

Questions and Answers. Miscellaneous.

Book on Hunting.

Will you please tell me, through the columns of your paper, where I can get a book on trapping and hunting?

H. H.

Ans.—A very good book, "Hunter and Trapper," by Hasluck, may be had through this office, at 55c., postpaid.

Ducks Overcome.

Could you give me information as to what was the matter with my ducks? At about five weeks old, and in the hot days of August, several of them would lose power of their legs and voice for a few hours, or half a day. Some would revive; others died. They were fed shorts in a mash at the time, had plenty of exercise, and clear, running water.

J. W.

Ans.—It is difficult to state exactly what caused the death of the ducks, but it would seem that they did not get enough shade, and were overcome with the heat, or were not given sufficient grit. A duck requires to be well grown. A mash composed of about equal parts of bran, shorts and cornmeal, is good. This should be wet with skim milk, or else have added to it ten or fifteen per cent. of animal meal. In addition to this, every peck of food should have with it one pint of grit. It often is necessary to feed the grit in the mash, as quite frequently they will not take it of their own accord. Ducks allowed to run in the hot sun, and not given shade, are often affected with the heat, and will topple over backwards. Ducks require water to drink each time they are fed; also shade, exercise, green feed, and grit.

Potatoe Seed Bulbs.

Would you kindly give me information regarding potato bulbs, as I have a quantity grown this season on a certain kind of potato, and I should like, if possible, to raise from this seed. Should the bulbs be opened and the small seeds taken out and dried? When is the best time, fall or spring, and how is the best way to raise them?

J. W.

Ans.—The seed bulbs, or seed balls, as they are so often called, are the true fruit of the potato plant, the tuber being simply a fleshy enlargement of the stock. Each seed ball may contain from 100 to 300 true seeds, and these may be new varieties. In fact, the parent plant seems to have very little control over the distinctive characters of its progeny, and all the large number of seeds may produce plants differing very markedly from one another. This is where the great possibilities for improving the potato by selection lie. But those attempting this work require great patience. There is a great tendency for the seed to revert back to the original wild form of plant, and from 1,000 seedlings there may not be produced one specimen worthy of propagation. The seeds contained in the berry, or ball, are white, kidney-shaped, and flat. Plants grown from the seed, very often require three years to attain full size. Allow the fruit ball to ripen thoroughly, and when it is ripe, wash the seeds from it this fall, dry them thoroughly, and store as other small garden seeds. Early in the spring prepare a small hot-bed and sow the seed under glass. The seeds germinate rapidly. Transplant the young plants as soon as the weather becomes warm and all danger of frost is over. The distance apart varies with conditions. Some plant one foot apart each way, others place them two feet apart. The upright stems of the young plants bear leaves, and in the axils of the first leaves, shoots appear which turn downward to the ground and bear tubers. Sometimes the tubers attain full size the first season, but in other cases it takes two or three seasons to develop them. Propagators say that unless tubers get to a good size the first year, it is more than likely that the variety will never prove profitable. Tubers from each plant must be kept separate, the best ones being selected and planted again. About the third or fourth year, field culture may be commenced. Thus, it is seen that considerable work is necessary in propagating new varieties before they are ready for cultivation on a large scale.



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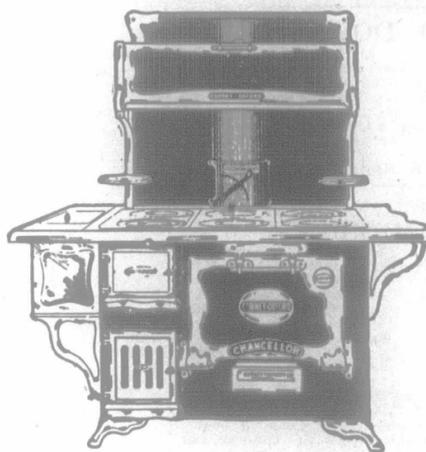
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