

City Milk Supply

Milk Dealers Will Fight Price

THE attitude likely to be assumed by milk dealers in Toronto to meet the price increase asked by the Producers' Association is indicated by the following press notice in a Toronto daily. The Globe:

"War has been declared by the Toronto Milk Dealers' Association upon the Toronto Milk Producers' Association. The former body held a meeting recently and decided that its members would not pay the increased price decided upon by the producers last Saturday. The dealers are supplying Toronto with milk fixed the price from October 1 until the end of this year at \$2.50 an eight-gallon can, an increase of 30 cents over existing prices. The dealers do not believe that the increase by the producers is justified. They feel that it is the producers living near Toronto that are boosting the price. Milk is being offered, they say, by farmers living farther from Toronto at the prevailing price, and these dairymen are anxious to get a market for it. The Toronto price is higher than these farmers can secure in their own neighborhood.

"The dealers at the meeting adopted a resolution deciding not to enter into any contracts with producers for milk at \$2.50 a can. They will only renew contracts for the seven months between October 1 and May 1 at the present price of \$2.50 a can delivered."

Difficulties of Milk Producers' Associations

SOME of the inherent weaknesses of milk producers' organizations were dealt with by Mr. E. H. Stonehouse, the president of the Ontario and Ontario Producers' Associations, in an address given at a meeting, held in Peterboro', on Sept. 10th, by a number of the dairy farmers who sell their milk in the city of Peterboro'. One of the greatest difficulties is the maintaining of interest in the work of the organization throughout the year. When prices are good interest lags and the membership falls off. When prices are unfavorable, interest increases. These ups and downs in the membership make it difficult for the officers to conduct the affairs of the association as satisfactorily as they otherwise could. Then also there are always a considerable number of farmers who refuse to join and who give as their reason that they can sell their milk at as favorable a price as the members of the association, but who overlook the fact that they, as well as members of the association, would have to receive lower prices were it not for the work of the association.

Mr. Stonehouse pointed out that there is always a limit beyond which prices cannot be advanced by any local association. When an effort is made to exceed this limit, it simply results in milk being shipped in from outside points, until prices are forced down to a basis more on a level with the price of milk elsewhere throughout the province.

In the early days of the Toronto association, members joined readily, but when sacrifices became necessary, the membership fell off, and finally the association went to pieces. For several years the producers were without an organization. Finally, conditions became so unsatisfactory, the producers once more were led to organize.

During the interval they learned a lesson which has made it possible to keep the association at work consistently from that time. The officers have found that as they interest themselves in broader questions, such as production, interest is better maintained than when only matters of price are discussed.

Cost System Needed

Great emphasis was laid by Mr. Stonehouse on the need for farmers being more businesslike in their methods. Whenever business men representing various organizations want up on the government, they are able to submit carefully figured out statements showing their receipts and expenditures, and why they need whatever form of government assistance they may be asking for. Farmers do not keep such records, and this is at a great disadvantage when questions relating to the cost of producing milk are under consideration by the Government. A year ago when Mr. Stonehouse was asked by the Food Controller to act on a committee that was appointed to consider the cost of producing and distributing milk, he had to go to Ottawa without an information bearing on the cost of production. In the year that has elapsed there has been able to obtain but little further information on this subject. Such figures as he did receive were of great variation, and therefore were very conflicting. One farmer, using improved methods and taking advantage of his opportunities, was reducing the cost of production, might also be producing profitably, where another farmer near by and not so progressive was producing at a loss at the same price. Another difficulty in obtaining information was found in the fact that on many farms milk is only a by-product.

Toronto Prices.

Mr. Stonehouse stated that the reason Toronto milk producers were obtaining better prices for their milk than farmers elsewhere, was because their farms were organized. While some farmers felt that the price they received for milk was sufficiently high, the members of the Toronto Milk Producers' Association at their recent meeting, decided unanimously to ask for an increased price. One reason for this was that gluten feed, which a year ago cost \$45, is now costing \$65 at Port William, and only small amounts are almost impossible to secure. The uncertainty over the feed situation was what led the members to ask for increased prices.

Mr. Stonehouse drew attention to the great diversity in prices paid for milk in different parts of the province. He stated that this diversity keeps consumers unsettled and is most unsatisfactory to producers and consumers. Their experience in Toronto has shown that when the price is advanced, consumption decreases. At the time of the last advance in Toronto, the consumption fell off about 10 per cent, and it was some months before it got back to normal.

The Toronto association has found it necessary to organize some 20 branch associations. These look after the organization of the milk producers in their respective localities. There is a considerable rivalry between some of the branch associations, some of which have been able to report every farmer in the district a member of their organizations.

No matter what efforts are put forth, the main responsibility for keeping an association alive and progressive, seems inevitably to rest upon the shoulders of a few men. These men have to be constantly on the job to keep things going. These few do the work which the rest hang on to the tail of the kite. Such a condition is not as it should be.

Owing to the fact that these are not normal times, Mr. Stonehouse claimed that the whole business of milk production should be handled with the greatest care. Before any radical changes are proposed, the producers should be prepared to prove that any step they take is justified. Mr. Stonehouse stated that he had heard that strong opposition was likely to be put forward to prevent the Toronto producers obtaining the increased price for milk that they had asked for. Evidence of the need of farmers knowing their cost of production was furnished at

the close of the meeting, when some of the producers present claimed that they were able to make money at the prices paid for milk near Peterboro', although Peterboro' producers were obtaining only \$2 for a 100-lb. can, where Toronto producers had been receiving \$2.50 for an eight-gallon can of 89 lbs. One producer claimed that they were unable to make a profit at the same prices.

FIELD NOTES

By "Mac."

Gleaning West and East

JUDGING by appearances, while passing through the coal producing regions of Alberta, it is evident that Western Canada is making a supreme effort to supply their own fuel for the coming winter. One of the regions particularly noted during my recent trip through the West was heller is of the Drumheller district. Drumheller is on the Red Deer river, and for several miles on either side of the river bluffs there is apparently an almost unlimited supply of soft coal. Some of this has been worked in times past, but this year every few rods along the railroad track, which follows the river for several miles, there are fresh cuts being made into the bank and new trestles being built to run the coal out to where it can be loaded on to the cars. After leaving the Red Deer river the C. N. R. gains the prairie level by means of following the canyon of Rosebud Creek. Along this creek are also extensive coal beds, some of which are being opened up and some of which are not.

IT is possible that not for many years has such a large quantity of prairie hay been cut in the western provinces as has been cut this year. There will be many parts of the West where none will be cut, owing to the fact that there is none to cut the range cattle having stripped everything that was fit to eat. In other districts, however, where hay has been ordinarily left year after year without cutting, the range cattle eating what they require and leaving the rest in large quantities have saved this year. This is due to the action on the part of the governments of the Western Province in cooperation with the ranchers and farmers in the dry districts, where that all feed be saved. This fact, coupled with the fact that large trainloads of cattle were transported farther north to districts where pasture was plentiful and where the trees and was, too, broken with trees, etc., to profitably for cutting hay, will go a long way to prevent a repetition of the great losses in range cattle which have taken place once or twice in the past history of the West.

This extensive cutting of hay, together with the large amount of green feed which has grown up since the rains of the past few weeks, but which will not be ripe in time to thresh, will give the Western ranchers a large supply of winter feed. This will go a long way to take the place of the depleted pastures which usually are practically enough feed during the winter months. It will entail considerable more work on the part of the owners of the stock, but considering the prices of beef at the present time, it will be time well spent.

WHILE the early frosts, which destroyed a large part of the wheat crop in the northern part of the three provinces, were looked upon as a dire calamity at the time, it is a question if, after all, they have not been a blessing in disguise. These frosts covered a large percentage of the area of the West on which there was a crop of wheat, yet while it has

robbed the wheat supply it has added to the supply of winter feed for the cattle. It also emphasizes to an even stronger degree than ever before the necessity of depending not entirely upon wheat as a farm income, even in the wheat producing provinces of the West. The farmer who has no stock to which they can feed their green feed are losers outright. The farmers who have stock of their own, or who are all rounders, or who have stock who wish to be fed, are not such heavy losers. They will receive an income which will pay them for their expense of seedling and harvesting and a little to the good besides.

WHILE going about various parts of Ontario during the harvest season this year I could not help noticing the large fields of grain which were not stocked. The farmers who owned them were in long chances. This was due to two chief causes. In the first place was lack of help to have the grain stocked as it fell sheaves. On many farms the one man operator, the binder, and stocked his grain either at night, when his horses were resting, or stocked the whole crop after the cutting was all done. In other cases the crop was so heavy that the binder could not possibly follow the binder. And there were very few farms that could boast of more than one man available for this kind of work. The other reason is the great amount of bad weather which we had during harvest. Many farmers with whom I have spoken stated that it was impossible to make the sheaves stand up and that it was a waste of time to try to stock them on windy days. Consequently the binder was kept running on windy days and the grain was stocked when the weather was calm.

IT is doubtful if for many years there has been as uniformly a good crop of grain in Ontario as there is this year. One of the remarkable features of the Ontario crop is the rapidity with which it grew, even in warm weather. At the time that I left for the West, on July 8th, there had been no warm weather in Ontario. Crops of all kinds were at standstill and, judging by appearances at that time, there might have been a crop failure. Apparently from that date until the date of my return, on Aug. 5th, there must have been a spell of unusually fine growing weather, and great was my surprise upon returning to Ontario to find the farmers in the midst of the harvest of one of the biggest crops they have yet had to do with. Not only is this so in local sections, but apparently extends over the whole of Ontario. I have seen the Western part myself, and in word received from one of our readers in the most eastern extremity of the province, that the wheat on the farm averaged from five to six feet in height and well headed out.

WHILE the fall wheat in Ontario this year has been next thing to a total failure, the spring wheat has been the very opposite. Even in fields where it was merely drilled in along with the remains of the fall wheat, it has shown an extra working of the soil, it has produced a bumper crop. This is quite encouraging to Ontario farmers, many of whom have begun to consider wheat as an unprofitable crop in Ontario.

If labor is too scarce to handle the fallen fruit in the orchards, why not turn the hogs in for a few hours each day.

The Western farmer remarks that it is strange how it improves live stock of all kinds to cross them with a locomotive. The ordinary burr often becomes a valuable beast after being killed.