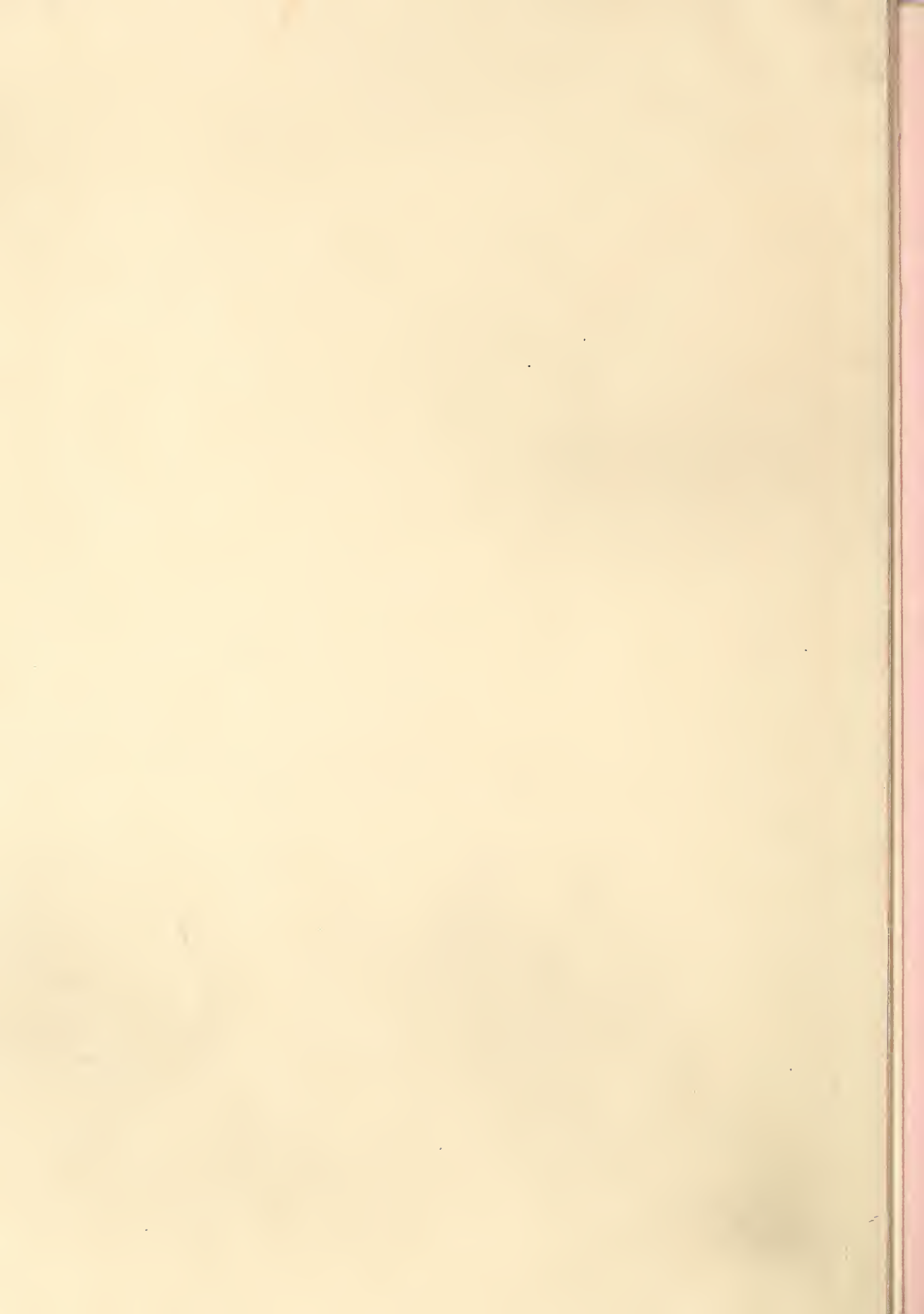


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HOMEMAKERS' CHAT

SATURDAY, January 27, 1940

(FOR BROADCAST USE ONLY)

SUBJECT: "NEWS NOTES FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE." Information from the Office of Information, U.S.D.A.

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Your Saturday reporter is on deck today with some news notes from scientists of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Remember that old saying: "There's a gold mine in the humble hen"? That old saying still has a good deal of truth in it. The men of the Agricultural Marketing Service find that eggs in the basket and chickens in the market-coop mean cash for farmers in both good times and bad. The humble hen has proved to be an important aid to family living and income over the years.

Chickens and eggs have long been the chief source of cash for meeting current household expenses on the farm. To show you how important chickens and eggs are to the farm family, listen to this: About 86 percent of all the farms in the United States produce eggs and chickens. And in each of the past 4 years the sale of farm chickens and eggs brought in about a billion dollars to American farm families. In 1920 and again in '29 the humble hen brought a billion and a half dollars to farmers.

Perhaps you are wondering how the chicken-and-egg business stands up in hard times. Well, the marketing men say it has a reputation for being a relatively stable industry in bad times as well as good times. In depression years poultry and eggs did more than their full share in supplying cash income to farm people.

In 1937 and '38 poultry products ranked fourth as a source of farm income. The only farm products to bring in more money were milk; cattle and calves; and hogs. Chickens and eggs brought in more cash than the combined income from all

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grains, or all vegetables, or all fruits.

Speaking of cash for farm families, here's a news note on growing your own food. Women on farms often wonder whether all the labor and effort of producing their own food pays. Does it pay to keep a cow for your own milk and butter and cheese? To have your own chickens and eggs? To grow your own fruits and vegetables and then put them up for winter? Does it pay to raise your own meat and go to all the trouble of home-butchering, curing and canning?

Scientists at the Department of Agriculture say: Yes, for families with low cash incomes. For families with small pocketbooks home-grown foods have 2 big advantages. They usually make family meals better. And then they release for other purposes the cash that otherwise would go to buy food.

In a recent survey of living costs on farms in Ohio and Pennsylvania, food economists made a special study of the living of 84 families, each family having 630 dollars a year to spend for family living, and each family consisting of a husband and wife and one child under 16 years.

A study of these families showed that as they produced more of their own food, they spent less cash on food. Some of these families produced more than 400 dollars worth of food right on their farms and spent only 160 dollars during the whole year for food. Other families raised only about a hundred dollars' worth of their own food and had to buy at least 200 dollars' worth. The economists calculate that such a family would spend about 265 dollars cash if it did not raise any food. Besides saving cash, the families who raised their own food were much better fed.

Of course, you need time and energy and land as well as money to raise your own food. But families with only 630 dollars for all living expenses can buy more of the things they cannot produce at home if they spend only 160 dollars for food instead of 265 dollars a year. The saving is about 40 percent of the possible food bill and about 17 percent of the total cash spent for living.

So much for news about the family pocketbook. Now for some news about family reading matter. This is the time of year to lay in your store of farm and home reading matter to help you with spring and summer jobs. The Department of Agriculture has recently published 2 new free leaflets you may want to add to your collection.

If you have your troubles with flies and mosquitoes, you'll be glad to hear about the new leaflets to help you fight these insects. The new leaflet on mosquitoes is No. 186 called "Domestic Mosquitoes." A postcard addressed to the Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. will bring you a copy as long as the supply lasts.

The new leaflet on flies is No.182 called "Housefly Control." It is also free from the Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. as long as the supply holds out. If you want one or both of these new publications, get a penny postcard and write for them before the warm weather and the annoying insects get ahead of you.

That's all the news notes for today.

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