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TIMELY NOTES ON TOPICS CONNECTED WITH Silver Fox and Mink Farming

A despatch from Oslo, Norway, gives the information that at the sale held over last weekend, silver foxes were 70 per cent disposed of with an average of 78 kroner. Blue foxes were 26 per cent sold with an average of 76 kroner. The silver fox would average about \$12 in Canadian money and the blues slightly less.

Hudson's Bay Company, Montreal, opened a special sale last Wednesday which continued Thursday. We have no report but among the offerings was 6,000 white fox which included good strings of eastern and western Arctic, 5,000 wild mink, 22,000 mutation mink, which is described as a very fine new season's collection featuring mutations from members of Canada Mink Breeders and comprising 10,000 silver-blue, 12,000 pastels and 500 miscellaneous mutations. On Thursday with the sale commencing at 10:00 a.m., 50,000 ranch mink, standards and half bloods, a representative offering of fresh western and eastern Canadian types from members of the Canada Mink Breeders were to be on sale.

Strong competitive bidding featured the first mink sale of Soudack Fur Auction Co. at Winnipeg. The 2,000 wild mink were

-NEWSY NOTES-

By J. A. Clark, D.Sc.
RECORD FARM CROPS

The grain growers of the Prairies have called 1952 a "year of wonders". They had nearly ideal harvesting conditions during April and May, when they safely threshed over 150 million bushels of wheat and about 135 million bushels of oats and barley that had lain out in their fields during the winter, because of very unfavourable fall harvesting conditions. Spring conditions were so favourable, however, that much of this grain graded higher than the wheat which they had succeeded in harvesting the previous autumn.

For two successive years the harvesting and planting of cereal crops on many areas of the prairies were carried on simultaneously. Farm mechanization made this possible, and the exceptional weather conditions that prevailed allowed for the almost continuous operation of farm implements and mammoth combines. By the middle of May, the spring harvesting of crops was nearing completion in the southern areas of all three Prairie Provinces, and wheat seeding was also practically over in these areas by that time, and at the end of the month, seeding was generally completed in the West.

Ontario, extending as it does, from a point farthest south in Canada to Hudson Bay, and from the Lake of Two Mountains on the Ottawa River to the Lake of the Woods, includes many climatic zones. Its growing season, however, was early in southern and eastern Ontario, and most of its farm crops reached or exceeded average yields. Southwestern Ontario had a drought period in the early autumn, which reduced late crop yields, but in the north, there were many record yields per acre of potatoes. We do not have this year's returns from Lambton County, but last year it produced a three and a half million dollar crop of husked corn, and eight million dollars worth of honey.

Quebec had a backward spring seeding season, and grain crops showed a marked decrease in yield; the average yield of wheat was down two bushels and that of oats was down 7.4 bushels from the previous year. Hay production however, amounted to six million tons, an increase of 185,000 tons over 1951, and the potato crop gave a yield of 149 cwt. per acre or a total of 22,750,000 bushels. These were the two outstanding Quebec crops in 1952.

Spring opened early in the Maritime Provinces, and there was some early seeding and planting which gave excellent returns. This was followed by a period of rainy weather that greatly delayed the general seeding of crops. There had been very little winter killing and clover and hay generally gave yields above average and of excellent quality. Early pasture conditions in Prince Edward Island were never better, and reports from other sections showed conditions above average. Farm crops generally gave better than average yields. Potatoes, however, in New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island gave record yields. There was quite a reduction in the potato

Our readers will remember that in our notes some months ago we had an item stating that the longshoremen in New York refused to unload Russian furs. In a probe about racketeers in the New York waterfront, evidence has been given that \$70,000 was paid out to the right parties and that the furs were unloaded.

At the International Fur Animal Show held in Salt Lake City a week ago, W. S. Cox of Murray, Utah, was the Blue Ribbon winner taking the most show points. He won first prize for a sapphire mink in the male and female medium shade and female light shade classifications. His females were judged the best Stewart sapphires in both light and medium shades and the new blue Iris breed not yet marketed brought two more ribbons to the Cox family.

The November issue of the Black Fox Magazine and Modern Mink Breeder, published in New York, is an extremely beautiful publication. It is devoted to the Mutation Mink Breeders Association of America. On the cover is a handsome blond wearing an EMBA Royal Pastel mutation mink jacket designed by Jandel, Washington. The story of the Mutation Mink Breeders Association is the feature article. These are a few extracts:—Twenty years ago the fur trade was receiving a few thousand dark ranch mink. Ten years ago the quantity was up to around 400,000 pelts annually with considerable quality improvement. In the last decade a new segment in the fur trade has been born and today the mink ranches of the United States and Canada are producing well over 3,000,000 pelts annually. It was the sponsorship of the Mutation Mink Breeders Association that brought mutation mink into prominence and the men responsible for it include Herman Boch, Larry Moore, Harold Reed, Harold Landon and H. W. Woodall.

To bring the new mutations before the public breeders sacrificed animals that were readily saleable from \$280 to \$500 each to have first garments made up. The matching of the pelt presented an unusual problem. It was met by killing an animal of a medium shade then going from ranch to ranch with the pelted animal and selecting the pelts to be taken from the live animals available. Fromm Bros. handled the promotion of

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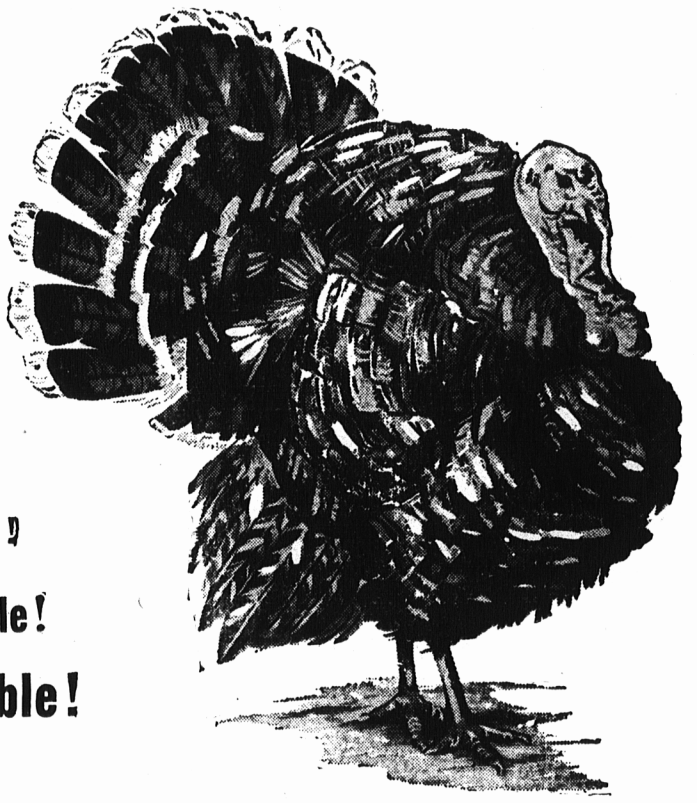
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