Admiring Glances—And No Wonder—This platinum fox fur coat which Betty Riddell, Montreal model, gazes on so admiringly was exhibited at the recent International Trade Fair at Toronto by the Canadian Farm Fur Advertising Commission. The latter is a Marketing Service conducted by the Dominion Government for the Farm Fur Association, and is designed to assist our fur producers in securing the most profitable markets for their furs.

The Chinchilla Business in Canada
$2,500,000 Invested in 5000 Animals

What are the prospects for the Chinchilla business? Will there be money made from raising the furry creatures—or are those who sunk their money into them due for a terrific loss? This is one of the questions that is of importance to hundreds of Canadians, who have invested something over two and a half millions in some five thousand animals — and also to the many others who are thinking of putting money into the business.

In a recent issue The Financial Post attempts to answer this question and to forecast in what direction the Chinchilla business is likely to travel in future.

One thing is certain—the article states — those pencil calculations that so many Canadians indulged in a year or two ago, where they came up with breath-taking profits of five thousand per cent in 10 years, look pretty cockeyed now.

Dollars—Or Sense?

The mathematical problem went like this;

If a pair of chinchillas produced another pair every year for four years, what will a person realize starting with one pair and selling them all at the end of 10 years at $50 a pelt. The answer — around $65,000 — is a problem in combinations and permutations. But now most owners know that chinchillas don't operate with such mathematical precision. There are the all-important variables of birth-rate and death-rate to contend with. Besides, the price of pelts is likely to be closer to $25 than $50, many fur manufacturers claim.

Yet hundreds of Canadians are still toying with the idea of buying a pair of chinchillas. Even if we were only 20% right, they say that wouldn't be bad on an original investment of $1,650 (current price for top-quality animals). Many people laughed at the possibilities of developing a mink market in Canada a few years ago, they point out.

National Body Formed

Some 500 ranchers who are confident about the future of the industry have recently organized under a Dominion charter as the National Chinchilla Breeders of Canada. Unscrupulous selling tactics of certain chinchilla salesmen and the growing belief among the public that all was not simon pure in the business have been important factors in the formation of this organization on a national scale.

Recent investigations into the operations of at least one of the large ranching companies pointed to the urgent necessity of establishing a firm set of rules and regulations for the industry and the prime importance of placing the whole business under the strict supervision of the Livestock Pedigree Act.

Better Business Bureau offices in several Canadian cities have files of letters on the chinchilla business. These letters don't make pleasant reading.

Promises Not Kept

Many of them have to do with the verbal "buy back" promise given by some ranchers with a purchase of chinchillas. When this promise has not been lived up to, small owners who, for one reason or another, have been forced to sell back, have had to seek the open market. Since in some cases the animals for which they paid the top price of $1,650 a pair, have proven to be "culls" and no use for breeding purposes the unlucky owners have had to accept next to nothing. "They are in the same position as a man with a counterfeit bill," E. W. White, president of the National Chinchilla Breeders of Canada says. "They've either got to pass it on to the next man dishonestly or take the loss themselves."

Willing to Gamble

Proof that Canadians are willing to take a gamble on the ultimate pelting market—chinchillas are still too valuable to kill for pelts—shows in the sales figures of the two largest companies for the year ended June 31, 1946.

One company sold $410,000 worth of chinchillas that year, another $202,000 worth. Many of the purchasers, of course, were planning to cut down their risk somewhat by sales to the high priced breeding market along the way.

A survey of several representative ranchers in Ontario where 60 breeders alone are offering chinchillas to the public indicates that an average increase from a pair of mated chinchillas is 150% a year—for all animals 100% a year. Active exchange of animals among ranchers for mating purposes helps to take much of the risk out of the business, maintains the birth rate and improves the quality. Individually females sell higher than males. Some ranchers will pay $850 for a pair of mated chinchillas. This is half of an original outlay of $1,650 for top quality matured animals, and they can keep on having litters for seven years, ranchers claim.

Will Prices Keep Dropping?

The price trend for chinchillas will be downward, of course—already has dropped from $3,200—as the animals become more plentiful and the ultimate fur market comes closer to realization A drop of $200 a pair a year might be the story from here on.

It is estimated that there are only around 40,000 chinchillas in the world today. About enough to make 400 full length coats. On the basis of a 100% animal increase, small-scale pelting might start in five years time.

The long-range planning of the big ranchers is to ensure such quantity of even better quality furs that chinchilla coats and wraps can eventually be moved down out of the present fantastic price levels to some intermediate level where thousands of women—rather than tens—can afford to bid for them. A price range from $7,500 to $15,000 per coat is tentatively suggested by some furriers. At these prices an annual North American market of over 50,000 coats might reasonably be anticipated, they think. The price could not be allowed to drift much lower though, or the exclusiveness of the coat, one of the big selling points, would disappear, the same furriers claim.

On the basis of 100 pelts to a coat this would mean an annual slaughter of some five million chinchillas for their furs. At current rates of reproduction it would take another eight to 10 years before there were enough chinchillas available to maintain this rate.

Active Market?

Furriers are pretty generally agreed that there will be an active market for the chinchilla coat when it is available. It has been proven that chinchilla is a good wearing fur despite its soft and fluffy texture. The extreme fineness of the fur—up to 80 hairs form one single hair follicle—makes for an extremely light coat. A square yard of chinchilla fur weighs approximately the same as a square yard of silk. A three-quarter length, size 40 coat weighs two lb. two oz.

One of the fur's most unusual attractions is the rich varying color effect given off by the three-color characteristics of the individual hair—gray on top, then white and finally blue, close to the skin.

In the final analysis, the soundness of chinchilla raising, whether as a business or as an investment will depend upon the market for chinchilla pelts in the fur industry.

Just For Fun

The other day a man frantic to locate a place to live, asked a naturalist if he knew where he could find a house.

The naturalist replied: "House? Boy, you're getting soft. Why don't you live out in the open air, let old Mother Nature cover you with a blanket of stars, and have the blue firmament above as a roof?"

"Frankly," said the man, "I had in mind something a bit smaller."

Some Notes From The Farm Front
Of Special Interest To Rural Readers
By John Russell

Maybe the mothers who used to try and slip Junior a dose of castor oil disguised with a thin film of honey had the right idea, only didn't go far enough with it. Anyway over in Russia they're producing not only vitamized honey, but also medicated honey containing quinine, streptocide, sulfidin and other medical preparations. Russia's agricultural Research Centre does it by feeding the bees on fruit solutions containing the necessary drugs.

* * *

Now there's an Australian veterinary surgeon who claims that a new method of treating milk—known as hoferisation——is superior to pasteurization. Under this treatment the milk is placed under oxygen pressure, kept heated at 131 degrees for an hour, then cooled under pressure. It is claimed that the milk has then been kept from three to six months, under pressure, without losing any of its freshness.

* * *

In 1947 Canadian per capita consumption of beef was 67.7 pounds; of Pork, 52.7 pounds. But when it came to Mutton and Lamb the figure had dropped to a mere 4.8 pounds.

Our indifference to Mutton and Lamb, according to The Industrial and Development Council of Canadian Meat Packers, may be ascribed to several causes. The available quantity is limited; it is not on the market every day; and prices are so much above beef levels, as a rule, that most folks look on lamb as a luxury dish.

But undoubtedly one of the greatest limiting factors in the demand for lamb has been the generally low average quality of our domestic product as compared to the New Zealand or Australian variety. Almost continuously the market offers a premium for blocky, well-finished ewe or wether lambs weighing 80 to 90 pounds alive—and almost continuously there is a shortage of same.

Canadian hog men have gone a long way in eliminating unsuitable breeds and producing a near-ideal market type. Perhaps something similar might be done as one of the first steps in revitalizing the Canadian lamb trade.

* * *

With prospects of especially heavy crops in the strawberry and cherry areas, according to the Ontario Farm Service Camps, pickers are urgently needed. Unless at least 500 more girls are willing to undertake picking and other essential tasks there are liable to be great losses of both fruit and vegetables.

There will be steady work, at good rates of pay, for the entire season for all girls sixteen or over who wish to spend a happy and pleasant summer working on fruit and vegetable farms and living at one of the comfortable and well-appointed Farm Service Camps, which are operated under the Y.W.C.A. supervision, and which make adequate provision for recreational and social activities during off-duty hours. Camps are already open at Thedford, Cottam, Ruthven, Waterford, Huttonville, Oakville, Clarkson and various points in the Niagara Peninsula, and all are far short of their required number of girls.

* * *

For the last two or three years there's been quite a lot of talk about holding back on grain for fattening cattle—that is, giving them only half or two-thirds of a normal feed.

A test along this line was made at an Experimental Station in Kansas. Twenty head of steers were divided into two lots. One lot was given full feed of grain, the other only two thirds as much. The steers that went short on grain got about twice as much corn silage as the others. Both lots received the same amount of protein and limestone.

What was the difference in their grades after the 180-day testing period? None at all. Eight steers in each lot graded choice, and two went good. The steers that were full fed gained 59 pounds more, but they ate 17.6 more bushels of grain. The silage total was three tons for the limited-grain steers—about half that for the others.

* * *

It isn't only when they're out in the fields that insect pests help you to harvest your grain crops. They do a lot of that after the grain is in the barn; and here are some of the things you can do to foil them.

1. Clean your empty bins thoroughly before refilling. Spray the floors and inside walls with an oil solution of water suspension containing 5% or less of DDT.

2. Clean up outside the bins too. Don't keep milled feed or empty feed bags near stored grains as often they contain insects brought from the mill.

3. Have your grain as dry and as free as possible from broken kernels when you store.

4. Inspect stored grain at least once a month. If bugs are working, fumigate. Use a ready-mixed ethylene dichloride-carbon tetrachloride solution. It won't hurt the grain, but watch out for fumes.

Silver fox is the most important fur grown in Canada. Mink ranks second.

Power of Color

We keep learning something new all the time. Increased consciousness of the power of color has led the experts to conduct experiments which have exploded the popular idea that combinations of black and white constitute the most highly visible marking for signs, notices, warning signals.

It has been found that black and white rank sixth in legibility as a color combination, with black on yellow by far the most highly visible. Ranking behind black on yellow, but ahead of the traditional black on white, are green on white, red on white, blue on white and white on blue.

It looks as though a lot of road signs will have to be changed before perfect visibility is obtained.

Girl Guide is Heroine in Landslide Tragedy
WINS DOW AWARD

MARY YOUNG
OF PICTON, ONTARIO,
shows courage and presence of mind as trench cave-in buries two

The men working on the sewer excavation were off for lunch . . . leaving the 9-foot-deep trench a perfect playground for the two small children. However, Girl Guides Mary Young and Nancy Wright, hearing the children down in the trench, decided that it was no place for games. Scrambling down quickly, they were escorting the youngsters out in single file when, suddenly, a large section of earth on one side gave way.

USES BARE HANDS

One child escaped the landslide unharmed . . . but a little boy and Nancy Wright were buried under the heavy earth. Mary Young, somehow extricated herself, pulling one foot completely out of her shoe . . . and then, seeing Nancy's fingers showing, she frantically clawed at the rock and earth until she had cleared a small space around the imprisoned girl's head. This done, she dashed to the nearest house, gave the alarm, and returned to the task of freeing her chum.

Unfortunately, the little boy died. But, due to Mary's quick thinking and courage, a double tragedy was averted. Nancy Wright suffered only minor injuries and shock. We are proud to pay tribute to Girl Guide Mary Young of Picton, Ontario, through the presentation of The Dow Award.

The Guides were trying to get the children out of the trench when the disaster occurred. Earth and rock tumbled down on top of them . . . burying Nancy and the little boy.

Her training standing her in good stead, Mary Young coolly extricated herself . . . and, risking a further cave-in, she clawed desperately at the earth to rescue her friend.

THE DOW AWARD is a citation for outstanding heroism and includes, as a tangible expression of appreciation, a $100 Canada Savings Bond. Winners are selected by the Dow Award Committee, a group of editors of leading Canadian newspapers.

The DOW AWARD
DOW BREWERY • MONTREAL

MACDONALD'S
BRIER
Canada's Standard Smoke

JITTER — By Arthur Pointer