

**Straw, Formerly Wasted,
Now Used for Fine Paper**

Fine paper from wheat straw, up to now usually wasted or burned on U. S. farms, is the promise of a new process developed by the department of agriculture's laboratory at Peoria, Ill. Paper from straw is not new, but the process, which reduces the chemical cost and gives significantly higher pulp yields, is.

Next come mill-scale trials, which domestic paper companies will watch with interest. Dutch paper engineers, to whom the process was suggested, are using it successfully on a commercial scale in Holland, where straw is the main raw material for paper.

About 25 mills in the Midwest produce annually 500,000 tons of straw-board for the container industry from wheat straw. But the cost of obtaining clean straw has previously been a stumbling block to using straw for fine papers in this country.

For years, however, European countries have produced fine papers, such as book and writing, from wheat and rye straw. England used a considerable amount of straw for fine paper during the recent war, and most of the South American republics make their papers from straw.

Paper and paper board are in short supply. This is due to short supplies of pulpwood species are being used faster than grown, and Canada is drastically limiting pulpwood exports to the United States. Last year 95 million tons of wheat straw was grown. The straw burned and wasted would have been enough to produce 20 million tons of cellulose pulp, this country's entire requirement.

**Electrical Hazards Cited
By University Researcher**

Spectacular dangers of high-voltage electrical circuits, well known and well guarded against, paradoxically constitute a lesser danger to the average person than do low-voltage electrical appliances abound.

This is one of the points raised by Charles F. Dalziel, associate professor of electrical engineering at the University of California, in a new summary of the results of several years research in electrical shock.

Professor Dalziel reviews information on the behavior of shock and damage producing electrical currents and charges, describes their physiological effects, and lists some accident statistics.

Dalziel warns that while it is true that the hazard from contact with electrical circuits is largely dependent upon voltage, the actual danger to life depends almost entirely upon the amount of current flowing through the body.

He cites as an example that a man accidentally coming into contact with a 60,000-volt circuit when standing on a very dry wood pole may cause a smaller current to flow that he who inadvertently grasps a defective 110-volt portable appliance when in a bathtub.

Building A Compost Pile

Small, out of the way corner of garden or yard makes a suitable site for a compost pile. Vegetable tops and trimmings make suitable compost, but the compost pile should not be looked upon as a substitute for the garbage can. Fats in particular are to be avoided. There is no hard and fast difference between compost and artificial manure. Compost usually consists of a mixture of poultry litter, fresh or dried manure and soil, usually in the proportion of one third of the animal matter to two thirds of the soil. Commercial fertilizer and ground limestone are usually added and the mixture is kept moist, and turned over a time or two during a six-month period. A mixture of this sort is usually referred to as potting soil and it supplies an excellent medium for the starting of seeds and transplanting plants.

Early Days of Red Cross

Red Cross societies of San Francisco, Berkeley, Oakland, and several other California cities sprang into existence in the early days of the Spanish-American war to serve troops of the California national guard, known as the First California Volunteers, who had been ordered to Manila. The effect of the surrender of the Spanish army at Santiago, Cuba, less than three months after the declaration of war, was to cause the theater of war to be transferred speedily from the Caribbean to the Philippines. Troops for this campaign, which was to last three years, came from all parts of the country and were mobilized in San Francisco. This mobilization developed the need of a broad, active Red Cross program.

Three Poison Plants

Poison ivy, poison oak and poison sumac inspire the same kind of rash—a patchy, blistery, angry skin surface that may remain localized, but too often spreads like mad. And the three plants give off the same kind of poisonous oily substance which causes the rash when it penetrates the skin. The plants are most dangerous in the spring and summer when their "juice" is in abundance. One can pick up the oil by touching the plant, by touching a rake that has touched the plant (and the oil has been known to stick to garden tools as long as a year), by contact with the clothing or freshly anointed skin of anybody or anything—even the family dog—where it has touched the plant.

**CONSERVATION
NEWS**

By L. B. HAIR

Fertilizer is good for pasture grass, according to J. E. Smith of Pleasant Gardens. Mr. Smith fertilized a part of his pasture last fall, and he says, "you can see to the very spot how far the fertilizer went; the grass and clover is larger and greener. Phosphate was spread over

the rest of the pasture last, Mr. Smith states.

"I have found that it pays to rotate cattle on my pasture," says G. W. Burgin of Old Fort. Mr. Burgin began last week to build other cross fences in his pasture. He states that where cattle are rotated from one section to another as the sod is eaten down, the grazing capacity of the pasture is increased.

Fate Morgan, Elmer McGinnis, R. J. Morris, G. W. Burgin, A. R. Walker, and others had terrace lines run on their farms recently. The local soil conservation service per-

sonnel assisted these farmers in surveying out their terrace lines.

W. G. Greenlee, chairman of the McDowell Soil Conservation committee, attended the annual state meeting of the soil conservation district supervisors held in Charlotte last week.

Special interest will center on potato production in 1949. The support price has been reduced to only 60 per cent of parity, and observers will be watching to see what effect this step will have on the number of acres grown.

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