

# Doctor Talk

By JOHN B. REMBERT, M. D.

After completing the reading of this column the reader will no doubt comment that "I have read several similar articles by the same writer during the past two months." This observation will be entirely correct, for again this discussion will be on poliomyelitis and the polio vaccine.

The technique of repetition has been used over and over in the past to stimulate people to activity or to keep a subject before the public enough until universal acceptance is achieved. This is the real reason for this discussion once again—it is hoped that most, if not all, of the fifty million Americans under forty years of age who have not been triply vaccinated will resolve now to commence the series of vaccinations.

The latest reports issued by the National Office of Vital Statistics disclose the polio picture nationwide—and the report is alarming—with paralytic cases jumping another 12 per cent. During the latest reporting period 318 new cases of paralytic poliomyelitis account for this increase. The grand total of paralytic cases for the year now stands at 2,449—this figure is more than double that for the year 1958, the total number last year being 1,054.

The 2,449 cases of paralytic polio so far reported for the year 1959 compares favorably, however, with the 4,082 such cases reported in 1955—the year 1955 being the beginning of the Salk vaccine era.

The alarming thing about the 2,449 cases already reported this year is that perhaps as many as three-fourths or more would possibly have never contracted the disease in the first place if only they had taken the time and effort to obtain the vaccine. This fact has been proven by the careful investigation of 1,446 paralytic cases reported this year, and of this number investigated 1,211 or 83.7 per cent of the cases were unvaccinated or only partially vaccinated. From these figures it is seen that much human suffering and heartache, at least during the year 1959, could have been avoided except for an alarming state of public apathy.

Poliomyelitis should and can be conquered—but only if all individuals will cooperate by receiving their vaccinations. Perhaps all groups, such as churches, clubs, schools, etc., should again renew their efforts to round-up all unvaccinated children and adults under forty years of age and impress upon them the importance of this preventive measure.

The problem is a tremendous one involving fifty million unvaccinated persons and the stakes are high—human lives—so action should be started today, now, not next month, or just later on.

## Farm Questions And Answers

Question: When should I dig my sweet potatoes?

Answer: Before the first killing frost. Also, when the number of No. 1's is largest. You have to take a sample digging to determine this. When you have at least half, and preferably two-thirds, No. 1's (with the remainder smaller culls or jumbos)—that's the time to dig.

Question: Where and how big is the largest tree in North Carolina?

Answer: The state's largest tree is reputed to be seven miles up the Roanoke River from Jamesville in Martin County. The bald cypress measures 36 feet in circumference five feet above the ground and is more than 100 feet tall. The tree's age is a mystery, but it was surely a healthy specimen when Columbus discovered America. If the tree were sound and equipment were available to handle it, it would be worth more than \$1,000 at current stumpage prices.

Question: Are any new peach varieties being developed for North Carolina these days?

Answer: Yes. The N. C. Agricultural Experiment Station at State College has recently released a new variety—the Marcus. It is a very early, yellow-fleshed clingstone peach that matures with an attractive red color, with a yellow ground color when fully ripe. The trees are moderately vigorous and productive. It has a showy flower. Marcus is not resistant to bacterial spot, but is classed as moderately susceptible. Get further information from N. C. Foundation Seed Producers, Inc., Box 5687, Raleigh.

QUESTION: Which is the best lawn grass for me to plant?

ANSWER: That depends to a great extent on where you live. If you live in the Coastal Plain, or east of a line on a map drawn through Warrenton, Raleigh and Wadesboro, your best bet is to use one of the warm season grasses like Bermuda, Zoysia, Centipede, or Carpet grass; near the coast you might want to use St. Augustine. West of this line you might try a cool season grass—Tall Fescue, Red Fescue, or Blue Grass. Start these in September and October. Start the warm season grasses in the spring.

Adding a fungicidal chemical to asphalt varnish used in painting tree wounds prevents growth of fungi that cause decay in shade trees.

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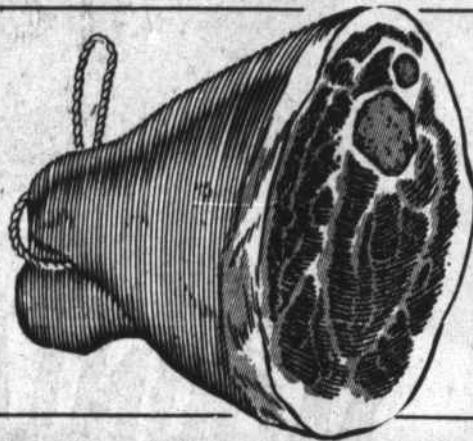
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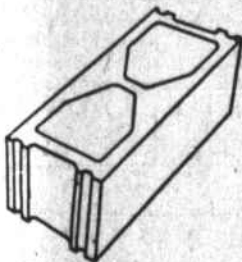
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