

## Farm and Dairy

### POTATO CULTIVATION IN CANADA

Continued from last week.

#### Storing Potatoes.

Potatoes should be stored dry in a cool, well ventilated cellar which is perfectly dark. There is no doubt that great losses occur every year from the careless storing of potatoes which are put in wet in comparatively warm and poorly ventilated cellars and piled in great heaps, giving almost ideal conditions for the development of the disease which may be in them and very favorable conditions for rotting. The expense of putting in a good system of ventilation in a cellar would be soon offset by the better condition in which the potatoes would keep, and hence the more profit there would be from them. If it is not considered wise to go to this expense every effort should be made to have as good a circulation about the potatoes as possible. Instead of piling the potatoes against the wall or on the floor, slats should be nailed a little apart about six inches or more from the wall. This will give a circulation of air behind the pile. A temporary floor should be put down about six inches above the permanent floor with cracks between the boards. This will permit air to circulate under and through the pile. Then if the piles have to be made very large, square ventilators of wood made of slats and running from the top to the bottom of the pile could be put in here and there through the pile. These with the ventilation afforded at the sides and bottom will keep the potatoes in better condition than if they were in a solid pile. Another good plan is to keep the potatoes in large crates made with slats close enough together to prevent the potatoes getting out. The ventilation between these crates would assist very much in keeping the tubers in good condition. Thousands of bushels of potatoes are lost every year when there is disease in the crop, by neglecting ventilation. The temperature of the cellar or storeroom should be kept as nearly 33 to 35 degrees F. as possible. The cooler potatoes are kept without freezing the better. It has already been stated how much the value of the tubers for seed is lessened by sprouting, but they are also much injured for eating. Moreover, if the potatoes are held over to sell in the spring there will be a great deal of shrinkage in weight if potatoes are allowed to sprout. It is important to have some means of letting cool air into the cellar towards spring, when it is difficult to keep potatoes from sprouting. The cool air should be let in at night when the temperature is lowest and the cellar kept closed during the day.

#### Storing Potatoes Outside in Cold Climates—Marketing.

To store about 1,000 bushels, a hole in the ground 14 feet wide, 4 to 4½ feet deep, and about 30 feet long will give ample space. The sides and ends of the hole may be lined with boards to prevent earth from falling in, though the earth may be forced back with poles if boards cannot be readily obtained. Fill the hole to a height of 3½ feet with potatoes, then place logs along the sides and ends to hold back the earth thrown out and for supports for the poles of the roof. The depth of this side log and elevation in centre of hole is to be left as an air space and no straw or rubbish whatever is put on top of the potatoes. A roof is made with poles placed close together. There should be but a slight elevation at the centre of the roof.

When the poles for the roof are in place there should be a little hay thrown over them to keep the soil from falling through. The roof should now be well sodded and some of the loose earth which was dug out of

the hole shovelled over the sods to make about one foot solid of earth and sods. Another foot of well rotted, dry horse manure will be sufficient during the coldest weather. The natural ground heat facing the bottom will keep the temperature fairly even. In a pit of this size there should be three ventilators each about 4 by 6 inches made of boards, one at each end and one in the centre. These should be put in when roofing. These are closed in the very cold weather with old sacks, and empty boxes then turned over them; when the weather becomes frosty the entire ventilator may be kept closed all the time. There should be no potatoes directly under the end ventilators as the drip of water from them might cause the potatoes to rot. A thermometer can be let down any time to test the temperature. In a pit of this kind the temperature should not go much below 40 degrees F. It is advisable to have a small space at one end to get to the potatoes in the spring. This should be sunk as deep as the pit and roofed over as the pit, and can be kept filled with manure or old bags during the winter to prevent frost getting in.

An inexpensive outside root cellar used at the Northern Experimental Station is described, and plans are illustrated in Exhibition Circular No. 71 of the Experimental Farm Series.

There is usually more profit, taking one year with another, in selling potatoes as soon after digging them as possible. While occasionally when frost has been bad and the crop short throughout the country and one happens to have perfectly sound tubers it may pay to hold them over, yet on the whole it is wiser for the grower to sell at a fair price in the autumn, as he thus avoids all the anxiety regarding the keeping of the crop and does not take any risk from probable losses.

#### IRRIGATION OF POTATOES.

(By W. H. Fairfield, M.S., Superintendent, Experimental Station, Lethbridge, Alta.)

There is an impression more or less general that potatoes grown with irrigation are apt to lack in quality; that when cooked they are inclined to be soggy or watery and less mealy and dry than are potatoes raised without the aid of irrigation. That there are grounds for this belief cannot be denied, for, if the crop is irrigated in a careless manner and too much water is applied, the resulting crop is almost sure to be poor in quality, as just pointed out. However, by using reasonable care and intelligence, this trouble may be easily avoided. To begin with, the land should be in good till. There is probably no better preparation than to summer-fallow the land the season previous to when the potatoes are to be planted, application of manure could be given before the land is ploughed for the summer-fallow, so that it would have a chance to rot during the summer, the yield of the following crop would be materially increased. Another quite satisfactory method is to manure the land in the spring and then raise a grain crop to be cut for green feed. They will leave the land relatively clean for the potatoes. As soon as a farmer on an irrigated farm has enough alfalfa seeded down so that he can afford to break up a four or five-year-old field to plant his potatoes on, he will have a field that will be certain to give large returns.

As indicated above, to avoid the possibility of producing potatoes of poor quality, care must be exercised as to when and how the crop is irrigated. It probably requires more skill and experience to raise potatoes successfully under irrigation than any other crop commonly grown here at the present time. The secret appears to lie in being able to keep the plants

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growing vigorously from the beginning with no set-backs, and on the other hand in being able to apply the water so that too sudden growth will not be induced at any time. If possible, the first irrigation should not only be very light, but it should not be given until the small potatoes are set and are perhaps the size of peas. This stage is usually about the time the first blooms appear. If the crop is set before this time there is danger of the plants setting more potatoes than they will be able to develop to a marketable size. To be sure that the potatoes are not wet too much when the first irrigation is given, it is well to run the water between every alternate row only and turn it off just as soon as it gets through so as not to let the ground soak up any more than is necessary. As soon as the ground dries out sufficiently, the land should be given a shallow cultivation. About ten days after the first irrigation, the second should be given. This time, the water may be run down between all the rows and should be allowed to remain running until the land is well wet. After irrigation has once begun, the land should never be allowed to dry out completely. Unless heavy showers intervene, it will be found necessary, in order to maintain this condition, to irrigate about every ten days. After each irrigation, as soon as the surface of the soil dries sufficiently, it should be given a shallow cultivation. If, for any reason, after irrigation has once begun, the land is allowed to become relatively dry, the potatoes should not again be irrigated, for, if they are, a second growth is almost certain to be induced, and this will injure the quality, for the main cause of soggy potatoes being produced when grown under irrigation is from allowing the land to become somewhat dry so that the growth is checked and then applying and inducing a fresh growth of roots and tops.

#### Cost of Growing Potatoes.

The cost of growing potatoes varies in different parts of Canada. Labor is more expensive in some provinces than in others. In certain parts of Canada there are no Colorado potato beetles to contend with and rarely any serious injury from late blight, making spraying not so important a part of the operations. In 1915 the cost of growing potatoes was recorded at several of the Experimental Farms and Stations and the details were published in the annual report for 1916 and will be found in the complete edition of this bulletin which will be sent to anyone who desires it. The cost of growing and marketing a 300-bushel per acre crop in the province of Ontario was estimated at \$80.55 per acre, to which should

be added \$60 for the year 1917 on account of the high cost of seed.

#### Varieties Recommended.

Experimental Farm, Ottawa, Ontario—Early: Irish Cobbler (Eureka Extra Early) and Early Ohio for market gardeners where extreme earliness is desired. Main crop: Green Mountain, (including Gold Coin, Carman No. 1, and Wee MacGregor, which are very similar to it), and Empire State.

#### MANY SOLDIERS HAVE APPLIED FOR LAND

Ottawa, May 23.—Discussion in the Canadian Commons on Saturday touched on various phases of the problem of the soldier and his dependents. Opposition arose in the first place to a clause in the bill amending the Canadian patriotic fund act. The clause authorizes the fund to give assistance to the dependents, who are or may become residents in Canada, of soldiers who have served "with the naval and military forces of the British Empire and her allies."

In criticism of this provision it was argued that it would pave the way for making Canada responsible for the dependents who come to Canada subsequent to the war. The minister of justice said the clause did not give anyone absolute right to a claim on the fund. It merely conferred authority to meet possible cases of destitution. The clause was modified and the bill reported.

Later, in supply, assistance for the returned soldier came up. Discussion was over a vote of \$2,900,000 for expenditure under the soldiers' settlement act. The minister of the interior explained that the money was to provide advances for returned soldiers settling on the land.

Two hundred and seventy-two applications under the soldiers' settlement act had been made. Advances totalled \$441,588. The average advance to settlers was \$1,256. The intention of the government, Mr. Meighen added, was to work towards cooperative arrangements with the various provinces in regard to soldiers desiring to settle on the land.

#### FARMERS OF CANADA

Have Established Permanent Lobby Committee at Ottawa.

Ottawa, May 18.—The farmers of Canada have established a permanent lobby committee at the Capital. They think if they ever get a committee at Ottawa all the time to watch legislation and support their interests and influence with the members and the Government, they will get more concessions. Three of the leaders of the deputation which saw the Government this week, will remain in the Capital. They are J. J. Morrison, secretary of the United Farmers of Ontario; C. W. Gurney, Paris, and J. H. Kernighan, Guelph. They will place all members on record and where their answers are unsatisfactory to farmers, resignations will be asked.

## FARMERS STILL AT THE CAPITAL

COMMITTEE IS STILL BUSY AT OTTAWA—WEST IS NOT SUCH A UNIT AS PREMIER MADE IT APPEAR.

Ottawa, May 20.—Representatives of the farming communities have not ceased to press upon the Government the urgent necessity of modifying the new military service regulations, if production is not to seriously suffer and if exceptional individual hardships are to be avoided. C. W. Gurney, of Paris, J. J. Morrison, of Toronto, J. N. Kernighan, of Goderich, M. Masson, of Montreal, and Albert Monette of St. Vincent de

Paul comprise the committee appointed to remain at Ottawa, and to look after the interests of the farmers and continue to press their claims. These men have been in touch with the ministers and members ever since the big delegation went away, and are not entirely despairful of results.

#### Cabinet is Considering.

Even now, the cabinet, it is stated, is considering certain modification. It has been stated that military authorities will be given certain discretion in the matter of granting leave of absence to individuals, the drafting of whom would create severe and exceptional hardship. The farmers' representatives, however, believe that little in the way of leniency can be expected from the military authorities, whose chief aim, after all, is to secure men for the front. The Government will likely be pressed to have agricultural representatives at each district

headquarters, whose duty it will be to inquire into and report exceptional cases, and to press for their consideration.

#### West Not Satisfied.

While only Ontario and Quebec were fully represented at the big conference, and it was represented by the prime minister during the conference, that the west, for instance, favored the Government's action and had no fault to find with the new regulations. As a matter of fact, it is now stated that the resolution purporting to have emanated from the Alberta United Farmers was framed by only a small part of the executive, and was not endorsed by the majority of the organization.

#### Saskatchewan Kicks.

Moreover, a resolution passed by certain branches of the Saskatchewan Grain Growers and sent here by J. B. Musselman, of Regina, has come to

the attention of the Ontario farmers. The resolution emphasizes the damage to cultivation which must accrue from the taking of only sons from farms. It states that many farms will be abandoned as a result of the new regulations.

In the meantime the Government is strongly urging that the incidence of the new regulations be postponed until after the new registration of man power has been completed.



## Real West Canadian Fur

THOSE who have never had the privilege of seeing a wild fox in the full glory of his winter clothing cannot begin to form a conception of the beauty of the dress. In the foothills and mountains of western Canada these animals reach practically the same perfection they do in the bitter cold of the Arctic. Some people claim they possess a more showy coat because they generally fare better.

The ordinary dweller of the cities pictures a fox as an indefinite red creature something like a wolf or a dog, but possessing a big tail. They know a fox is called red generally, but they do not know the shade. Those people who have seen foxes in cages also cannot appreciate the vast difference between the captive and the free.

The true wild fox in winter is a wonderful creature of soft blendings of bright gold, cream, the purest of white, the sharpest of black. Every hair shines with life and vigor, and the brush is a magnificent appendage which would make a true cross-country fox-hunter kill an Irish hunter to obtain.

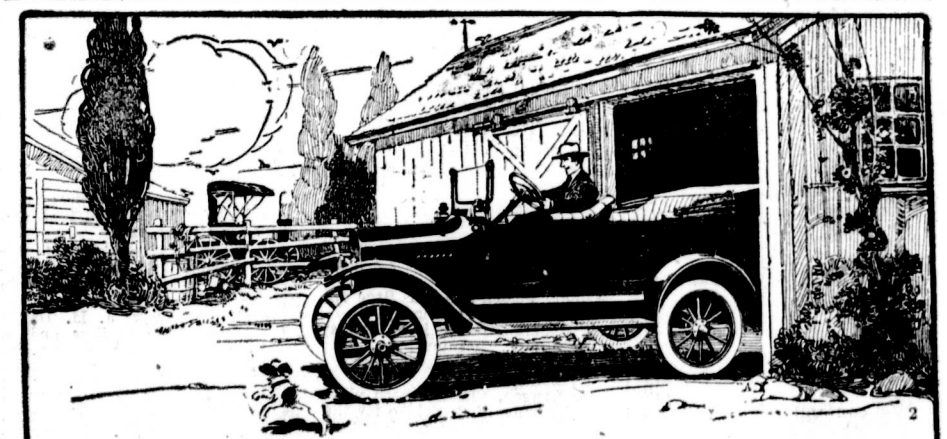
A splendid type of red fox trotted up the snow-covered ice of the headwaters of the Red Deer River in Alberta. He heard the sound of splintering shell-ice and he paused to listen. Far ahead some Stoney Indians, returning from their big annual game drive to the Clearwater and the Saskatchewan were crossing southward, their ponies laden with the meat of bear and deer and the moose. They were bound for their homes in Morley, thirty miles distant, where they would sit in comfort in the warm log cabins for the remainder of the winter, going out perhaps only to feed their saddle horses or to pose in their blankets on the Canadian Pacific Railway platforms for the benefit of any tourists who might be travelling.

The fox took to the brush. It was high noon; clouds had rolled down from the peaks and soft new snow was falling. Crossing another bend of the river he came to a river flat where the body of a dead horse lay. He was as cautious as any fox but he

was confident that no harm lay in the meat of this carcass because on the preceding night he had slunk by while coyotes made the darkness ring with their unpleasant bickering over the feast. So, picking out a choice piece of the neck he ate, and then went on.

But sometime during that morning a hunter in the district had "salted" portions of the dead animal. He had heard the coyotes at it and he had been waiting for just that development, knowing that after their caution had been blunted by one feed they would be back again and he would be able to harvest some fur. By and by he came to inspect his "bait." He saw the fox tracks in the

fresh snow and he followed, but not far. In a wooded dell where the spruces and birches gloomed and sparkled, at the foot of an open, snow-filled coulee he spied his catch. It was dead, its toes turned up as is usual with the victims of strychnine. Its shining red and white and black coat, its huge, soft brush, were as striking points of beauty as anything else in that ermine covered, green and silver studded spot of northern beauty. But the hunter was material. He was pleased because he had promised a girl in New York that when he returned home from his holiday in the foothill hunting country he would bring her some real Canadian fur.



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