

INFORMATION FOR THE PRESS

United States Department of Agriculture

Release - Immediate.

Washington, D. C., August 23, 1937

PUBLISH "DOCTOR BOOK"
FOR USE ON FUR FARMS

Biological Survey

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Fur farmers find that it pays to keep their animals healthy, since poor pelts are often the result of infectious diseases. Sudden death of a fox or mink from an accident or from a virulent disease may not affect the value of a pelt, but if the animal is sick over a long period the pelt may lack luster and other desirable qualities.

Practical information on the prevention and control of disease on fur farms is contained in Farmers' Bulletin 1777, "Disease of Fur Animals", just published by the U. S. Department of Agriculture. Research, says the Department, is yet too recent to make recommendations for all the diseases known to attack fur animals, but methods of control already developed are being used on many farms with good results.

Prepared by Dr. J. E. Shillinger, senior veterinarian of the Bureau of Biological Survey, the bulletin lists the symptoms of distemper, paratyphoid infection, encephalitis, infectious enteritis, and pneumonia. Insects and other parasites that also affect the health of fur animals are described. In checking a disease outbreak it is imperative that the sick animals be removed to separate pens. On well-managed fur ranches these "quarantine" pens also are used for observing newly introduced stock, as many disastrous outbreaks of disease have originated from importations. The fur farmer can help further in controlling the

disease by describing to the veterinarian the symptoms he has observed and how he has cared for his animals. This information helps the veterinarian to make a proper diagnosis and to formulate methods of control.

The bulletin stresses the importance of sanitation on fur farms as a means of preventing and reducing losses from disease. It recommends that pens be at least 10 feet apart, situated on well-drained soil, and that the ground in the enclosures be raised slightly to afford good drainage. On up-to-date fur farms the kennels are built so they may be opened for airing and sunning and for disinfection.

Methods used for treating skin abrasions and broken legs of fur animals also are described in the bulletin. Copies of Farmers' Bulletin 1777, "Diseases of Fur Animals", may be obtained from the Superintendent of Documents, Washington, D. C., at 5 cents each.

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