

State College Answers Timely Farm Questions

Q. At what age should pullets start producing eggs? A. Thomas B. Morris, extension poultry specialist at State college, says pullets that have been fed and managed properly will come into lay when around six months of age. However, the birds need plenty of proteins, vitamins, and minerals to develop into profitable layers. Chicks 12 to 14 weeks of age that are turned out to find food usually will have their growth retarded. Birds treated this way usually don't come into lay until late winter or early spring. Examples of this were seen last fall, when pullets in bred-to-lay flocks reached a weight of 3 1/2 to four pounds by October 1, at six months of age, but didn't start laying until about January 1. "Pullets that have been fed well usually will lay enough eggs to pay for all their feed by the time poorly fed birds are coming into production," says Morris. He adds that chicks need plenty of water as well as plenty of feed. A water barrel with a float will help to keep water before the birds and also save labor. A brush arbor or other type shade over the barrel and fountain will help keep the water cool. Q. How can I prevent sunburn on watermelons? A. Sprinkling lime or apply-

Some Safety Rules For Lightning

Following a few simple safety rules will help reduce the chances of injury by lightning, says H. M. Ellis, extension agricultural engineer at State college. Don't go outdoors or remain out during thunderstorms, advises Mr. Ellis, unless it is absolutely necessary. Stay inside a building where it is dry, preferably away from fireplaces, stoves, and other metal objects. In choosing shelter, select a building which has a lightning protection system or a large metal or metal-frame building. If an unprotected building must be used, choose a large rather than small one. In all cases, stay away from open doors and windows. If you must remain outdoors, keep away from small sheds and shelters in exposed locations, isolated trees, wire fences, hill-tops, and large open spaces. Seek shelter in a cave, depression in the ground, valley, the foot of a steep or overhanging cliff, dense woods, or in a grove of trees. Occupants of an automobile having a metal body are practically immune from injury by lightning. A wire fence will conduct electricity for considerable distances. Livestock should be protected by grounding all wire fences. Connect ground rods with each lateral wire of the fence and extend into the ground for at least three feet. Fences joined to a building should be grounded at the post nearest the building. Also, the ground rod of the structure should be connected to the fence.

Suggestions Offered For Father-Son Farm Agreements

Recommendations for suitable written father-son farming agreements are given in a new publication just issued cooperatively by Agricultural Experiment stations of North Carolina and several other southeastern states. The publication is based on a study of father-son farm agreements in 14 counties of Virginia. W. L. Gibson, Jr., and F. D. Hansing, of Virginia Polytechnic Institute, interviewed representative farm families to find out how father-son agreements were working. Their report covers four main items: (1) conditions favorable for a successful agreement; (2) types and principal features to

be included: (3) legal considerations; and (4) what the agreements should actually contain. Also included is a section on transferring farm property to heirs. The Southeast Land Tenure committee, made up of representatives from the Alabama, Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee Experiment stations, supervised the work. Also cooperating was the Farm Foundation. The new publication has been designated Bulletin 9 of the Southern Cooperative Series. Copies may be obtained by writing to the Agricultural Experiment Station, Virginia Polytechnic Institute, Blackburg, Va.

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Q. When a barn hay drier is to be used, at what time of day should alfalfa be cut and how long should it be left in the field? A. Agricultural engineers at State college say most successful operators of barn hay driers use one of two procedures in cutting: (1) Begin cutting in the morning as soon as most of the dew is off, cutting no more than can be put in the barn that afternoon; or (2) cut late in the afternoon so that no wilting will occur that day and leave in the swath overnight, cutting no more than can be put in the barn the following afternoon. The hay should be allowed to wilt in the field up to the point where as much moisture as possible is removed but where the leaves are not dry enough to shatter during handling. Wilted hay should not be exposed to rain or dew. On a good hay-curing day, two hours in the swath and two hours in the windrow is long enough. Q. What are the symptoms of Granville wilt in tobacco? A. The first symptom of Granville wilt usually is the flopping of green leaves on one side of the plant. Even one side of a leaf may be wilted and the other side not affected. Later all leaves may wilt and turn yellow before dying. The roots decay, beginning near the tips, but the most distinctive symptom is the presence of dark streaks resembling very fine pencil marks in the woody tissues of the stalk. By midsummer these streaks may extend to the top of the plant. In advanced stages, the pitch decays in a slimy, soft rot. The disease is usually most severe on light, sandy soils.

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