

# FRUIT and FARM

The quantity of tomatoes grown in New Jersey is enormous. It is estimated by good authorities that New Jersey growers receive a greater aggregate income from tomatoes than in any other state. It is not uncommon for 30,000 acres of tomatoes to be grown in New Jersey in one year.

### Withhold That "Swat"

No longer swat the prospective valuable breeding males among our dairy and swine herds, sheep and goat flocks, when a year of their service is ended. That would be economical folly. The get of a breeding sire soon proves his worth and many a proved sire has doubled and quadrupled his selling value by the uniformly high excellence of his progeny. So do not be carried away with the "swat the rooster" propaganda. When you are so fortunate as to have a cockerel with known blue blooded, trapped ancestry, withhold the swat until his pullets prove his right to live or doom him to die. A good breeding male in poultry stock handled correctly should live to serve for three or four years.

### Buying Young Livestock Right

Successful livestock feeders say that one of the most important things is to get the young stock bought right. Sometimes a man is a good feeder but a poor trader, or it may be that he cannot be deceived in his judgment of livestock out in the open but will fall to see all the angles when trading at the stockyards. In such cases it is safer to let a commission buyer do the buying. If this commission man is what he ought to be he is familiar with the way many of his purchases turn out, which makes his judgment worth something. In May this year there was a great demand at Kansas City for Angora goats to put on brushy land to clear it up. Only a few goats were coming to market, dry weather in Texas having made the season a month late. The first goats to reach the market sold at higher prices than had ever been imagined before in connection with goats, good Angoras for browsing purposes selling at \$10.50 to \$11.25 a hundred pounds. These prices started the goats to moving to market more freely and prices went down fast the last week in May. Within two days the price was \$9 to \$10 a hundred pounds. At that stage of the market a man who had some brushy land to be cleared went to the stockyards to buy 100 goats. He bought them on the second day of the break in prices, when they were selling at \$9 to \$10, and he paid \$9 for his goats. He bought from a dealer and got what he saw in the pen but instead of getting 100 good young goats he got 65 goats of that kind and 35 stag goats. The 65 goats had cost the dealer \$11.25 a few days previously but the 35 he had bought that same morning at \$7 a hundred. All the goats had horns and looked alike except that the horns of the stags were larger and longer. Thus the buyer lost almost the entire advantage he should have gained by the decline in prices.

### Frost Protection to Vegetables.

By protecting tomatoes, potatoes and other food plants from night frost much valuable seed and food material can be saved and given an opportunity to reach full, rich maturity. This continued clear weather is likely to be accompanied by killing frosts, says Prof. W. L. Powers, in charge of the O. A. C. weather records, and timely protection is suggested as the best way to prevent frost injury.

Preparation of protective coverings is recommended by the Department of Agriculture. Old sacks, tarpaulins, straw and paper are named as good materials for covers. These can be thrown over the plants at night and removed after sun up in the morning. Other plants not easily covered, such as tomatoes, can be pulled up and hung in the cellar to ripen. Immature produce may be used as pickles.

Potatoes will be cleaner and their skins less liable to injury if harvested in sunny weather and given a little time to dry, but not left exposed on the ground over night.

### Cost of Growing Wheat.

Now that the government has fixed the price of wheat, both for the 1917 and 1918 crops, the question of actual cost of production becomes more interesting than ever. What is the average cost of producing an acre of wheat? Is a price of approximately \$2 a bushel too much? Let us see. A few years ago the cost of wheat was figured at from \$19.50 to \$12.50 an acre, with a few estimates running above or below these figures. That

costs have greatly increased since the beginning of the European war all must admit.

In round numbers the cost of an acre of wheat averaging 15 bushels is now \$20, with the chances for still greater cost in 1918.

Here are the figures showing acre cost of wheat in a leading winter wheat state: Man labor 12.8 hours at 15 cents an hour, \$1.92; horse labor for 27.3 hours at 11 1/2 cents an hour, \$3.14; interest at 6 per cent on \$75 land, \$4.50; taxes, 25 cents; upkeep, 30 cents; seed (1 1/2 bushels) at \$2.25, \$3.37; use of machinery, 80 cents; 1 1/2 pounds of twine at 17 cents, 26 cents; threshing-machine hire at 5 cents, 75 cents; coal, 15 cents; marketing, 80 cents; fertilizer, \$4. Total, \$20.24.

That these figures are conservative appears upon the closest and most critical study. For instance, the first item, that of man labor, is certainly within reason. We very much doubt if farm labor can be had at 15 cents an hour. The same conservatism applies throughout, whether the item be cost of twine, threshing bill, or taxes on land. Some may question the wisdom of figuring in fertilizer cost, as not all farmers use commercial fertilizers for wheat. This is quite true, but all wheat takes plant food from the soil.

A 15-bushel crop of wheat removes, in the grain alone, 17.5 pounds of nitrogen, 2.25 pounds of phosphorus, and 4 pounds of potassium. But these ingredients in the form of commercial fertilizer and see how much you will have left out of \$4.

So with a 15-bushel crop next year, and with a price of \$2 a bushel, the wheat grower may realize \$9.75 an acre more than his wheat cost him, provided he has no bad luck. On a 40-acre crop this is \$390. This is less than the price of a good team. Surely it is not too much when we remember that the wheat grower takes his chances against hail and storm, Hessian fly and winter-killing.

### Cover the Naked Soil

The outermost soil layer of Mother Earth has a close similarity to the skin which protects the human body. This soil covering of productive, well conditioned land is injured by an overplus of stagnant water, excessive dryness, the baking and hardening effects of summer's heat, and the heaving and leaching accompanying winter's frosts. The skilled farm operator tile drains to take care of surplus water and thereby also secures fuller use of the subsoil moisture remaining and the fertility it carries in solution. Further, the far-seeing farmer protects his soil surface from the injurious baking effect of summer heat by means of an insulating surface soil stratum of material rich in vegetable substance like decaying plant roots, stubble, stable manure, and green manure crops. For the freezing, heaving, blowing and surface-washing of winter, he provides a fall growing cover crop to protect his land from winter's harsh usage. This growing cover, when partly killed, blankets the surface and effectively prevents a wastage of the precious plant food which still is held in the living root tissues of the cover crop, ready to be given up to the early needs of the spring sown crop.

That big new comet is not to be visible until next year, but the conscientious study of astronomy already leads the young people to go on dark nights looking for it.

Mrs. Leonard of Bend returned home after a pleasant visit with Mrs. Rutledge.

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## Red Cross Activities

### Young Ladies' Auxiliary

The Young Ladies' Auxiliary, that popular annex to the Civic Club, has pledged itself to devote every Wednesday afternoon to sewing for the Red Cross, meeting at the local headquarters where a special table is to be installed for them, for that purpose. Mrs. Henry Provost has been made chairman of the committee in charge of the Auxiliary Club's table and of its weekly quota of work. The giving of such a generous proportion of time to this patriotic cause is only another instance of the splendid public spirit, for which the Young Ladies' Auxiliary Club is well known.

### In Charge of Cutting Department

Mrs. Emil Peil has been placed by our new directress, Mrs. J. M. Wagner, in charge of the cutting department at Red Cross headquarters. This appointment assures our local auxiliary of continuing to have the efficient and ably managed cutting department, which is the first essential of turning out satisfactory work along the lines of hospital supplies.

### Wool At Last

Wool at last! Not three bags full, but \$10 worth at Red Cross headquarters, ready for use and to be distributed free of charge to the efficient wielder of the glinting knitting needle. Mrs. Herman Mattern, who is the proficient knitter, will meet those volunteering for this work, and will give any needful instructions.

### Akra's Inspiration

That Ashland's Red Cross is not the only one whose patience has been tried by the delay in the wool shipment is proved by the following true story about the Akra Red Cross of Akra, N. D. There they had appealed to headquarters and made shopping expeditions to nearby towns all in vain, no wool could be obtained for knitting. Then the Akra chapter held a council of war. If no yarn was to be purchased, there was only one alternative—they must make it. A committee consisting of every member of the chapter was appointed to visit every sheep herder within riding or walking distance and beg him to shear a sheep or two for the American Red Cross. Within a week a large amount of raw wool had been assembled at the Akra Red Cross station. Then the Akra Red Cross went into executive session, carding, weaving and spinning black and white wool into just the right shade of "army gray" yarn. The socks made from this home-made yarn look exactly like the thousands of other knitted socks that daily receive the

official stamp of approval from the A. R. C. But they are different, so different that one wonders if the Sammy to whose lot they fall, will ever dream of the ingenuity and patient scheming that went to the making of his foot gear.

The high school girls of Ashland are to assist our local Red Cross in making hospital supplies. It has been arranged that they shall do this work under the direction of the domestic arts department of the school, the junior high having been assigned "nightingales," bed socks and towels as their share; and the high school proper, the making of hospital bed shirts. Mrs. Fred Engle has been appointed supervisor of this branch of our local Red Cross activities, her recent connection and wide acquaintance with school work making her seem the logical choice for this position. She will have charge of preparing these articles intended for the schools, cutting them out at headquarters and distributing them to the domestic arts department, with which she will co-operate in seeing that the work is done in accordance with the instructions issued by the National Red Cross.

### The Badge of Service.

Any Red Cross member who wishes to wear a Red Cross pin—and who of us would not be proud to wear this badge of noble service?—can secure one of these artistic plans for a quarter at the State Bank, where Mr. Eubanks has two dozen or so in stock.

### A Hive of Industry.

With 48 energetic workers in our work rooms on last Wednesday and an even 60 there at the Friday meeting, the whirl of busy sewing machines mingling with the hum of many voices, our local Red Cross headquarters has seemed a veritable hive of industry this past week.

### The Social Circle of the Christian Church.

The ladies of the Social Circle of the Christian church have promised to give the second Friday of each month to work at local headquarters, thus doing their bit towards the cause of the Red Cross. It is most gratifying to add still another to the list of the women's organizations of Ashland, which have pledged themselves to this work.

### "Wool-Gathering" Again.

"Wool-gathering," contrary to the popular idea of it, seems to be a very strenuous business now-a-days. Our entire stock of wool was exhausted Wednesday afternoon by the many volunteers who came to be initiated by Mrs. Mattern, our able instructor, into the art of making "Kitchener" toes and other mysteries connected with knitting. Another \$10 worth of wool has been ordered, however,

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### The Soldiers' Auxiliary.

A delegation of ladies from the Soldiers' Auxiliary have had special tables at the Red Cross work rooms this past week, where they worked with a will, constructing comfort bags and "housewives" for 24 of our boys at Fort Stevens, who, it seems, have not yet been provided with these twin necessities. The materials for these articles were largely furnished by the local Red Cross, though a proportion of the many small items needed for their equipment was given by the ladies of the Soldiers' Auxiliary, not to mention the large item of the work of making them.

### Apropos of the Above.

Soldiers have to do their own mending, when it is done at all, and it appears that they are supplied with outfits for that purpose. Otherwise, this joke would be impossible. Everything was ready for kit inspection; the recruits stood lined up ready for the officer, and the officer had his bad temper all complete. He marched up and down the line, grimly eyeing each man's bundle of needles and soft soap, and then he singled out Private McTootle as the man who should receive his attentions. "Toothbrush!" he roared. "Yes, sir." "Razor!" "Yes, sir." "Hold-all!" "Yes, sir." "Huh! You're all right, apparently," growled the officer. Then he barked, "Housewife?" "Oh, very well, thank you," said the recruit amiably. "How's yours?"

After meeting the man with a cousin in the war department who has it direct from headquarters that already there are 1,000,000 American soldiers in France, you meet the fellow whose wife's brother is in the navy, and also has it direct that there aren't 150,000 there yet.

It must be great being a Russian general, as all they have to do is to obey implicitly the orders given them by the private soldiers.

After reading those elaborate articles on how to build a house for the least money, we have concluded that the way is to wait until some blame fool gets sick of his job and wants to move so bad that he will sell cheap.

## Don't Put Off

Don't wait for the burning of the neighbor's property to forcibly remind you to prepare yourself. Proximity, unless the fire is so close as to actually affect you, has nothing to do with sequence. Today's destructive fire may be thousands of miles from you; you may not even read about it. Tonight's fire may be visited upon you.

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