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OUR DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

An Iceless Cooler for Porks
Put the hogs in the "cooler" during the hot days—not as punishing, but to keep the heat from reducing daily gains in pork.

Home demonstration agents of the United States Department of Agriculture and the State colleges have been demonstrating the iceless refrigerator, and these handy coolers are becoming very popular. The swine-extension man in Mississippi, who is working in cooperation with the Federal department, is planning to put into practice the same principle used in the iceless refrigerator to keep hogs cool in summer. The iceless refrigerator is made by enclosing a frame in cotton flannel, burlap, or duck. A pan of water is placed on top and wicks are extended from the water over the sides of the pan and down the sides of the frame. The evaporation of the moisture in the wicks keeps the refrigerator cool. In applying this principle in the hog lot a frame will be built to provide shade for the hogs and large burlap wicks will extend down the sides from containers which are placed on top and are filled with water. It is expected that the evaporation of the water will keep the hogs cool and thus enable them to make more economical gains during the summer months.

Pea-Root Rot Runs Riot
There is an unusual outbreak of pea-root rot throughout Delaware and Maryland, according to specialists of the United States Department of Agriculture. The crop is reduced about 60 per cent. by the disease, apparently due to the same organism that causes the streak disease of sweet peas and other legumes. In southern Delaware entire fields have been completely destroyed and some were plowed under without harvesting. The peas in this region are grown largely for canning. As a rule the first year's crop is not greatly damaged, but when grown for a second or third year in succession on the same ground the disease becomes more severe, so that a crop failure usually results. The vines, leaves, and pods generally show numerous lesions and streaks which occur near the soil line while in most cases the roots, with the exception of the tap root, are entirely rotted away. The leaves first turn yellow, then dry and brown, and finally drop off, followed by the death of the plant. One extensive grower in south Delaware, whose crop has been badly affected, reports as follows: "I put out 1,324 bushels of seed peas, and should have picked around 40,000 cases but, as it looks now I will probably get only from 1,000 to 3,000 cases. I had hopes of saving 10 per cent. of the crop, but it looks doubtful at this time."

Plan Hog Development Program
Thirty-nine field workers in swine husbandry of the United States Department of Agriculture, several State directors of extension work, and others met in a conference in Washington last week with officials of the department. Plans were worked out for carrying on the extension work in developing hog production along more uniform lines than heretofore. Addresses were made by Dr. J. R. Mohler, Chief of the Bureau of Animal Industry; G. M. Rommel, Chief of the Division of Animal Husbandry; E. Z. Russell, in charge of swine investigations; Bradford Knapp, chief of extension work in the South, and C. B. Smith, chief of extension work in the North and West. The workers spent a day at the department's experimental hog farm at Beltsville, Md., where judging contests and demonstrations of butchering and vaccination for cholera were held. All phases of the hog industry were discussed during the conference. Particular attention was given to the promotion of feeder animals in the South and the finishing of pork in the corn-belt States.

Why Not Have a "Mutton Monday"?
The average housewife would be surprised to learn that in a year she buys for every person in the household only about 5 pounds of mutton or lamb, as compared with about 71 pounds of pork and 67 pounds of beef. If all American families had sheep meat one day a week in the average daily amount of other meats, that would mean more than 20 pounds of mutton and lamb annually per capita, or four times its present consumption.

More than that, the head of the family, who pays the bills, would no doubt encourage purchasing mutton and lamb in larger cuts, instead of merely a few chops at a time, if he were made to realize that mutton is economical and the greater encouragement to production. In that connection a shoulder of mutton or a leg of lamb, being smaller than the average beef joint, should appeal especially to small families.

State Retain Poultry Extension Men
Proof of the success of the campaign to increase poultry as a war emergency carried on last year by the United States Department of Agriculture, is shown by the fact that many States are employing the department's emergency extension poultrymen to continue the work this year. Recently a representative of the department visited eight States—Missouri, Kansas, Nebraska, Iowa, South Dakota, Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Illinois—and found that in six of them the State colleges are planning, if finances permit, to retain the men originally placed there by the Federal department. The situation, the representative says, seems to indicate that the State officials have been convinced of the strength and value of these men to such an extent that they are making a great endeavor where funds are available to keep them. This is true not only in the States mentioned, but in many other States where the Federal department is now conducting cooperative extension work. In practically every State the directors seem to feel that the results are such, and the demands for the work so urgent,

that they dare not drop it unless compelled to do so on account of financial conditions. In some States that heretofore have never carried on poultry extension work to any great extent, they have been led to see the importance of it, and will continue such activities either with the Federal department or with their own funds in the future.

Lice Increase Cost of Making Pork

Lice add a cent a pound to the cost of producing pork. This has been found in tests just completed at the experiment farm of the United States Department of Agriculture at Beltsville, Md. Twenty-four lousy hogs were secured and divided into two lots as nearly equal as to quality of animals as possible. The two lots were managed and fed the same way with the exception that one lot was treated to prevent lice. The animals were weighed at regular intervals and at the end of the fattening period it was found that the hogs infested with lice cost a cent a pound more to fatten than those which were free of the troublesome pest. The officials of the department who had charge of the experiment give an interesting side light in connection with securing the lousy animals. They communicated with some of the department's field men, asking them to locate lousy hogs. It was some time before a reply was received to this surprising order. After the lousy hogs were purchased the owner learned why, and he immediately built a dipping vat and began to treat the animals to prevent lice.

Reports on Game Birds and Animals
To gather up-to-date and reliable information on the present condition of game birds and animals in the Western States, as compared with previous years, the United States Department of Agriculture, through its Bureau of Biological Survey, sent blanks to thousands of hunters, and has asked that they be filled out with as complete and definite information as possible. Recently 1,000 of these blanks were sent to a selected list of hunters in all counties of Washington State. The information which will be obtained from the replies, together with that supplied by the field representatives of the bureau, will give reliable information on the game-bird and animal population of that State. The bureau has already issued reports regarding animals and birds, including the game species, of Wyoming, New Mexico, and Colorado. Information for reports is now being collected for the States of Montana, Arizona, Wisconsin, and Washington.

Heat Causes Losses to Shipped Hogs
Last May 651 hogs, weighing approximately 157,000 pounds, were unloaded dead or died in the stockyards at the South St. Paul market, according to records kept by a representative of the Bureau of Markets, United States Department of Agriculture. Of this number, 359 hogs weighing approximately 102,000 pounds, died in transit or in yards during the last six days of the month. This was the week of the first real warm weather, and as is usually the case during the first hot spell in the summer season, the hot of hogs in transit was extremely heavy. The difference in price between dead or live hogs during this week was approximately 18 cents a pound, which would mean a total loss to shippers of about \$3,300. This loss, says the Bureau of Markets, might have been largely avoided if the shippers had taken proper care in loading, seeing that all cars were properly cleaned before loading, and that cars were not loaded as heavily as is the custom in cooler weather. If these hogs had been loaded in clean cars the losses could have been further decreased by having them sprayed often in transit by garden club leaders, especially upon arrival at transfer points, and also upon delivery to the terminal. One of the largest buyers of hogs at the South St. Paul market, who ships to other markets for slaughter, states that the losses of his firm during the last week in May were no heavier than usual, but that they were extremely careful to have their cars thoroughly cleaned and sanded before loading, in addition to loading lighter than usual and taking the adequate precaution of requesting the railroad officials to issue instructions to have the hogs sprayed as often as possible in transit.

T. B. Testers to Have Certificates
To meet the need for qualified veterinarians to apply the tuberculin test to cattle intended for interstate shipment and issue certificates to cover movements of such animals after July 1, in accordance with the rules and regulations of the Secretary of Agriculture, the United States Department of Agriculture has sent 10,000 certificate blanks to State live-stock officials, who will distribute them among veterinarians to be filled out and returned to the department. Veterinarians who will be authorized to apply this test for tuberculosis must conduct it strictly in accordance with the rules and regulations prescribed by the Bureau of Animal Industry of the department. The certificates authorizing veterinarians to apply the test will carry the signatures of the veterinarian, the State veterinarian, and the chief of the Bureau of Animal Industry. Under no circumstances is the certificate to be used for advertising purposes, and any reference to it in connection with advertising is prohibited.

How Southern Club Girls Helped Win
In the 15 Southern States there were last year 9,026 girls' clubs organized by the home demonstration agents. These clubs had a total membership of 286,278. Of these members 77,264 cultivated one-tenth acre plots; others had one-twentieth acre, and still others were in bread and poultry clubs. Many of the club girls had to fill the place of some man of the family, called to the Army, and they faithfully attended to the work of planting, cultivating and harvesting crops, besides trying to keep up their own garden plot and to can the crop raised there. One of these girls is Violet Willoughby who, with her widowed mother, ran a farm last year in Pitt

County, N. C. She reported to the agent at the end of the year that she filled only 775 cans with the products of her garden because the tobacco crop needed so much of her attention. "I believe," she said, "I could have canned twice as much if I had had the time, but I had to do all my canning at night. I was often up very late even doing that amount because the tobacco required the daylight hours."

Nematodes Feed on Cantaloupes
In the Imperial Valley of southern California there are between 14,800 and 16,000 acres of cantaloupes which, during the current year, will suffer a crop loss of at least 5 per cent. through root knot. General alarm exists throughout the entire valley among the ranchers and shippers concerning the depredations of the nematodes responsible for root knot. One 30-acre field has suffered a loss of from 30 to 35 per cent. the current crop being the first on that field. Another 15-acre field, which has been in alfalfa for eight years and is now planted to cantaloupes, will have a loss of at least 40 per cent. The root knot is playing no favorites, as it is developing on old land, new land which has been in alfalfa from three to eight years, as well as on old soil land.

The symptoms of root knot are sudden wilting of the vines before picking, in some cases, and a sudden wilting soon after the first picking in others. The cantaloupe industry is growing, as approximately 5,300 cars will be marketed this year, an increase of almost 1,000 cars over the output of 1918. Consequently the growers are extremely anxious to control all cantaloupe diseases which threaten their incomes. A form of blight in the second setting of cantaloupes has also developed in the Imperial Valley. This blight consists of the yellowing, browning, spotting, and withering of the melon soon after setting, when the fruit is about two inches in diameter. The trouble is general and universally reduces the yield, while experts believe that it might possibly affect matured fruit of the crown setting. Laboratory investigations are being conducted by the United States Department of Agriculture with the hope of isolating and controlling organisms which cause the disease.

Plenty of Profit from Good Fowls
The story of Reuben Lowe, of North Shapleigh, Me., illustrates the possible profits from poultry keeping where careful management is practiced. During 1918 this poultryman, who devotes only part of his time to chicken raising, kept 250 birds, which paid him a profit over feed cost of more than \$1,000, equivalent to \$4 a bird. Included in this amount are the sales of a few, eggs for hatching, about 30 cockerles sold for breeding purposes at \$3.50 to \$5 each, as well as the market eggs, which were disposed of in large quantity. Mr. Lowe keeps White Wyandottes of a strain that wins in the show ring when judged according to either the Standard of Perfection or a utility standard.

One pen of 20 pullets owned by this Maine poultry raiser produced eggs as follows: November, 1918, 419; December, 1918, 418; January, 1919, 380; February, 1919, 328; March, 1919, 456; a total of 1,901 eggs, averaging 99.65 eggs per bird in five months. It pays to keep poultry of this kind, and growers everywhere are coming to realize that there is more money in keeping better fowl and feeding them properly balanced rations than in wasting time with inferior birds.

Iowa Garden Clubs Increase
Garden club leaders in Iowa have found since the war ended that interest in gardens has increased rather than diminished. There are more garden club members in the State this year than last. The city of Des Moines alone has 1,000 more members this year than a year ago. That additional interest is being taken in gardening throughout the State is shown by the fact that 90 per cent. of the garden-club leaders are being paid this year, as against 50 per cent. who were paid last year.

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