

AROUND THE FARM By DON COIN WALROD County Extension Agent

For those of us living along the Columbia River, the life history of the white sturgeon should be of particular interest, especially in view of the size limits placed on these fish. The life history of this fish apparently has been hard to get, but recently Oregon State University wildlife management specialist Andy Landforce passed on some research work shedding a little light on this subject.

On November 10, 1949, Oregon Fish Commission biologists released a tagged white sturgeon near the mouth of the Sandy river as part of a research project involving the Columbia basin's fishery resources.

Twelve years later on October 22, sport fisherman G. E. Antilla, Clarkston, Washington, landed this same sturgeon while angling in the Snake river about one mile above Clarkston. After noting the yellow plastic disc tag attached through the tail of the fish, he recorded the number, weighed and measured the specimen, and returned it to the river. Measuring 22 inches in length and weighing 22 pounds when tagged, the fish had grown to 43 inches in length and 14 pounds during the 12 years. This confirms previous findings regarding the slow growth of sturgeon.

Antilla's tagged specimen was estimated to be 15 years of age. Female white sturgeon do not reach maturity until they are 15 to 19 years of age, but males mature somewhat earlier than this. Some individuals have been known to attain ages over 80 years. The age of a sturgeon is determined by microscopic examination of a cross-section slice of a fin ray of the pectoral fin. Under high magnification concentric growth layers can be counted and age determined much the same way we do in counting the growth rings of trees.

During the early days of Columbia river fishing, 500-pound white sturgeon were reported to be common. Some individuals in the Columbia river have been

known to reach 1500 pounds, and there is on record an 1800-pounder from the Fraser river, B. C.

Antilla's tagged fish had to pass at least one dam, Bonneville, and perhaps McNary which was completed in the 12-year period following its tagging, to reach the Clarkston area where it was caught.

The well-recognized trend toward larger dairy farms certainly means that larger bulk holding tanks are needed. These larger bulk milk tanks need better and more substantial footings to support them properly.

Often a new and larger tank has been added to meet the increased production, but the ordinary thickness of the concrete floor may not be adequate to prevent some settling of the new tank and the increased load. If settling does occur, the calibration of the tank is going to be off. If the calibration is not accurate, either the dairyman or the processor is going to be gyped, depending upon how the calibration is affected. A word to the wise should be sufficient.

With income tax time rapidly approaching, it is well to note that "Uncle Sam" wants every tax dollar due him, and he often takes steps to get it. On the other hand, he does not want more in the way of taxes from any individual than is rightfully due under the law. However, the burden of proof of what is or is not due is placed upon the taxpayer. There are too many instances in which the taxpayer paid too much simply because he didn't know or didn't get the help needed in filling his return.

The 1962 "Farmers Tax Guide" can be helpful in better understanding federal tax provisions as they apply to farmers. This 63-page guide is relatively easy to read and covers most tax situations. Copies are available from county extension agents but supplies are limited.

Closing of Schools Given Careful Consideration Due to Cost Item

Illnesses still plague the schools in this area, though the absences are not as great now and the worst seems to be over. Schools were not closed at any time because of the epidemic.

J. W. Acaituri, superintendent of the district 47 joint schools, stated this week that many questions have come to the school as to why the schools were not closed due to the illness and also because of inclement weather. He stated that the question of closing schools is weighed carefully and

that step is not taken unless absolutely necessary because closing actually costs the district money.

To substantiate this statement, he gave the following figures. Each day that the schools operate, the district draws approximately \$670 from the state basic school fund. This is not paid for days the school is closed.

However, costs go on when the schools are closed, the same as if they were operating because contracts are on a monthly and yearly basis. For each day the schools are closed by illness, weather, or such, it costs the district \$2,412.75 in salaries, transporta-

Peach Growers Need to Spray

December, the month when we all enjoy the Christmas holidays, reflects one chore of interest to the peach growers, stated John F. Neu, county extension agent. December is the time when the first spray is applied for control of peach leaf curl. This application should be made as near December 15 as weather conditions permit.

For the commercial peach producer one of the following fungicides are recommended:

1. Bordeaux mixture 12-12-100
2. Puritized Agricultural Spray, 3 pints in 100 gallons.
3. TAG, 1½ pints in 100 gallons of water.

4. Liquid lime sulfur, 8 gallons in 100 gallons of water.

A stocker should be added with fungicide. Dormant spray oil used at a quart per 100 gallons makes an excellent sticker. Most of the other available commercial stickers are satisfactory when used according to the manufacturer's directions.

The home gardener, for ease of handling should use lime sulfur, Puritized Agricultural Spray, or TAG; these are all liquids. The mixture is prepared by adding 3 tablespoons of Puritized Agricultural spray or 1½ tablespoons of TAG, or 4 cups of lime sulfur, to 3 gallons of water. A sticker should be added to each of these mixtures.

Flowering peaches are also susceptible to peach leaf curl and should be sprayed at the same time as other peach trees.

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Vernonia Eagle

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tion contracts, heat, etc. Those figures are computed on the basis of a 180 day school year, and is the figure it costs per day whether the school operates or not. Unless the day is made up in the spring, the amount, based on fixed contracts is lost to the district. Acaituri further stated that of course, health and welfare of students and employees is and will remain a major item of concern, but the expense angle must also be considered in making a decision. If, when schools are closed, all children stayed home and avoided contact with ill persons or danger of illness from exposure, that would also be a talking point for closing, but observers can realize that they do not, but can be seen at shows, on the streets and circulating freely.

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