

Balanced Flock Needed For Greater Poultry Profits

Farmers who are not getting a good supply of eggs this time of year may have a flock this out-of-balance, too many old hens and not enough big pullets, suggests a Michigan State College poultryman. Hens finishing a year-long lay-

ing tour go into a rest or molting period, explains Earl W. Henderson, and there should be a flock of pullets timed to take over at this time. Many poultrymen keep hens only one year and keep replacing them with pullets for this reason, he notes.

FARM NEWS

BETTER SEED RAISES YIELD OF POTATOES

Use of certified seed has boosted Michigan potato yields and put better potatoes on the table, reminds Henry C. Moore, Michigan State College farm crops specialist. In 1952, there was a disease tolerance of ten per cent and a yield of 138 bushels per acre in certified fields, notes Moore. In 1953, the disease tolerance was cut to one per cent and the yield increased to 315 bushels.

Twelve varieties were grown under certification in 1953 with Russet Burbank and Sebago accounting for 70 per cent of the crop; other important varieties include Katahdin, Green Mountain, Chippewa, Irish Cobbler, Sequoia and Pontiac. Russet Burbank has been a leading variety in northern areas for 40 years, have a high dry-matter content and keep well; they are a favorite of shippers. Sebago are the most important potatoes in central and southern Michigan, have good cooking quality and looks, and yield well and resist scab on both muck and upland soils.

The MSC farm crops department and county agricultural agents can aid farmers in locating certified seed sources.

No county in the U. S. can afford to be without honey bees, claims E. C. "Bert" Martin, MSC entomologist. Many important fruit and seed crops either would fail to bear or would yield lower without honey bees to carry pollen between flowers, he explains.

Maple Tapping Season At Hand

Now is the time to tidy up the "sugar bush" for the maple tapping season just around the corner, suggests P. W. Robbins, maple syrup specialist in the Michigan State College forestry department. Other farm work is not so pressing now, he explains, and some improvement cuttings can be made in the woodlot. It's a good time to get out some logs to be hauled up for wood - to keep the maple sugar business alive, but not this coming season - in 1955. Wood must be cut at least six months ahead of time to be dry enough to use, Robbins explains. It's a practical test and cutting; it will improve the stand.

Dead, diseased and defective trees should be cut for wood, with the butt logs used for lumber if suitable. A cord of wood for each 50 mills to be a good measure, the MSC forester suggests.

While in the woods, take a look at the evaporator in the sugar house, Robbins adds, to see if it is rusted through; then check over the bins to see if they are busy from storage and inventory spots, packaging containers, thermometers, felt filters and labels. The first maple sap run often is the best, he cautions, and the radio station, WKAR, will carry cap weather reports from the U. S. weather station at East Lansing.

DREAD SWINE DISEASE IS ON INCREASE

The dread swine disease, infectious atrophic rhinitis, is on the increase in Michigan and the malady apparently is causing farmers to take a substantial loss.

That is the report of Dr. Frank Thorn, Michigan State College veterinary researcher. Judging from the number of post-mortem examinations, he says, the disease is spreading, and there is apt to be pneumonia. Later, the nasal bones deteriorate and the pig's face has a disheveled appearance or the snout curves over to the side.

Dr. Thorn emphasizes there is no control for the disease, except to kill all hogs from the infected farm. The farmer should wait at least a year before starting into the business again, according to the veterinarian. The disease is spread chiefly by taking new hogs into the herd, but it can be transmitted by neighbors who visit the hog lot.

Dr. Thorn advises calling a veterinarian for a definite diagnosis of the disease before getting rid of all the swine on the farm. Atrophic rhinitis can be confused with other diseases.

Conservation, Dairying Work Go Hand In Hand

Dairy farmers should work hand-in-hand with the soil conservation interests, according to Earl Weaver, head of the Michigan State College dairy department.

He explains that the man who does a good job of dairy farming uses many practices that contribute to soil conservation.

Weaver notes that the growing of soil-building roughages is recommended in many districts of Michigan. The roughages require more cattle, especially dairy cattle, and an increase in milk production. But the milk market is already literally overflowing, so this puts the pressure on from another direction.

The dairyman can't refuse to produce economical milk, but neither can he produce it and have no market. New outlets and greater promotional effort for greater use of milk will help, explains Weaver.

FARM CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- February 5, American Dairy Association of Michigan annual meeting at the Utten, MSC.
- February 5, Michigan Association of Soil Conservation Districts.
- February 5, Michigan State Rabbit Breeders' Association annual meeting.
- February 8, Michigan Concrete Tile Manufacturers Association annual meeting, Agricultural Engineering building, MSC.
- February 8 & 9, Second annual State Farm Machinery Conference at Michigan State College.

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MEAT PREPARED FOR FREEZING MERITS CARE

Cleanliness and temperature control are the major factors in preserving the home meat supply, according to Lyman J. Pratzler, Michigan State College animal husbandman.

The first rule in assuring a wholesome and high quality meat supply is that slaughtering, cutting and processing be done by a salaried workman in a clean place. Slaughtering and cutting sanitation determine to a large extent the length of time meat can be stored.

Carcasses that are soiled during dressing or later in processing cannot be cleaned satisfactorily, says Pratzler. The meat from these carcasses will discolor quicker and produce off odors sooner than cleanly dressed carcasses.

Frozen storage retains the fresh qualities of meat to the highest degree.

In preparing meat for frozen storage, veal and pork should be cut and wrapped as soon as the carcasses are thoroughly chilled. Beef and lamb of good and higher grade can be aged 7 to 10 days at from 32 to 36 degrees. Good wrapping materials are moisture and vapor proof cellophane, aluminum foil and laminated papers. Waxed butcher papers are good only for short periods, Pratzler cautions.

Farm Groups Seek House Space At MSC

Federal farm agencies in central Michigan may find their homes on the Michigan State College campus in the future.

The State Board of Agriculture, governing body of MSC, has authorized a study on construction of an office building on the campus to house the agencies. The building would be built with private and trust funds, with the cost repaid from rent. Estimated cost is \$200,000.

The project has been urged by members of the MSC School of Agriculture who work closely with the federal agencies in many areas of agriculture. The agencies are seeking a way to centralize their operations since their facilities presently are in scattered locations in the Lansing area.

College officials were authorized to make a detailed study of the project and report to the board in February.

Poultry's needs for minerals go beyond calcium and phosphorus for bone formation, advises Dr. Philip J. Schutte of the Michigan State College poultry department. Body fluids and digestive juices need common salt and blood needs iron and copper in order to carry oxygen. Some iodine is needed for better protection and manganese prevents bone porosis.

NEED, COVER Feed your pregnant ewes so that they gain slightly more than the weight increase of the lamb they are carrying, advises Graydon Blank, extension animal husbandman at Michigan State College. This is to prevent pregnancy toxemia or lambing paralysis.

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