

POULTRY



Portable Poultry Houses.

At the Illinois State Fair there was one exhibit that was very suggestive. It was of a portable poultry house, large enough to be used for camping out in if its use for a poultry house should be at any time discontinued. Adjustable and portable poultry houses have long been advertised by English agricultural papers, and it has been a wonder why the industry did not manifest itself on this side of the water. Any man can make an adjustable poultry house of his own. It is only necessary that each part be complete by itself and that it be perfectly fitted to the adjoining parts.

The fault with some such constructions is that they are rickety. This is a fault that can be easily cured. The joints should be perfect and the parts should overlap enough to prevent drafts in winter time. We can conceive of a portable house being so badly made that the poultry would be exposed to drafts constantly throughout the winter.

The advantages of portable poultry houses are many, especially for tenants. There are many people that wish to keep poultry, but they do not care to construct a poultry house to be left on the place when they move. The portable poultry house can be quickly taken to pieces and it makes the least possible bulk when placed on a wagon. Whoever builds such a house should make himself patterns beforehand that he may avoid mistakes in the construction.

Eggs in Winter.

Some writer has said that if eggs could always be produced as abundantly in winter as in summer poultry would always be profitable. It is hard to agree with the statement. If eggs were naturally as abundant in winter as in summer there would be no reason for high prices in winter. The reason why eggs are high is because they are scarce. But for the good of the poultry industry and of the general public eggs should be produced about equally in all the months of the year. The average price might be a little higher but the buyer would have a compensation in the fact that his eggs would always be fresh. Doubtless the time will come when fowls will produce eggs abundantly in the winter, but it will be after a multitude of men learn how to take care of fowls properly. As it is, fowls are so generally neglected that Nature takes her course. Most fowls, no matter how neglected, will produce eggs in the summer time, but cannot be depended on to do the same in the winter time. This proves that it is a matter of care only and management. For the present the man or woman that will so care for their poultry and so manage them that the bulk of the eggs will be produced during the time when eggs are high in price will be making a large profit for themselves.

New Diseases Develop.

We have a development among fruits and vegetables, and we regard as quite remarkable the changes we are able to make in certain things. That there is a development in the character and form of the fungi that form the bases of our diseases seems quite certain. This is a point we have not generally considered and seem unable to guard against. There are numerous fungi that are known to be harmless. Last year a form of fungus caused rot among apples in Western New York. This fungus had always been considered harmless. A report was made to the experiment stations on the disastrous effect of this fungous disease. Whether it will spread to other parts of the country we cannot be sure. At present the danger of this does not seem to be great.



Realizing the Presence of Dirt.

It is the experience of these factory inspectors that where the owners of a factory are prosecuted for keeping an unclean establishment the men that supply their milk quickly come to the conclusion that it does not pay to send milk to a factory of that kind. In many cases the defections have been so numerous that the factory has had to close and go out of business. Farmers have listened to the campaign of education long enough to begin to realize that high prices for their milk products cannot be obtained if the medium through which they reach the public is a filthy one.

One would suppose that the farmers who take their milk to a factory every day for six months would be able to realize the presence of dirt in the factory before a stranger came along and pointed it out. It is a queer thing this realization of dirt. If an inspector had not begun legal action against the factory the farmers would have been content to bring their milk to the same dirty factory year after year.

The men that could not realize the dirt in the factory till it was pointed out to them do not realize the untidy conditions of their own farms. If high prices for cheese made in a dirty factory are not to be hoped for, neither can we hope to get high prices for cheese and butter made out of milk produced in a dirty stable.

Roots and Silage.

Roots are good for cows and so is silage. In the United States silage is far cheaper than roots if we compare the cost of the dry matter in each. Careful estimates have been made of the amounts of nutrients in the form of roots and in the form of silage that can be produced on an acre of land. It has been certainly proved that twice as much nutriment can be produced in the form of corn as in the form of roots. Then, too, it costs less to raise an acre of corn than it does an acre of roots. The corn is planted, cultivated, cut and made into silage by the use of machinery, while beets have to be raised largely by hand work. Labor is a very expensive item in the United States. In some parts of the Old World, where labor is cheap, the cost of raising roots is comparatively low. Raisers and users of roots in those countries come to the United States and try to do the same thing, but soon give up the attempt. This is why all the admonitions to raise roots for cows seem to fall to the ground without bearing fruit. It is a matter of finance. It is by far more economical to get succulent feed from silage than from roots.

Root Rot of Apple Trees.

In some of the Western states root rot is becoming a great source of annoyance to the orchardists. It is found quite generally in orchards over five years of age and even in some younger ones. The disease is, however, of more frequent occurrence in new land than in old. The disease is most to be met with on poorly drained land, though it is found more or less on any kind of land. The disease is not a product of the apple orchards but exists in our native forests. Thence it spreads to the apple orchards. This is a very important reason for not setting apple orchards on recently cleared land. That the disease is highly contagious is shown by the fact that it will attack an apple tree and spread from it in all directions killing every tree it touches. The best remedy is to remove and burn infected trees, not putting other trees where the old ones have been. It takes at least three years for the disease germs to die out.

LIVE STOCK



Free Vaccine for Blackleg.

The first vaccine sent out from the experiment station was in October, 1899. From that time until October, 1904, over four hundred thousand doses of vaccine have been supplied free of any charge to farmers and stockmen of Oklahoma. During the above time every effort has been made to have the vaccine used regularly and in a systematic way, and many are doing this, vaccinating their cattle regularly twice a year. However, the fact remains that at this time about four out of five requests state that vaccine is needed because one or more calves have already been lost by blackleg. This loss can be almost completely avoided by vaccinating the young cattle at regular intervals until they are too old to take the disease.

There is a great variety of opinions among cattlemen as to how the calves get the germ of blackleg into the system. A great many, and possibly the greater portion of them, believe that the germ is taken into the body with either the food or drink. To test this two calves were purchased, placed in close stalls, and drenched with a large dose of pulverized meat from a calf that had died with the blackleg. The calves were kept under observation for a week and no noticeable results followed drenching with a large amount of infected meat. At the end of this time these calves were inoculated under the skin of the hip by taking for each calf one one-hundredth of the amount given in the drench, with the result that both of the calves died with the blackleg, one forty-one hours after inoculation and the other in fifty-two hours. From this and the results of other work that are available it is evident that calves become inoculated with the germ of blackleg through some wound of the skin. This injury to the skin may be very slight and easily overlooked, but there is sufficient injury to allow of inoculation.

The policy followed by the station in sending out vaccine is to supply anyone with the amount of vaccine needed on receipt of a request for the vaccine. This plan has enabled us to get the vaccine to the party needing it with the least loss of time, as it has been our experience that very few vaccinate until they have lost one or more animals. This plan of supplying the vaccine will be continued in the future and all that is required of anyone is a request for the number of doses of vaccine needed.—Oklahoma Station.

The Zebra.

A new breed of horseflesh has come into public notice, namely, the Zebra. Some of these animals are being shown at the World's Fair. They originated in Africa from a cross of the Zebra stallion and the horse mare. They are said to be highly regarded in South Africa, where they are valuable on account of not being affected by the bite of the tsetse fly, which is sure death to the horse or donkey. Breeders in South Russia, in England and Germany have taken up the breeding of these animals. They are said to be harder than the mule or horse. The Zebra is known to be a very wild and swift animal and for a long time it was found impossible to make him useful to man on account of his wildness. The crossing has taken some of the wildness out of his progeny. The name given to the progeny is Zebra. It is likely that we will soon have a good many varieties of the Zebra, as there are two species of zebras, those inhabiting the mountains and those inhabiting the plains, and the crossing of these in various ways should give a great variety of markings and other conformations.



English Wheat Imports.

Statistics which have been collected relative to the wheat acreage of England show that whereas in 1868 it was 3,500,000 acres, in 1904 it was only 1,375,000 acres, the shrinkage since 1903 being 13 per cent. Under these circumstances it is not surprising that England is the heaviest importer of wheat and wheat flour in the world. Heretofore this trade has largely been held by the United States which had until 1903 furnished more than half the British imports of wheat and three-fourths of their imports of flour. But in 1903, though Great Britain imported 164,505,380 bushels, the United States supplied only 45,167,991 bushels, or about 27 per cent. During the first eight months of the present year or up to August 31st, the United Kingdom imported from all sources 113,390,350 bushels, or about 9,000,000 bushels more than during the same period last year, and of the total the United States furnished less than 10 per cent, the balance being obtained from Russia, Argentina, British India, and Australasia. This independence of the biggest buyer of wheat of the United States as a source of supply only deepens the mystery of the present extraordinarily high price of wheat in this country. True the crop is under the average and much of the Northwestern wheat will rank below milling grade, but unless the supply is insufficient for home consumption, and that is not claimed, it is difficult to account for abnormal values on any other basis than speculative manipulation of the market. High prices are of course factors in the decline of wheat exports.

Nut-Bearing Trees.

Most of our people take little interest in the growing of nuts, and it is rather remarkable that in the light of this we should still have the amount of nuts on the market we do—nuts sufficient to supply the demands of a large population. But with the increase of population we must expect to see the demand for nuts increase. That there will always be a good market for nuts is without controversy. An increase in the price is not going to stimulate production to the point where there will be an over-supply. It takes too many years to bring a nut tree to the point of bearing for us ever to have a very great over-supply.

But just at this time the question of reforesting many plots on the farm is being considered. Why not plant groves of nut trees as well as other kinds of trees. The woods of some nut trees are quite valuable. The planter will have the satisfaction of seeing a grove of beautiful trees growing up on his farm and may live to reap the fruit of them. Where single trees are to be planted in pastures it will be hard to find trees more suitable than some of those that bear nuts.

Help the Creameryman.

The creameryman and the cheesemaker are bound up with the men that furnish them with milk more than is the ordinary manufacturer with the man that provides him with raw material. The patron should feel it his duty to help the creameryman in every way he can; for in so doing he is helping himself. Let him consider that the creameryman and the cheesemaker would like to have a greatly increased volume of milk. He can afford to do some agitating in this line for the greater the volume of milk the less will be the cost of making butter and cheese from it. The man that furnishes only cream should take unusual care to see that the cream is in perfect shape when it goes in to the hand of the man that is to make it into butter.