

should be exercised not to damage or break the ergot. Winnowing can be achieved, in the absence of a machine, by throwing the material in a draught of wind in the open, or such as is obtained through an open doorway. Bags should be placed on the ground to catch the ergot. Being heavier, the ergot will fall closer to the thrower, while the lighter seed, straw, and dust will float further away. The operation will probably require repeating several times to secure a reasonably clean sample.

Cleaning can also be obtained by throwing the mixed ergot and rubbish in a pail of water. The heavier and better-class ergot will immediately sink, and by judicious stirring, the remainder of the ergot will be induced to fall, leaving the straw, seed, and other light rubbish floating on top of the water. The floating material can then be poured off, leaving behind the ergot at the bottom of the pail. The ergot should then be thoroughly dried immediately in the sun.

Purchasing Price

The thoroughly dried pure or practically pure ergot should be put in air-

tight containers, such as tobacco tins, and taken to the nearest produce merchant, who will purchase it on the following basis:—

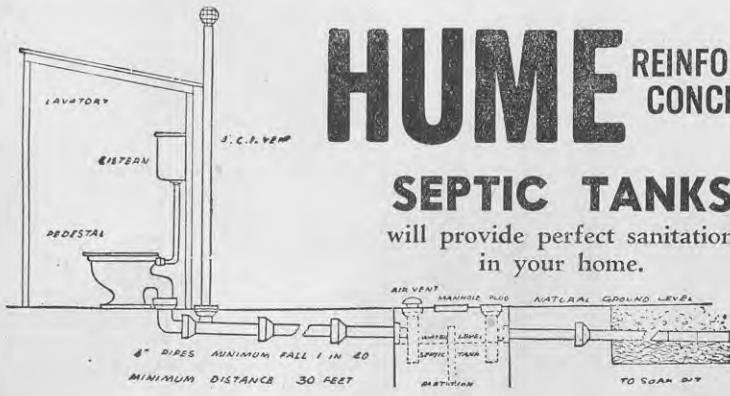
- Grade 1.**—100 per cent. clean dry whole ergot, 8s. per lb. or 6d. per oz.
- Grade 2.**—Not less than 80 per cent. clean dry whole ergot; not more than 20 per cent. clean dry broken ergot, 6s 8d per lb. or 5d. per oz.
- Grade 3.**—Not less than 70 per cent. clean dry whole ergot; not more than 30 per cent. straw, seed, and foreign material, 5s 4d per lb. or 4d per oz.
- Grade 4.**—Not less than 50 per cent. clean dry whole ergot; not more than 30 per cent. straw, seed, and foreign material; not more than 20 per cent. broken ergot, 4s. per lb. or 3d. per oz.

Here is an opportunity for service in alleviating the suffering of men who are fighting for us. It is an opportunity which offers itself particularly to children in country districts, and contributions of even 1 oz. will be welcome. Ergot from many grass plants is useful, but that from tall fescue in particular and marram grass is most valuable. Let us see that the tons of ergot which soon will be present on the tall fescue of our swamps do not fall to the ground unharvested.

Tall fescue is easily recognised. It is a tall, upright plant with coarse leaves, the edges of which are liable to cut the tongue if drawn across it. The base of the stem next to the root and close to and slightly below the ground has a red colouration.

Export to Britain

After the ergot has been collected the merchants purchasing the ergot will forward it split into the four grades to a central merchant, where it will be inspected before being forwarded for machine dressing. After machine dressing the ergot will be exported to Britain. The Government has set aside £14,000 for the purchase of ergot, and it is to be hoped that all this money will have been expended by the time the ergot harvest is over. The produce merchants are being put to a considerable amount of trouble in the handling of the numerous small amounts that are liable to come forward, and it is to their credit that they have agreed to give their support to the scheme.



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