

average Quebec farmer, who has been devoting his attention to dairying for so many years, understands what it really means to feed cattle for the export market. Even if he had the right kind of animal for beef production, it may take a few years to educate him how to feed it for beef purposes. Then how is it possible for him to feed and raise a dairy calf and make it into a quality of beef suitable for the export trade?

Choice Bacon Hogs at a Premium.

No other product of the farm is selling so well at the present time, comparatively speaking, as the first class bacon hog. Last week as high as \$0.25 per cwt. was paid on the Toronto market for hogs of this character. As compared with Chicago prices for the best hogs this is fully \$2 per cwt. higher. To bring this figure, however, the hogs must be of the highest class for bacon-producing purposes. Both the breeding and the feeding must be right or the top limit cannot be reached.

Complaints still continue to be made by packers of the number of inferior hogs that are being offered on the market. The greatest objection seems to be in regard to the feeding of the hogs. Where they are fed largely of such foods as corn and fresh clover, especially for a month or six weeks previous to shipping, a soft, oily fat meat is the result, which is unsuitable for making the finest export bacon. To produce the finest bacon, which will command the top price on the market, a hog must be fed right. Ground peas, barley, oats, etc., or shorts mixed with the by-products of the dairy, make the best of foods for bacon production. Especially should these foods be given for the six weeks previous to the time when the hog is ready for shipping. Then, with a good type of bacon hog there should be no difficulty whatever in producing the kind of bacon wanted for the British markets.

The extra high prices now being paid for choice bacon hogs should certainly be an inducement for our farmers to raise and feed that kind of hog and no other. The complaint is heard once in a while that the packers are getting too particular, and find fault for the purpose of making a little extra out of the farmer. We do not think there are any grounds whatever for these complaints. The packers' interests in developing the export bacon trade are identical with the farmers' interests and *vice versa*. Of course the packer is not in the business for the fun of it, nor is the farmer. Both are in the business for the money there is in it; the one producing, the other converting the product into an article of export, and both must co-operate or the highest benefit cannot accrue to either. The packer and exporter, who comes directly in touch with the consumer of the product, knows the quality of goods which suits his tastes the best, and for which the consumer will pay the highest price. And he in turn is willing to pay the farmer a higher price for hogs suitable for making the quality of bacon for which the British consumer will pay the highest price. The high premium which the packer is now paying for choice bacon hogs is proof of this.

But to come down to a question of profit, which, perhaps, is the only standpoint from which the question should be discussed, what should be the attitude of the farmer towards this whole subject? Sometimes the price for which an article sells is not an indication of what profit there is in producing that article. Profit is the difference between the cost of production and the price for which the article sells. In this country, however, the choice bacon hog can be produced just as cheaply as any other kind of hog, so long as the farmer has the right type of animal to begin with. This being so, there is more profit in producing this kind of hog than any other. Even if it should cost a trifle more to produce the bacon hog, the much higher price which he will command on the market will make up for this extra cost and leave a good margin to boot.

There is one thing that should be remembered by the hog producer. So long as the packer is willing to pay a high premium for choice bacon hogs it is clear that that is the kind of hog which suits his trade best. If this were not the kind of hog which the export market requires why would he be willing to pay a high premium in order to get it. If the time should ever come when the packer would not be willing to pay a higher price for a choice, properly fed bacon hog than for a large fat one, it may be taken for granted that the former is of no more value for the export trade than the latter, and that one will pay the farmer as well as the other. At present the packer is willing to pay fifty cents more per cwt. for the choice bacon hog than for any other, and therefore there can be no doubt but that is the kind of hog the farmer should produce. Those who have followed the markets closely during the past few years will have noticed that the distinction between a choice bacon hog and any other quality is becoming more marked. In other words the prices obtainable for choice bacon hogs and heavy, fat corn-fed hogs are getting farther apart. We believe that the margin between these two classes of hogs will be greater than it is now. In fact we are inclined to the opinion that the packers do not make sufficient distinction as between the prices for choice bacon hogs and heavy fat hogs. If it is all important to the trade that the bacon hog should be produced and no other, a greater difference than fifty cents per cwt. should be made in the prices paid for the different qualities. If thick, fat hogs are not suitable for the export bacon trade it seems strange that as high as \$5.60 to \$5.75 per cwt. should be paid for them on this market.

The British Farmer's Outlay for Foreign Feeding Stuffs.

Everybody knows that Great Britain spends enormous sums every year for foreign meats and breadstuffs for human food, but it may be news to many to know that she also imports every year large quantities of feeding stuffs to be given to farm stock. These latter are, for the most part, in the form of concentrated products, such as corn, barley, etc. The quantity of hay and rough feeds is, comparatively speaking, very small. Upwards of twenty million pounds sterling is paid out every year by the British stock owners for imported feeding stuffs. The British stockman is beginning to feel this drain upon his purse more keenly of late. Though he has been compelled to purchase largely of this foreign feed, the price of cattle is lower per head than it was some years ago. Besides, the number of cattle kept has not increased, while the acreage devoted to pasturage is larger than it was a few years ago, when the outlay for foreign feeds was not so great as it is to-day. The situation, then, is not a very desirable one from the British farmer's point of view. And he is beginning to wonder what the outcome is going to be. However, so long as he farms, he must feed more or less cattle, and it will be necessary for him to purchase largely of foreign feeding stuffs.

Of the foreign feeding stuffs imported by Great Britain, corn is one of the most important items. In 1897 fifty-three million cwt. of Indian corn was imported. The greater part of this came from the United States, though, of late, large quantities come from Argentina. The average cost of the corn landed in England is about 3s. 6d. per cwt., or £3 10s. per ton. Of late years a large amount of barley is annually imported for feed. The quantity imported in 1897 was about 19 million cwt., the greater portion of which came from Russia. A large share of the barley imported is for brewing purposes, but a considerable quantity that cannot be used by brewers is used for feed. The feeding barley laid down costs about £4 per ton. A large percentage of the peas and beans imported is used for feeding stock.

Of the total supply of oats available in Great

Britain, about twenty-two per cent. is estimated to come from abroad. Upwards of eighty per cent. of the foreign oats brought in, it is estimated, is given to farm stock. In 1891, imported oats cost laid down there 18s. 4d. per quarter as compared with 13s. 4d. per quarter in 1895, a decrease of twenty-seven per cent. It is estimated that the British farmers expend annually three and three-quarter million pounds sterling for imported oil cakes and oil seeds. The imports of hay since 1895 have been at the rate of 115,000 tons annually, which cost laid down about £3 7s. per ton.

From this summary it will be seen that the British trade in foreign feeding stuffs is worth catering for. Canada would not be able to compete with the United States in supplying corn, but she ought to be able to compete with any country in supplying barley, oats, peas, beans and hay for the British farmer. In regard to hay the quantity imported is not as large as was supposed. Quebec alone would be able to supply this year double the annual quantity imported. Though this market may be somewhat limited it may be worth while to give some special attention to it this year, when Canada has such a large hay crop to be disposed of.

What is to be Done with the Big Hay Crop?

From all accounts Canada, and more particularly the Province of Quebec, has not had such a big hay crop for years as has been gathered in this season. As compared with last year, the crop is an exceptionally large one. There is this difference, however, that while last year's crop was, as a rule, poor in quality, this year's output is of very fine quality. But this does not help the situation any if a market cannot be obtained for this year's output. Prices for last year's crop were, on the average, very low, with the exception of those for first-class quality, which was very scarce. If this was the case last year, what may the farmer expect for this year's abundant crop? Even though the quality is so much better, it is not likely, from present prospects, that any better prices will be obtained than for last year's output.

It may not be the best kind of farming to sell the hay off the land; but, nevertheless, the fact remains that many farmers will have considerable surplus hay to sell, and in Quebec, where a large number of farmers make a business of growing and selling hay, there will be between 300,000 and 400,000 tons for export. The question then is, what is to be done with this surplus hay? The heavy duty imposed prohibits Canadian hay from being exported to the United States. To export it to Great Britain is the next thing that suggests itself. But the prices there of late have been so low as to almost prohibit the exportation of hay at a profit; and according to late reports the home crop throughout the United Kingdom is very large, so that there is not likely to be an advance in prices there for some time. The outlook therefore is a somewhat gloomy one.

However, the only way of solving the problem seems to be along the line of further developing the market for our surplus hay in Great Britain. But when the price there is low, by the time freight and transportation charges are paid, there is not much left for the producer. Comparatively speaking, the freight charges both by rail and ocean vessel on bulky products from Canada, such as hay, are exorbitant. It costs nearly as much to carry such products to the English consumer as it does to purchase them from the farmer. Just here the two great railway corporations of Canada have a splendid opportunity to do a very generous act for the Canadian farmer, who for these many years back has been paying into the coffers of the railway companies a large share of the value of the products shipped from the farm, by lowering the freight rates on this year's hay crop. Why not have cut freight rates as well as cut passenger rates? The railways would undoubtedly get a larger share of business. Unless the prices