

In the Field of Agriculture

DARK HORSES FOR THE ARMY

A decided activity is noticed in the various horse markets throughout the country, due to the European war, and many farmers are profiting thereby. The representatives of foreign governments sent here for the purpose of buying horses are letting it be known that white or light-colored horses are not wanted. According to the Army and Navy Journal, the color line is being drawn by the army in this country in the purchase of horses. On this subject it says further:

"The color line has not been drawn in favor of white or light-colored horses, but against them and in favor of sorrels, browns, bays and even blacks. Because of their visibility white and gray horses are not considered desirable mounts. In the field they are a mark for sharpshooters, and on this account the quartermaster corps has stopped purchasing light-colored horses. Officers are permitted to purchase gray horses if they care to take the chances of being shot in the event that they are on the firing line, but the inspector general's department has condemned the general use of gray horses in the army.

"This, however, does not prevent many of the officers of the army from riding gray horses, and they have refused to draw the color line. Some of the members of the general staff are advocating the issuance of a general order prohibiting the use of gray or light-colored horses in the army, as they claim that with even a few officers on light-colored mounts the enemy will be able to locate a regiment or company which might be on scout duty. The question whether a gray horse is officially regarded as a suitable mount for an officer has been the subject of lively controversy at at least one army post.

BIG CUT IN LOSS BY HOG CHOLERA

Out of 6,500 cases reported, all but one per cent of the hogs treated with serum have gone safely through hog cholera outbreaks, according to H. P. Hoskins, in charge of the serum plant and the cholera investigation work of the department of agriculture, University of Minnesota.

In all of these instances the state serum was used. This record is some-

what better than that reported by the United States department of agriculture for the southern states, where the reduction of the loss to 2.27 per cent was regarded as highly gratifying evidence of the value of the preventive treatment.

The loss where the treatment was given in infected herds in Minnesota was about 10 per cent, many of the losses, however, were in herds in which the veterinarian merely took the "fighting chance" to save hogs that were very sick.

Officials of the department of agriculture at Washington point out that inoculation alone is not sufficient, and does not remove the necessity for sanitary and other precautions. For example, hogs given the treatment should be fed a few days on laxative foods. They should be removed to clean and disinfected pens where there is plenty of shade, and care should be taken to free them from lice and worms.

MAKE READY FOR WINTER EGGS

Preparations that are to be made in the poultry yard for winter should be made early in the fall so the hens will become accustomed to the changes and have time to get back to laying before cold weather sets in, says Chesla C. Sherlock in the Journal of Agriculture. Now is the time to do the work.

Remove all the old litter and nesting material and burn it. If allowed to accumulate in the yards it will serve as a wholesale incubator for disease germs, which may mean death to your fowls. The best plan is always to keep everything clean. It is the cheapest, too.

After everything has been removed from the house and it has had a thorough scrubbing, give it a good painting all over with whitewash and a disinfectant made of crude carbolic acid. If you can not do this, any of the commercial disinfectants will do. Paint the roost with it an hour or two before the hens go to roost and it will do away with the lice.

If you are planning any new buildings or yards, they should be made at once, for it will be fatal to the production of winter eggs, if you wait until cold weather comes. The hens naturally require some time to get accustomed to new things.

Gather a supply of good road dust for use in the dust box this winter. There is nothing that the hens enjoy

more than a good dust bath and it is by far the cheapest lice remedy you can get. Gather up a barrel full and you will have enough to last all winter.

If the nights get pretty cold in your locality in the winter time it will be a good plan to make roosting closets for the laying hens. It will keep up the production of eggs. It costs little and will more than repay you for the trouble and expense of making it.

If you need new food hoppers, get them now. Nothing like being prepared for winter when it comes. If we keep putting things off we are apt to forget them altogether.

WHEN PRICES ARE HIGH

Nutritious and inexpensive buttermilk cheese can easily be made at the farm or in the creamery. The method is fully described in a bulletin just issued by the agricultural experiment station, University of Wisconsin.

Buttermilk cheese is said to be superior in flavor and texture to cottage cheese. It has about the same food value as lean beef steak and sells for half the price. Buttermilk cheese is not only an economical but a palatable food. Here is a recipe to follow in making the cheese from ordinary buttermilk:

Heat a quantity of buttermilk to 130 or 140 degrees (about scalding hot) and then let stand for half an hour. Most of the curd will rise to the top and the whey may be drawn off. The curd is collected in a cheese cloth bag and left to drain for from one to four hours.

When dry enough, the curd should be evenly salted, one ounce of salt being about the right amount for five pounds of curd. The cheese is then kept in a refrigerator for a week or more without losing in quality.

Buttermilk cheese may be eaten alone, or like cottage cheese, mixed with cream. For use in sandwiches, or salads, it may be mixed with butter, Spanish pimento, paprika, chopped pickles, olives, or nuts.

OLD SILAGE

One of the valuable points about silage is its keeping quality when properly prepared under right conditions. The Michigan Farmer relates that an Indiana farmer reported that he placed well matured corn in a concrete silo fourteen years ago, and emptied the bottom of the silo the past July. This farmer said that the only difference that he was able to detect between the fourteen and the one-year-old silage was that the former was slightly more acid than the latter, but that the cattle ate old and new silage alike. An important fact in connection with the silage keeping so well is that the corn was ripe when it was placed in the silo. Incidentally the silo was a home-made one, the base of which was five feet below the surface of the ground line. Such a construction with mature corn well packed would almost insure good silage for several years.

THE GRAIN WEEVIL

Complaints are coming into the office of the state board of agriculture, Columbia, Mo., that the grain weevil is doing injury to wheat in granaries and elevators in many instances where it has not been moved

since being threshed. Professor C. S. Hutchinson advises fumigating with carbon bisulphide in a tight granary, bin or box. Use proportion of ten pounds to each thousand cubic feet of space. Pour liquid in shallow dish and set on top of grain, closing bin tightly for one or two days. Avoid breathing the gas, which is dangerous to all life and is highly explosive under certain conditions. Bar the pipe, cigarette, lantern or fire—and do not risk even a spark from driving a nail. The vapor or gas is more than twice as heavy as air and will, in a tight bin, settle down into the grain. The fluid is cheap and can be bought at drug stores. Uncertain results may be expected if bin or box is not tight and not well covered.

MULCH THE STRAWBERRY

It is nearing the time of the year when the strawberry patch will need attention. Strawberries, like clover, heave badly in an open winter or during the alternate freezing and thawing in the early spring. Clover usually has to take chances with the weather, but for strawberries, which are usually grown on a smaller scale and are relatively more valuable, winter protection amply pays, and this protection is best secured by mulching.

The plants should be covered with a mulch of straw, swamp hay or a coarse manure, as soon as the ground freezes in the fall hard enough to hold up a wagon, which is usually about Thanksgiving in the northern latitudes. They should not be mulched before the ground freezes or so early that there is liable to be a continual warm season which will cause them to be smothered. The best material to use is clean straw, free from weeds. If this is not available, marsh or swamp hay may be used, or even coarse, strawy horse manure. The mulch should be two or three inches deep and cover the entire patch, and if light should be weighted down by boards to prevent its being blown away. It should remain on until the plants begin to start in the spring, or until the danger from late frosts has passed.

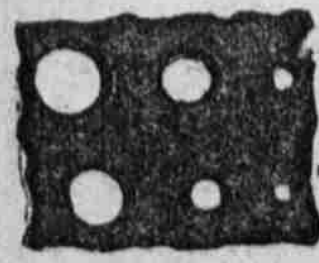
CORN SMUT AND ITS CONTROL

Wherever corn has been grown for a period of years the well-known disease known as "corn smut" will be found to have established itself. Its distribution, therefore, is very wide. Considerable losses, sometimes averaging as high as 5 per cent, are sustained by American corn growers, and not infrequently the losses in some sections of the country run as high as 25 per cent, according to the United States department of agriculture.

The corn-smut disease is caused by a parasitic fungus which produces its spore masses in the form of smut boils in the ear; along the stalk, particularly at the nodes or joints, and less frequently within the leaves and tassel. These boils or spore masses are surrounded by a membrane of fungous tissue mixed with cells of the host. Upon drying out, large numbers of microscopic roundish spores are liberated. These are capable of retaining their germinating power over a winter or longer. They germinate readily in water or upon any suitable moist medium and produce great numbers of secondary spores which are easily carried by wind from one part of the field to another or from field to field.

Carefully conducted experiments covering several years of research both in America and Europe indicate that corn-smut infection takes place at a time or times following the appearance of the host plant

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This is the leather punch blade.

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