the corrugated boards for making it up at any iron monger's. Scald them thoroughly first and let them lie in cold water till you are ready to begin. Take a bit of butter about as big as a walnut, put it on one board and with the other pat it down till it is about an eighth of an inch thick. Then roll it, place it on the butter dish and do the next in the same manner.

Spots on Silk.

Grease spots, pure and simple, upon delicately colored silks are best treated with either French chalk or corn starch. Powder the chalk fine and fill two little cheese cloth bags loosely with it. Lay one bag upon the board, stretch the grease spot, right side down, over it, and cover the spot with the second bag, patting it out flat. The chalk ought to be only a quarter of an inch thick. Set a heavy hot iron upon top of the upper bag, and leave it there for several minutes—of course, taking care that it does not scorch the uncovered silk. Remove the iron and the chalk bags, then if the spot has not wholly disappeared, shake up the bags, so as to bring fresh chalk to the surface, and repeat the whole process until the last speck of grease has vanished.

Art in One's Dwelling.

It has become quite the accepted thing in house furnishings that a certain trend of style shall prevail in each room. That is, for a parlor handsome effects are proper, but in a living room, where comfort and a prevailing air of "usedness" is desired, everyday things are de rigueur, while for a bedroom suite dainty things are in best taste. For this reason the up-to-date housewife does not use handsome curtains in the bedroom, so the simpler ruffled ones are more favored. Those in the know predict a growing mode for semi-colored effects for these ruffled curtains, as in keeping with the old-timey flowered chintzes and cretonnes so popular for bedroom adornment just now. Not in bright, strong hues, but the softer tones, in Dresden effects, yet with quite large figures, too. White ruffled curtains with a wide border of large blossoms in Dresden tints just inside the ruffle, are especially liked.

Table Ornamentation.

It is a Viennese fancy to have the flowers used on the dinner table match the prevailing color. Jasmine and dahlias have been used recently with artistic effect. Last season very little silver was seen on the tables at fashionable dinners in Vienna. It has been restored this season, but all the articles are small and ornamental.

In preparing tiny candles for placing on birthday cake, heat the eye end of needles in a gas flame, and while hot force them into the lower end of the candles. The little holders supplied in the shops are bulky affairs, and take up so much room where many birthday counts are needed that this idea of an ingenious woman may well be recommended. Tiny stars may be cut from gilt or colored papers, or little candies may be used as ornaments for the base of the candles.

The Japanese fern balls make pretty centrepieces for occasional use, and are suspended from a chandelier by an invisible wire. They should hang to within an inch of the table centre, and if a circular mat of mirror glass is put just underneath a very pretty effect is secured.



Quick Coffee Cakes.—One cup of sugar, two eggs, one-half cup of butter, one pint of milk, three teaspoons of baking powder, sifted into enough flour to make a batter as stiff as cake batter. Pour into a well-greased baking pan, sprinkle melted butter, sugar and cinnamon on the top and bake for half an hour. Serve hot.

Nut Patties.—Line patty pans with a rich pie dough and bake. Fill them with the following nut filling: One pint of milk, two eggs, one ounce of finely chopped nuts. Beat the eggs well and add to the milk. Moisten the flour in a little cold milk, add it with the sugar to the mixture. Cook until it thickens then add the chopped nuts. Fill the patty shells, cover each with a meringue. Brown lightly in the oven. This is sufficient for 12 patties.

Black Pudding.—This pudding may be kept for an indefinite length of time, in a cold, dry place. It can be sliced and heated in the steamer whenever desired. This is a particularly good recipe: One cup of chopped sweet milk, three and one-half cups of seeded raisins, scant half teaspoon of salt, half teaspoon soda and one teaspoon baking powder. Mix the suet, molasses, milk, salt and spices together; add the baking powder to the flour and the soda to the milk. Stir in the milk, and lastly the flour. Steam for three hours and serve with a hard sauce made by rubbing a cup of white powdered sugar with three tablespoons of butter and one-half teaspoon of vanilla.

STRANGE MONSTER IN FLORIDA.

Reptile Formerly Thought to Be a Creature of Indian Imagination.

An enormous reptile, more like the extinct brontosaurus, or fabled sea-serpent than any living creature, has just been killed by a hunter in the lower Florida Everglades. He means to send the skeleton to the Smithsonian Institution at Washington.

It has for 100 years not only been a tradition among the Seminole Indians who inhabited the borders of Lake Okeechobee, but it is stated as a fact within the knowledge of some of the Indians now living that an immense serpent made its home in the Everglades and has carried off at least two Indians.

The Indians reported the animal to be snake-like in appearance, with ears like a deer; that it had only been seen in the Everglades, and that it was very wild. They said that when it traveled it frequently stopped, raised its head high above the sawgrass to take a view of its surroundings to discover enemies or to locate victims, a deer, bear, hog or some other animal. If frightened, the Indians asserted that it glided off at immense speed.

These stories have kept the venturesome hunter and trapper on his guard and in a state of more or less anxiety, notwithstanding they did not give credence to these Indian stories. Recently Buster Ferrel, one of the boldest and most noted of the hunters of Okeechobee, who for 20 years has made the border of the lake and the Everglades his home on one of his periodical expeditions noted what he supposed to be the pathway of an immense alligator.

For several days he visited the locality with the hope of killing the saurian, but was unsuccessful in finding him. His pride as a hunter was piqued, and his desire to obtain the hide of what he felt sure to be one of the largest alligators ever seen in this section, where alligators are noted for their immense size, grew daily. He studied some plan to outwit it. A large cypress stood near its pathway, and he concluded to climb the tree and take a stand for his game. He accordingly took his position in the tree. For two days he stood on watch with his rifle ready. Nothing appeared. He was becoming discouraged, but determined to give one more day to the effort.

On the third day, before he had been on his perch an hour, he saw what looked to him like an immense serpent gliding along the supposed alligator track. He estimated it to be anywhere from 25 to 30 feet long and fully 10 to 12 inches in diameter where the head joined the body and as large around as a barrel 10 feet further back. The creature stopped within easy range of his gun and raised high its head. As it did Ferrel shot at its head. Taken by surprise the serpent dashed into the marsh at tremendous speed, while Ferrel kept up firing until he had emptied the magazine of his rifle.

About four days afterward he ventured back into the neighborhood and about a mile from where he first saw the monster he saw a large flock of buzzards, and went to see what they were after, and there he found the creature dead, and its body so badly torn by the buzzards that it was impossible to save the skin.

He, however, secured the head, and has it now in his home on the Kissimmee river. It is truly a frightful looking object, fully 10 inches from jaw to jaw, and ugly, razor-like teeth. He described the animal as dark colored on its back and a dingy white beneath, with feelers around its mouth similar to catfish.

He has gone back into the swamp with the intention of obtaining the skeleton and bringing it back, after which he will send it to the Smithsonian Institution in Washington.—New York Times.

"Master of the Music."

The court position of "master of the music," to which Sir Walter Parratt was reappointed recently in London, is much sought after by composers. One first hears of this quaint office in 1660, the first holder being Davies Mell, famous as a violinist and clockmaker. John Banister, his successor, was dismissed because he dared to think that English violinists were superior to those who came from France. In 1672 Thomas Purcell, uncle of the great Henry Purcell, held the appointment, and he was succeeded ten years later by Dr. Nicholas Staggins, the first professor of music at Cambridge university. Sir Walter Parratt, who is the organist of St. George's Chapel, Windsor, and who is an eminent chess player, was appointed "master of the music" in 1893 on the death of Sir William Cusins. The band he conducts consists of 34 instrumentalists, one of whom, the harpist, is a woman. When performing before the court they wear a very picturesque costume of blue.

Isolated Tribe in Mexico.

In the village of Amatlan de los Reyes, in the state of Vera Cruz, Mexico, a little handful of Indians have lived for 200 years, and have continued to keep, during all that time, their national characteristics, their traditions, and their individuality. They are known as the Amaticas. The Amaticas are perhaps the only people in the republic who have succeeded in retaining for themselves what is practically self-government. It must not be understood that they make any pretensions of being independent of the control of the federal authorities in Mexico City. They long ago gave up as hopeless any struggle against the power of the Spaniards, and later on the Mexican nation, and this submission is responsible for the fact that they have been able to retain their ancient customs, habits and modes of government.

The Biggest Bags.

The biggest authenticated bag secured at one shot, of which I have ever heard, consisted of one rabbit (the cause of the shot), one beater, one onlooker, (a French cook,) a boy, and a dog. I once shot nine snipe at a shot—but this was in South America—they were on the ground, and they were shot for the pot. I have read of a sportsman (not Baron Munchausen), who shot a bumblebee and a butterfly, right and left; and, indeed, sometimes a large bumblebee does, for an instantaneous second, look uncommonly like a distant advancing grouse; just as, when on the alert for partridges, the fieldfares, breasting the hedge, often cause a nervous twitch of the gun.

Grievous circumstances sometimes occur on shooting. A friend walking in line down a turnip field saw a startled hare running fast and straight toward him up a furrow. He stood still, waiting for her to turn, but the hare, with its peculiar vision, did not see him, and ran her head plump against his shin, killing herself and very seriously bruising his leg.—The Fortnightly Review.

Chinese Feeling About the War.

Down here in the South, the people are angry that they should be called upon to pay anything toward the big bill that has to be paid before the Chinese question is finally settled. A well-to-do Chinese gentleman said to me yesterday: "We had nothing to do with this outbreak. We cherished no animosity either against Christianity or the foreigner. Nor did the Emperor. This foolhardy bravado was attempted by a handful of fools in the north of China, whom the officials did not attempt to suppress; therefore these fellows should be made to pay the bill, and not we." Poor fellow! He forgot that China is one, at least as far as paying goes. There is therefore a great deal of grumbling and antagonism among the people against this heavy tax.—North China Herald.

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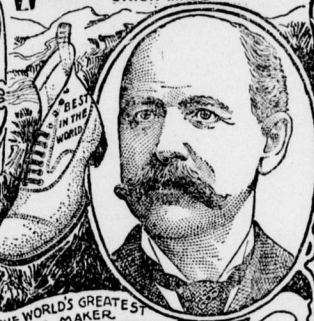
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