

Soviet Wheat

➤ A GIANT-GRAINED hybrid wheat, with individual kernels almost three times the weight of ordinary wheat grains, is one of the agricultural novelties which Soviet scientists are preparing to carry back into western Russia as soon as it has been cleared of Nazis. A cablegram received from Soviet Scientists' Anti-Fascist Committee in Moscow adds that the new grain variety is also highly resistant to practically all known fungus diseases of wheat.

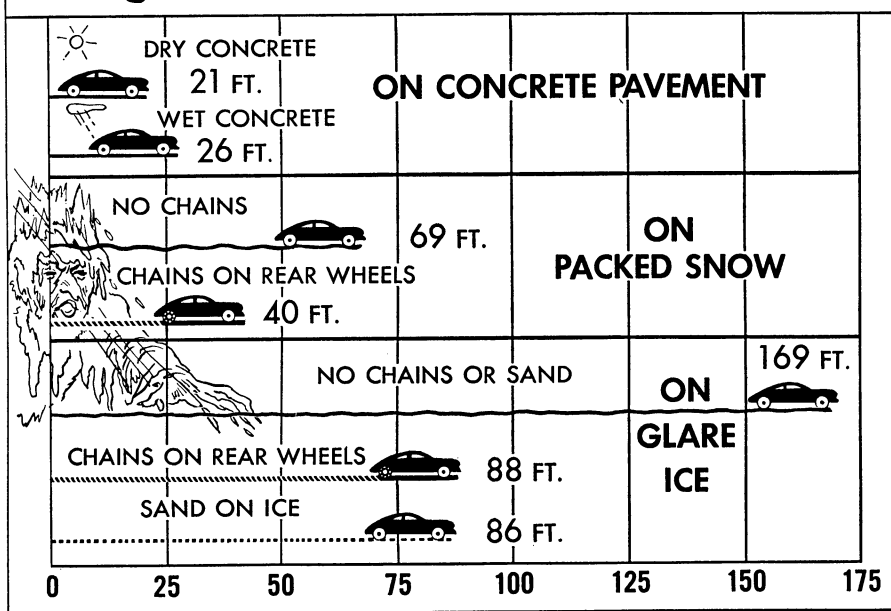
The hybrid was originated by Academician Anton Zhebrak, member of the Belorussian Academy of Sciences and professor of genetics at the Timiri-azev Academy. He was working on his breeding experiments in the White Russian city of Minsk when Hitler's invasion was launched, and carried his priceless propagation stock with him as he left the burning streets behind. Now he is ready to carry the descendants of those grains home from exile, for further tests in their ancestral soil.

Academician Zhebrak's hybrid is a cross between the standard hard or macaroni wheat known botanically as *Triticum durum* and a recently discovered wheat species from the Caucasian highlands, called *Triticum timopheevi*. He has patriotically given it the name Soviet wheat, or *Triticum sovieticum*.

It is from the timopheevi wheat that the new hybrid apparently derives its extreme resistance to fungus attacks. The same species has been introduced into breeding practice in the United States; of no economic value by itself, it is prized for the contributions it makes in hybrid combinations.

Academician Zhebrak has also produced a hybrid between the timopheevi species and common wheat (*Triticum*

Braking Distances on Various Surfaces at 20 mph



SKIDDING—The National Safety Council has prepared this chart in the hope that it will make car drivers more careful on dangerous winter streets. Traffic deaths in snow belt states last winter increased the mileage death rate 24% above the summer toll. The chart does not include in its "braking distances" the actual stopping distances, which are 22 feet more at 20 m.p.h., because it takes the average driver 3/4 of a second to react and apply brakes after seeing a reason to stop.

vulgare), which has progressed to the stage of large-scale field tests.

Both these hybrids are of the type which geneticists call amphiploid. This means that the full number of heredity-bearing chromosomes in the cells of both parents are added together in the offspring, instead of being halved and the half-numbers then added. This increased chromosome number often gives the resulting hybrids considerable advantages such as increased size and greater vigor.

The chromosome number for timopheevi wheat is 28, for durum wheat the number is also 28, and for common wheat it is 42. The timopheevi hybrid with common wheat thus has 70 chromosomes per cell, while the new Soviet wheat has 56.

Science News Letter, January 8, 1944

SAFETY

Transportation Troubles Cause Much Absenteeism

➤ TRANSPORTATION problems were responsible for as much as 31% of all absenteeism in some war plants

during severe weather last winter.

Concern over the annual increase of auto accidents, always greatest in mid-winter, and the necessity of avoiding traffic tie-ups and loss of essential vehicles or manpower, was expressed in a joint statement by Under Secretary of

PREPARE NOW for
POST-WAR
OPPORTUNITIES
with LINGUAPHONE

In your own home you can now prepare for peace-time opportunities in many fields by learning to speak in an amazingly short time any of 29 languages by the world-famous

LINGUAPHONE Ear-Eye METHOD
It's quick, easy, correct

SPANISH	JAPANESE	RUSSIAN
PORTUGUESE	FRENCH	GERMAN
ITALIAN	CHINESE	NORWEGIAN

and 20 others.

Successfully used by Army, Navy, Flying and Signal Corps and other services; in thousands of schools and colleges; endorsed by leading educators.

Send for FREE Book—
Call for FREE Demonstration

LINGUAPHONE INSTITUTE
31 RCA Bldg., Rockefeller Plaza, N. Y. (20)



War Robert P. Patterson and Lieut. Robert E. Raleigh, safety director of the International Association of Chiefs of Police.

The wartime tips they give for minimizing winter skid-wrecks and road blockades, based on National Safety Council research, include reducing speeds when snow and ice conditions require it, always maintaining visibility, using anti-skid chains when streets are dangerous, keeping a safe distance from the vehicle ahead, signaling intentions as clearly as possible and anticipating the mistakes of pedestrians and drivers. Mechanics are scarce and vehicles must be made to last.

Science News Letter, January 8, 1944

SAFETY

Industrial Injuries Cause Great Losses in Manpower

► LOSSES in manpower because of industrial injuries are higher now than they have been for many years, Max D. Kossoris, chief of the Industrial Hazards Division of the Bureau of Labor Statistics, stated at the National Safety Congress in Chicago.

"Considering the trends during the last two years, the further drafting of men out of our industries, and the expected growth in our industrial employment, the trend of injuries can be expected to continue upwards," Mr. Kossoris predicted.

During the last few years, total work injuries have increased more rapidly than employment. Mr. Kossoris said that from 1940 to 1942 average employment increased by 19%, but work injuries rose 23%.

The combination of "green" personnel, congestion and less adequate supervision increases the problem which safety engineers must handle.

Science News Letter, January 8, 1944

Camels have been used in warfare from the earliest days in history.

PSYCHOLOGY

Planning for the Future

Americans want to arrange now for preventing post-war unemployment; in favor of giving returning soldiers education and first choice of jobs.

► THE AMERICAN people want plans made for re-converting for peace after the war, and they want those plans made now. This is revealed by a poll covering all major regions of the nation, conducted by Dr. Jerome S. Bruner, of the Office of Public Opinion Research at Princeton University, for the National Planning Association.

"The public is ahead of the government and Congress in their demand for immediate planning," Dr. Bruner said.

Almost unanimous backing is given President Roosevelt's proposal to give returning soldiers a chance for education. Only 11% oppose the plan while 86 out of every hundred favor it—Republicans and Democrats. Also popular (81% in favor) is the idea of lending money to returning soldiers to help them get started in business or to establish a home. And men and women, rich and poor, would give the soldiers first chance at jobs after the war. But any plan to provide a cash bonus to the soldier after he has found a steady job is likely to meet considerable opposition, the survey reveals.

Apparently a good job is seen by most people as the first essential to be provided the returning soldier. The largest vote of those surveyed (41%) was for having this handled by the U. S. Employment Service, but another large group favor having the job assigned to a new government agency. Only 14% would have the local draft boards handle it.

What sort of a world will we have after the war? Most people (56%) look for a large number of new products to

make living more pleasant. But, on the other hand, the survey does not indicate that we may expect any wild spending spree when peace comes. More than seven out of every ten of the persons surveyed declared they are going to hang on to their bonds for a while after the war. Less than half are looking forward to some purchase when the war is over, and most of these hope to put the money into a house or house repairs.

Nine people out of ten favor the continuance of rationing after the war if it is necessary to feed starving and devastated countries, and 75% advocate post-war price control for a while.

One point on which people disagree is who should lead in the post-war planning. In general, the less well off economically and the Democrats feel that it should be done by the government; the more wealthy and the Republicans would have business and labor take the initiative. All political parties and income groups are equally optimistic in the belief that joint planning can prevent unemployment after this war.

Science News Letter, January 8, 1944

NAVAL SCIENCE

New Carriers Spearhead Pacific Task Force Drives

See Front Cover

► FROM ABOARD one of the warships in a task force in the Pacific, the U. S. Navy's photographer has caught the picture on the front cover of this SCIENCE NEWS LETTER showing other ships on the same combat mission, including two carriers of the new Essex class. These carriers, 25,000-ton vessels, have spearheaded drives on many Japanese-held islands in the Pacific—Wake, Rabaul, Makin, Tarawa, the Marshalls and Nauru.

Operating from the carriers are Douglas Dauntless dive-bombers and Grumman Avenger torpedo planes. Cover for the bombers is provided by the new and distinguished Grumman Hellcats.

Science News Letter, January 8, 1944

Science News Letter Subscription Coupon

To Science News Letter, 1719 N St., N.W., Washington 6, D. C.

Start Renew my subscription to SCIENCE NEWS LETTER for 1 year, \$5 2 years, \$8

Name _____

Street Address _____

City and State _____

(No extra postage to anywhere in the world)