

PRODUCE GROWERS KEPT IN TOUCH WITH CONDITIONS BY GOVERNMENT SERVICE



Using the Government's Eyes to Improve Opportunities.

(Prepared by the United States Department of Agriculture.)

Shaping one's course by faith rather than by sight is doubtless good practice, spiritually speaking, but produce growers used to find it mighty disastrous in business. Of course, some of them are still following the faith system of growing and marketing, because they have not seen fit to use the eyes furnished them by the government in the crop and market reporting service of the United States department of agriculture. These are still planting, gathering, and marketing more or less at random, but a constantly increasing number are looking around and ahead, seeing what other sections are doing, finding where any shortage or surplus is likely to be produced, ascertaining special advantages or disadvantages in consuming centers, and generally getting a forecast of the market from crop and other conditions the country over.

The farsighted southern potato grower no longer plants blindly or by rote. He takes into account the volume and probable movement of the northern crop and the quantity of the old crop likely to come over till spring. The northern grower watches the development of the southern crop. If the southern acreage is reduced, if there are late frosts, if anything happens to bring about a material reduction of the crop in the South or in any large potato-growing section of the North, the wide-awake northern grower is in position to make money by putting in a late acreage and top-dressing it. The Texas onion grower, before time for planting, takes into consideration the quantity of old northern stock in storage and the rate at which it is going to market.

Worth \$500 to This Grower. In a score of lines the same system is being followed. Take, for illustration, the case of a grower of hothouse lettuce in the neighborhood of one of the large eastern cities. Ordinarily he grows to meet a fairly late market, after the Florida and South Carolina crops are off. But if he receives news of a destructive freeze in the South,

he promptly regulates his seed beds and moisture in such way as materially to advance the maturity of his crop to take advantage of the shortage soon to occur. One such grower of hothouse lettuce says that the government crop and market reporting service is worth \$500 a year to him in that way.

Here is another concrete illustration: During the past season there was a short crop of potatoes in Virginia and Maryland. The crop and market reporting service informed potato growers over the country of that fact in time for them to take advantage of it. As a result, some southern growers held their potatoes for a few weeks, while some northern growers dug and marketed theirs a little earlier than usual, thus not only obtaining better prices, but filling in a period when there would have been otherwise a shortage of new potatoes.

Shows Market Advantages. The service indicates to the grower who uses it intelligently, temporary and local market advantages. A city that this week is an extremely poor market for a particular commodity may be the best market for that commodity next week. The grower who has followed the reports and correctly interpreted conditions is thus in position to ship in such way as to get his produce on that market at the beginning of better prices.

The results are beneficial alike to producer and consumer. The producer takes advantage of the market where prices are best. The consumer has a more regular supply and usually without extreme fluctuations in prices. Of course, such application of benefits is not yet universal. The service is comparatively new and many people have not yet learned to avail themselves of it. However, the 32 permanent branch offices of the bureau of markets and the numerous temporary stations in shipping areas bring within reach of practically all shippers the information furnished in the form of daily market bulletins, weekly market reviews and monthly news articles.

EFFECT OF WEATHER CONDITIONS IS FELT

One Market May Go Up While Another Goes Opposite Way.

Crop and Market Service of Department of Agriculture Keeps Both Shipper and Consumer Posted on Situation.

(Prepared by the United States Department of Agriculture.)

Any given weather condition—cold, rain or heat—may affect one market one way and another market in the directly opposite way. A period of rainy weather, for instance, might put peach prices away up in New York or Chicago and away down in Atlanta or Augusta. The effect of any particular weather condition is likely to be different in the big consuming market from what it is in producing sections. In the case cited, the rain might delay gathering. Then at the beginning of fair weather, great quantities of more or less damaged peaches would come in at once, instead of being distributed over a period of weeks, and prices would go down sharply. At the same time, a shortage would have been caused in some of the large cities and prices would go up. Another set of conditions might reverse the process, making prices high in producing sections and relatively low at consuming markets. The crop and market reporting service of the United States department of agriculture, carrying full information on weather and crop conditions, keeps both the shipper and the consumer posted as to such conditions and, in a general way, works to smooth out such discrepancies.

Cowpeas Are Really Beans. Cowpeas really are not peas but beans. They are the kind of beans most commonly cultivated for food in the old world. In our country they are used mainly as a pasture crop.

Splendid Spring Pasture. If stock is turned on sweet clover in the spring before it has had a chance to become woody, it makes a splendid

MARKET TERMS

(Prepared by the United States Department of Agriculture.)

The market is FIRM— when, for the commodity under consideration, prices are holding fairly from day to day and from week to week, with the values more prompt than the declines and values gaining only a few cents with a compared with the week or fortnight before.

The market is STRONG— when the advances are fairly sharp and the declines slight and quickly overcome.

The market is WEAK— when the declines are sharp and persistent, continually reaching low points and making only slight and short recoveries. The degree of weakness is measured by the frequency and extent of such movements.

The market is DRAGGING— when prices sag almost imperceptibly, simply falling a little short of the previous top quotations from time to time so that the decline is scarcely noticeable except by comparison with the level of the previous week or month.

Reports of the condition of the crop, the shipments, the weather, are factors in determining what may be expected to follow a firm, strong, weak, or dragging market. The progressive produce grower studies all of these conditions and markets his produce accordingly.

GENERAL FARM NOTES

Spring oats occupy the land but a few months.

Lime promotes the growth of the pumpkin on acid lands.

Neither sorghum nor Sudan grass hay are equal to clover or alfalfa.

THE KITCHEN CABINET

A friendship that makes the least noise is very often the most useful, for which reason I should prefer a prudent friend to a zealous one.—Addison.

SOMETHING FOR DINNER.

A good way to use any leftover fish such as cooked haddock is to make

Fish Croquettes.—Cook one-half

tablespoonful of chopped shallot, two tablespoonfuls of red pepper, each finely chopped, with three tablespoonfuls of butter, five minutes. Add one-third of a cup of flour mixed with three-fourths of a teaspoonful of salt, one-fourth of a teaspoonful of paprika and stir until well blended; then pour over one-half cupful of milk and one-half cupful of cream. Bring to the boiling point. Add one and three-fourths cupfuls of flaked fish and spread on a plate to cool. Shape, dip in crumbs and egg and fry in deep fat.

Peach Tapioca.—Drain one can of peaches, sprinkle with one-fourth cupful of powdered sugar and let stand one hour; soak one cupful of pearl tapioca in cold water to cover. To the peach sirup add enough boiling water to make three cupfuls, heat to the boiling point, add the soaked tapioca, one-half cupful of sugar, one-half teaspoonful of salt and cook until transparent. Line a pudding dish with the peaches, fill with tapioca, and bake in moderate oven thirty minutes. Cool and serve with cream and sugar.

Potato Salad.—Cut boiled potatoes in one-half inch cubes; there should be one and one-half cupfuls. Add three hard cooked eggs chopped, one and one-half tablespoonfuls of chopped pimento and one-half tablespoonful of chopped onion. Moisten with cream salad dressing and serve on lettuce.

Chocolate Souffle.—Melt two tablespoonfuls of butter, add two tablespoonfuls of flour, and three-fourths of a cupful of milk. Bring to the boiling point. Melt one and one-half squares of chocolate, add one-third of a cupful of sugar and two tablespoonfuls of hot water; stir until smooth. Combine mixtures and add the yolks of three eggs beaten thick; then add one-half teaspoonful of vanilla and the whites of three eggs beaten stiff. Turn into a buttered baking dish and bake in a moderate oven thirty minutes.

Quick Dinner Blat.—Mix and sift one and one-half cupfuls of pastry flour, three and one-half teaspoonfuls of baking powder and three-fourths of a teaspoonful of salt. Work in three tablespoonfuls of lard, add one-third of a cupful each of water and milk. Drop by spoonfuls in hot buttered iron pans and bake in a hot oven fifteen minutes.

The firmest friendships have been formed in mutual adversity, as iron is most strongly united by the fiercest flame.—Colton.

SPRING GREENS.

The early spring greens that are found in various localities are what is needed to purify the blood, furnish a tonic and otherwise get the system in good working order.

In the South, the poke is a common spring green and is cooked as one does asparagus. Dock leaves, mustard, sorrel, are all palatable when served in salads or as greens.

Dandelion greens are growing in popularity for canning for winter use. They must be canned when very tender, as we like them for greens. Wash and thoroughly clean them, then let them simmer in boiling water to cover for five minutes, then drain and pack as closely as possible in a mason jar, adding a teaspoonful of salt to a quart of the greens. Fill the can with boiling water and screw down the top which has been furnished with a good rubber, not tight but close enough so that the lid may be lifted without coming off. Set into a boiler of boiling water and boil for two hours, then remove the can and seal perfectly tight.

Beet tops when young may be canned for winter use, adding a few of the small beets as one does when serving them as greens. These are processed in the same manner as the dandelions. A housewife may put up a can or two of greens quite often, just preparing a few more than is needed for the table and process them in a kettle instead of a boiler. Spinach and Swiss chard grow so easily in the home garden and while it is crisp and tender a few cans may be put away for the winter. A good combination that is recommended for young children is spinach, a carrot or two in the can, one onion and a stalk or two of celery, canned as usual. A few spoonfuls of this mixture put through a puree strainer and added to a small dish of broth is a rich and nourishing food for children, giving the elements needed to build up bone and muscle.

Water cress is another valuable vegetable rich in mineral salts, a good blood purifier in the spring. Serve it with French dressing or as a garnish.

"The time is coming when no young person of either sex will be considered well educated who is not conversant with the composition of food-stuffs and their uses in the body, and who does not know why cleanliness is ranked next to godliness."

OCCASIONAL DISHES.

For a dainty dessert to follow a dinner which has not been too substantial try

French Cream Puffs.—Put one-fourth cupful of butter and one-half cupful boiling water in a saucepan, bring to boiling point. Add one-half cupful of flour all at once and stir vigorously.

Remove from the fire, add two unbeaten eggs, one at a time. Drop by spoonfuls on a buttered sheet shaping as nearly circular as possible. Bake thirty minutes in a moderate oven. Cool, split and fill with whipped cream. Serve with hot chocolate sauce.

Emergency Soup.—Dissolve two and one-half teaspoonfuls of beef extract in three cupfuls of boiling water. Add three tablespoonfuls of milk gradually, to one and one-half tablespoonfuls of flour; mix until smooth. Add to the first mixture, stirring constantly until the boiling point is reached, then boil three minutes; add three-fourths of a teaspoonful of salt, a few grains of pepper, and cayenne and three-fourths of a cupful of cream. Celery salt, onion salt or parsley may be added to vary the flavor.

Napoli Spaghetti.—Cut four slices of bacon in small pieces and fry. Add one sliced onion, one-half a can of tomatoes, one-half a box of tomato paste, one-half teaspoonful of salt, one-eighth of a teaspoonful of pepper, one-fourth teaspoonful of mace, a few grains of cayenne and a bit of bay leaf. Bring gradually to the boiling point and let simmer fifty minutes. Pour over one-fourth of a pound of cooked spaghetti, and let stand ten minutes. Serve hot.

Mushrooms on Toast.—Cut stale bread in slices and shape with a round cutter, then fry in butter. Cook two cupfuls of cut-up mushrooms in two tablespoonfuls of butter five minutes. Cook one tablespoonful of butter with a half teaspoonful of shallot chopped, three minutes; season with paprika, salt and pepper. Arrange the mushrooms on the rounds of bread, pour over the tomato puree and sprinkle with chopped parsley.

Fame is a scentless sunflower. With gaudy crown of gold; But friendship is the breathing rose. With sweets in every fold. —O. W. Holmes.

MORE GOOD THINGS.

Chicken is the favorite meat of the majority of people, but even chicken loses its charm if always served in the same way.

Baltimore Chicken.—Cut chicken in pieces, season with salt, roll in flour, egg crumbs and fry in butter until tender. Fry five minutes, three tablespoonfuls of butter and one tablespoonful each of chopped ham, carrot and onion; add three tablespoonfuls of flour, one-half cupful of tomatoes, one cupful of chicken stock, two cloves, one-half teaspoonful of salt, one-eighth teaspoonful of pepper and one-fourth teaspoonful of paprika. Simmer ten minutes, rub through a sieve, add two tablespoonfuls of fruit juice and cook five minutes. Pour sauce around the chicken and serve.

Lemon Pie.—Mix one cupful of sugar and three tablespoonfuls of flour; add three tablespoonfuls of lemon juice, the yolks of two eggs slightly beaten, one cupful of milk, one tablespoonful of melted butter and lightly fold in the stiffly beaten whites with a pinch of salt. Bake in one crust.

Escalloped Tomatoes.—Remove the whole tomatoes from a quart can. Season with salt, pepper onion juice and a teaspoonful of sugar. Cover the bottom of a baking dish with half a cupful of crumbed and buttered bread; cover with tomatoes then with more crumbs. Bake in a hot oven until the crumbs are brown.

Hongroise Potatoes.—Parboil three cupfuls of half-inch cubes of potatoes three minutes and drain. Add one-third of a cupful of butter and cook on the back part of the range until slightly brown. Melt two tablespoonfuls of butter, add a few drops of onion juice, two tablespoonfuls of flour and pour on gradually one cupful of hot milk. Season with salt and paprika, then add one egg yolk. Pour the sauce over the potatoes and sprinkle with finely chopped parsley.

Lemon Cream Sherbet.—Mix one and one-half cupfuls of sugar with three-fourths cupful of lemon juice, add two cupfuls of milk and two cupfuls of thin cream, a few grains of salt. Freeze as usual. A little grated rind may be cooked in a tablespoonful of water and added for a higher flavor if desired.

Any fruit juice with a bit of lemon juice to add zest with thin cream or top milk, makes a fine sherbet. Grape juice is especially fine.

KEEP YOUNG CHICKS GROWING BY USING FEEDING SCHEDULE GIVING BEST GAINS



Starting at the Bottom to Learn the Chicken Business.

(Prepared by the United States Department of Agriculture.)

Every poultry raiser wants his chicks to grow fast whether he plans to get them on an early market or to develop profitable layers. Early hatching is one of the first steps in this direction, but the next, which is of equal importance, is proper feeding. Undoubtedly chicks will grow faster when fed five times than when fed only three times daily, say poultry specialists of the United States department of agriculture, but it should be borne in mind that more harm can be done to the young chicks by over-feeding than by under-feeding. Young chickens should be fed not more than barely enough to satisfy their appetites and to keep them exercising, except at the evening or last meal, when they should be given all they care to eat. Greater care must be exercised not to over-feed young chickens that are confined than those that have free range, as leg weakness is likely to result.

Chicks' First Meals.

Inexperienced poultry raisers are tempted to feed chicks immediately after they are hatched, but this should not be done. No feed should be given before the chicks are thirty-six or forty-eight hours old. During the first week feed them stale bread, pinhead oatmeal, rolled oats, hard-boiled eggs, or johnnycakes. Crumbly, but not sloppy mash, made by mixing with milk, are considered valuable. During the second week add cracked wheat, finely cracked corn and bulled oats to the chicks' ration.

After the chicks are ten days old a good growing mash, composed of two parts by weight of bran, two parts middlings, one part cornmeal, one part low-grade wheat flour or red-dog middlings, and ten per cent beef scrap, may be placed in a hopper and left before them all the time. The mash

may be fed either wet or dry; if wet, only enough moisture (either milk or water) should be added to make the feed crumbly. If this moisture is not used a hopper containing bran should be accessible to the chickens at all times.

After the chickens are two months old they may be fed four times daily, with good results. When they are three months old three feedings a day are enough.

Hoppers for Feeding Chicks.

As soon as the chickens will eat the whole wheat, cracked corn, and other grains—usually in about eight weeks—the small-sized chick feed can be eliminated. In addition to the above feeds sour milk, skim milk, or buttermilk will hasten the chickens' growth. Growing chickens kept on a good range may be given all their feed in a hopper, mixing two parts by weight of cracked corn with one part of wheat, or equal parts of cracked corn, wheat, and oats in one hopper and the dry mash for chickens in another.

The beef scrap may be left out of the dry mash and fed in a separate hopper, so that the chickens can eat all of this feed they desire. If the beef scrap is to be fed separately, it is advisable to wait until the chicks are ten days old, although some poultrymen put the beef scrap before the young chickens at the start without bad results.

Chickens confined to small yards should always be supplied with green feed, such as lettuce, sprouted oats, alfalfa, or clover, but the best place to raise chickens successfully is on a good range where no extra green feed is required. Where the chickens are kept in small bare yards, fine charcoal, grit, and oyster shell should be kept before them all of the time, and cracked or ground bone may be fed. The bone is not necessary for chickens that have a good range.

YOUNG CHICKS MUST HAVE GOOD SHELTER

No Particular Style of House Is to Be Recommended.

It Should Provide Ample Ventilation, Dryness, Sunlight, Freedom From Drafts and Can Easily Be Cleaned—Avoid Crowding.

(Prepared by the United States Department of Agriculture.)

Growing chicks should be provided with a house that will give them a place to stay in bad weather and at night. No particular style of house is recommended, but it should be so built that it will provide ample ventilation, dryness, sunlight, freedom from drafts, and be so arranged that it can be cleaned easily and frequently.

The lumber from piano and dry-goods boxes can be used in building such a house, and when covered with ordinary roofing paper so as to keep out the rain, will make desirable quarters. It is suggested that such houses be built on the colony plan, so that they can be moved from place to place, thus providing the chicks with fresh ground to range over. Elevating such a house six inches above the ground will help to keep the floor dry, by means of the circulation of air, and such space will also provide shade for the chicks.

In placing the chicks in their growing house for the first time, it is best to confine them for several days by erecting a temporary yard wherein they can run for five or six days until they learn where to return when the fence is removed and they are allowed their liberty. Care should be taken not to crowd the chicks by placing too many in any one house. When the chickens cover the greater part of the floor at night, it is an indication that they are too crowded. At such a time they should be thinned out and placed in another house.

TO MAKE EGGS PROFITABLE

Hens Must Be Provided With a Variety of Grain, Some Meat, and Constant Supply of Water.

Do not forget that to make eggs in profitable numbers the hens need a variety of grain, some meat food, some green feed, grit, charcoal and shells.

HURRY WITH HATCH

(Prepared by the United States Department of Agriculture.)

Early chicks develop rapidly into provident pullets that replace the industrious hens as flock breadwinners when the molting season arrives. These early pullets produce in plenty during the period when eggs are scarce and hens high in price. In order that the late fall and early winter stream of eggs may flow to market uninterrupted it is essential to jump the traditional barriers and hatch early and hence wisely.

POULTRY NOTES

Fresh air is one of the essentials in poultry houses.

Early hatching means well-matured pullets which begin to lay in the fall.

Gradually poultry breeding is becoming more like live stock breeding.

Don't use any except strong, vigorous males to head the breeding pens this season.

The egg with a dirty shell is one of the most objectionable factors of the egg industry.

It is a serious mistake to cross and mix the breeds. There is no place for the mongrel fowl.

The comb of a good layer is pliable and warm, usually well colored and of a soft, velvety texture.

It pays to padlock the poultry house every night and know how many birds are supposed to roost there.

Pack the eggs according to size, placing the large eggs in one case and the small ones in another.

To get fertile eggs for early hatching, the fowls must be healthy, and green feed helps to keep them in condition.

Do not wash dirty eggs and send them to market, for different forms of mold may result.