

## County Agent Reports Farm News Briefed From The County Agent Radio Programs

By J. D. VERTREES

The year 1957 will be remembered as the "mouse year" in the Klamath Basin. During this fall, mouse damage and resulting crop loss has been greater than many old-timers can remember for many years.

Damage from loss of stands in alfalfa, clover, and pastures in the Basin will be large this winter. There will be loss in potato storage in cellars, and grain in farm storage. These losses will occur if the mouse population is not reduced by disease, winter kill, baiting programs, and predators.

Potato losses are already estimated at an extreme of 50 per cent in one or two cases, to between five and 10 per cent in many fields. Some degree of loss exists in about every field in the potato area.

Grain losses occurred in many fields with clover damage also widespread.

As winter approaches, mice are moving into potato cellars and hay stacks. These mice will work in these shelters all winter unless controlled. Damage can occur in farm grain storage, also.

The meadow mouse, the main culprit in this area, has from 5 to 8 litters per year. Each litter contains from four to 10 mice. These newborn mice mature in about six weeks and are also producing young. The offspring from one pair of mice will run into the thousands in one year's time if no controlling factors are present.

Winter usually doesn't slow mouse activity much. Under a good protective cover of snow, mice will do great damage. In alfalfa, clover, and pastures, mice eat off the crowns and down the tap roots, killing large areas in fields. In the winter of 1949-50, serious losses occurred in Fort Klamath pastures, from this cause.

Nature occasionally builds up an "explosion" of a species, as has occurred with the mice. When this happens, it is often followed closely with a natural control. Disease, weather conditions, and predators can be expected to greatly reduce this outbreak.

Baiting still remains the best practice to be used by farm folks. Oat groats treated with strychnine remains the popular old standby. Good control follows proper use of this bait. Another bait, advocated by the Federal Fish and Wildlife Service, is zinc

phosphide. This poison is distributed on wheat. Both baits are effective when used properly.

In considering per cent of kill compared to cost; safety to applicator, safety to game birds and domestic animals; and effectiveness in various situations; poison grain baits are still the most dependable. Several chemicals have been tried by air and ground application. Results have varied. Effect on wildlife has been questioned.

Poison grain bait should be applied in cellars before storing potatoes. Serious losses will be prevented. Similar baiting around granaries and hay storage is recommended.

Some evidence shows that soil sulphur application to clover and alfalfa fields will chase the mice out of the area. Concentrated baiting can then be done at field edge. Sulphur will probably help the alfalfa a lot, too.

### Chick And Poultry Disease Studied

The newest developments in the fight against chronic respiratory disease in chickens and infectious sinusitis in turkeys were discussed at a recent meeting of representatives of a number of states co-operating with the U.S. Department of Agriculture in a coordinated research program for the investigation of these diseases.

Closely controlled experiments by members of this group of research workers, indicate that the practice of injecting laying hens with antibiotics to produce non-infected chicks is not a sure-fire method of controlling the spread of the chronic respiratory disease. In a number of trials, treated hens produced infected chicks, and non-treated hens produced healthy chicks.

Keeping chicks in small numbers and segregation helped produce disease-free flocks, the tests showed.

Tests by the use of large quantities of drugs can the disease-producing bacteria in affected birds be reduced. Hypodermic injection appears to be a more effective method of treatment than the use of medicated feed or water. Investigations are continuing on dosages and methods of administering antibiotics in the treatment of affected individual birds and affected flocks.

An experimental, rapid-blood test



**THREE OF A KIND.** Something to be proud of are these triplet heifer calves: Faith, Hope and Charity, shown with their owner Raymond Palmer of Flemington, Missouri. The calves, now seven months old, are an animal rarity. Authorities point out that triplet heifers occur once in 832,000 cattle births and that for all three to survive is even rarer.

## State Expands Meat Program

The new full-time meat inspection program is now operating in slaughter plants in Lane and Douglas counties, the State Department of Agriculture reports. Sausage kitchens not connected with slaughter establishments will be entered as soon as possible.

This is the second area in which operations have been set up. Inspectors are at work in four plants in Douglas and five in Lane. Two additional plants are candidates for exemption under the complete custom kill rules and a third is not operating at this time.

Two veterinary meat inspectors, Dr. R. L. Burnett and Dr. Ray Mast, and six lay inspectors from the pilot crew are in these two counties to assist in getting the program started and in training new appointees.

Dr. G. F. Reid, formerly in practice at Albany, has joined the state staff and is stationed at Eugene temporarily. Three practitioners from Douglas County will be as-

signed later to plants near their homes, according to Dr. Rolla C. Sexauer, assistant state veterinarian in charge of field operations. New lay inspectors assigned to the Lane-Douglas area are Harold Cone, Roseburg; Charles Doane, Carl Barnes, Claude Crandall and Ivan McKibbins, Eugene. The three latter lived in Salem before joining the inspection staff. The two veterinary and six lay inspectors of the pilot crew will move on after the program is well established in this area. They are used as the training cadre in each area; when the program is in operation statewide they will draw permanent assignments. Areas soon to be entered, department officials now plan, will be the Linn-Benton district and the northwestern Oregon coastal district. Under the program, all animals are inspected before and after slaughter to determine wholesomeness for human consumption.

TESTING TOUCHSTONE  
A touchstone is an ancient device for testing metals, especially precious ones. It is a black stone on which a metal, such as gold, can be rubbed, leaving a streak. The color of this streak will indicate the amount of other metal alloyed with the gold.

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**ALL-STAR RULES**  
Under rules governing the selection of players for the All-Star squads, every major league baseball club must be represented by at least one man. The eight players voted by the fans (exclusive of the pitchers) must play at least three innings unless forced out by injuries.

Queen Victoria gave birth to nine children.

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**PARISIAN MARKETING PROBLEM.** Pondering the mass of humanity buying and selling in Paris' famed market place of "Les Halles" is French economist Daniel Barrere. French farmers have great difficulty getting their produce through the maze of traffic to the market and even though it is a popular sight for tourists Barrere thinks that it should be moved to one of the outlying districts.

**WANT AD WONDERS**  
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Lawsy in Santa Thursday. Need  
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