

4. (Analysis as guaranteed by the manufacturer, which shall show the percentage content of protein, fat and fibre.)

Never was it so important to know the relative merits of different feeds and the exact analysis of the product we buy as it now is. Live stock is being fed high-priced feeds, and farm stock must be carefully rationed in order to show the desired returns.

British Farm Live Stock in 1917.

EDITOR "THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE":

Farm live stock have occupied a very prominent place in the agricultural annals of Great Britain in 1917, and it is not too much to say that the events of the year have demonstrated the very high place which our farm animals occupy in connection with the food supply of the nation. We might almost say that 1917 has demonstrated that our farm live stock are the key to the whole food position, and that mistakes with regard to them may not only be costly to the people's food supply, but very nearly irreparable. Their great economic place on the farm is that they are maintained and reared to a very large extent on crop residues or crops which are necessary to maintain the soil in high fertility for the more special crops for human consumption.

These supply overwhelmingly the bulk of the food of our farm, such supplementary "concentrated" foods as are added being given only—in the great majority of cases—to an extent necessary for the more effective utilization for meat or milk on the farm roughages which are the bulk of the food. This is the part which "concentrated" foods play in the feeding of farm animals, although during the times of low prices probably more grain, meal, or cake was used than was absolutely necessary for the actual economic utilization of farm roughages. But just as low prices brought about such extra use of these supplementary foods, so we may take it that the high prices which the war has brought about would be a sufficient corrective. At any rate, beyond a rigorous economy in the use of "concentrated" foods, a proper handling of our home food production would have seen to it that the effective feeding of farm animals should not be allowed to deteriorate in any way. This was as necessary for the maintenance of our supplies of meat, milk, and dairy produce, as any measures for conserving human foods. It was fully recognized by Mr. Prothero, in his circular letter of the 28th of December, 1916, and has been emphasized by that gentleman in December, 1917, in advice that in the croppings of the new arable lands, crops for the feeding of live stock are as important as wheat and potatoes for human beings. Unfortunately, between these dates, other "controllers" evidently under the idea that farm animals are fed entirely, or almost so, on concentrated foods—have not only interfered with the business of stock feeding, but have even gone so far as to issue orders based on the assumption that "a large reduction of our flocks and herds" is essential.

This policy of reducing our flocks and herds has been helped very much by the fixing of prices for both meat and milk at a figure which was declared by agriculturists to be below the cost of production, and as early as May last the Royal Agricultural Society formed a War Emergency Committee, and this body has been doing much to present the agricultural side of this and other questions to the country, and to get modifications of quite a number of orders. This committee has also asked, in connection with several matters, that all agricultural matters shall be left to the Board of Agriculture and not be dealt with by other bodies. At its December meeting the committee passed a resolution declaring its conviction that the position with regard to meat supplies of the country is so grave "that it feels compelled to warn the government of the serious consequences that must arise, and urges the necessity for an immediate inquiry into the whole position."

Such is the situation as the year 1917 merges into 1918, and it finds us with our live stock situation by no means promising statistically. We have been recovering somewhat in the number of our dairy cattle ever since the twentieth century opened, but such recovery has been small and slow. Meat animals and horses, however, had made very little advance before the war, while sheep were declining. Since the war commenced, the changes shown may be best described as follows:—

Numbers of Live Stock in England & Wales in 1917.

	Numbers in 1917	No.	+ Increase or—Decrease compared with	1916	1914
Horses.....	1,372,820	13,250	—	26,727	
Cattle.....	6,227,150	11,370	+	349,206	
Sheep.....	17,169,860	781,260	—	898,834	
Pigs.....	1,918,540	249,400	—	562,941	

Under the conditions which now prevail these figures are not satisfactory, and there can be no doubt that, just as we are increasing our arable land, so also we ought

the agricultural year has been presented by the pedigree stock sales, at which not only have records been broken continuously and in every direction but which can only be regarded as very satisfactory from the faith which these high prices have shown in the future of stock-breeding. For practically all British breeds a new high-water mark of prices has been reached, and there can be little doubt that the Live Stock Journal Almanac for 1918—in which the doings of every breed is chronicled in detail—will long be cherished for the records it gives on the wonderful war year for breeders. The sales have been about the usual numbers, and there is no evidence of any getting out of the business, as is sometimes the case when prices are high. Such dispersion sales as there have been have been those which usually follow in the usual course of events. On the other hand, the election of from 100 to 200 new members at every meeting of the council of the Shire Horse Society in 1917 is evidence that not a few men are coming into the business. It also shows that draft horse breeders are certainly not dismayed at the coming of the motor tractor. And the fact that 530 guineas and 490 guineas were paid for colt foals during the year at ordinary repository sales at Peterborough is something tangible to base their faith upon. Both Clydesdales and Suffolks have had a year equally noteworthy with the Shire. Shorthorns have had a phenomenal year. Not only were 6,497 head sold at 73 sales for £512,826 14s. 6d., or a general average of £78 18s. 8d. apiece, but at seven of those sales individual animals ran into four figures in guineas, and at sixteen sales the total realized ran into five figures in pounds sterling. The Holstein-Friesian breed increased the number of animals sold over 1916, and also increased its average price per head from £55 10s. to £103 7s. All the other cattle breeds shared this advance in values, as have also sheep and pigs, and altogether the year 1917 has shown, as we cannot help repeating, great faith in the future of the British live stock industry. And it has been a faith that has been well backed up with "cash down".

ALBION.

THE FARM.

Strong Reason for Seed Testing.

EDITOR "THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE":

There are some features in farming which are not under the control of the operator, or are only partially so. There are other things, however, about which he may have exact knowledge. Too frequently farmers take a gambling chance with the seed they use, both from the standpoint of its purity and vitality, but most frequently with the last point. It is true that more farmers from year to year test or have their seed corn tested for them before planting. So many have sustained such losses in the past from poor germinating seed corn that it is rare for them now to sow or plant any corn of which they have not some assurance that most of it at least will grow when given a fair show. Farmers cannot control weather conditions and they may be able to control only in a measure the availability of the plant food required by the crop, but there seems to be no reason why they should take a chance on the vitality of their seed grain when they can so easily make a test themselves between dampened folds of blotting paper, used with inverted plates on the back of the stove, or by planting a given number of seeds in soil. If they don't want to take that much trouble they have the Dominion Government, through the Seed Branch of the Department of Agriculture, Ottawa, to help them out without any fees or even the cost of a postage stamp to send, up to 8 ounces of seed through the mail. Seed testing under Seed Branch auspices is also done at Calgary, Alta. In sending seed there, however, postage is required. Usually a little over 200 seeds is all that is required. However, it is better to send double that quantity in case a second test is necessary.

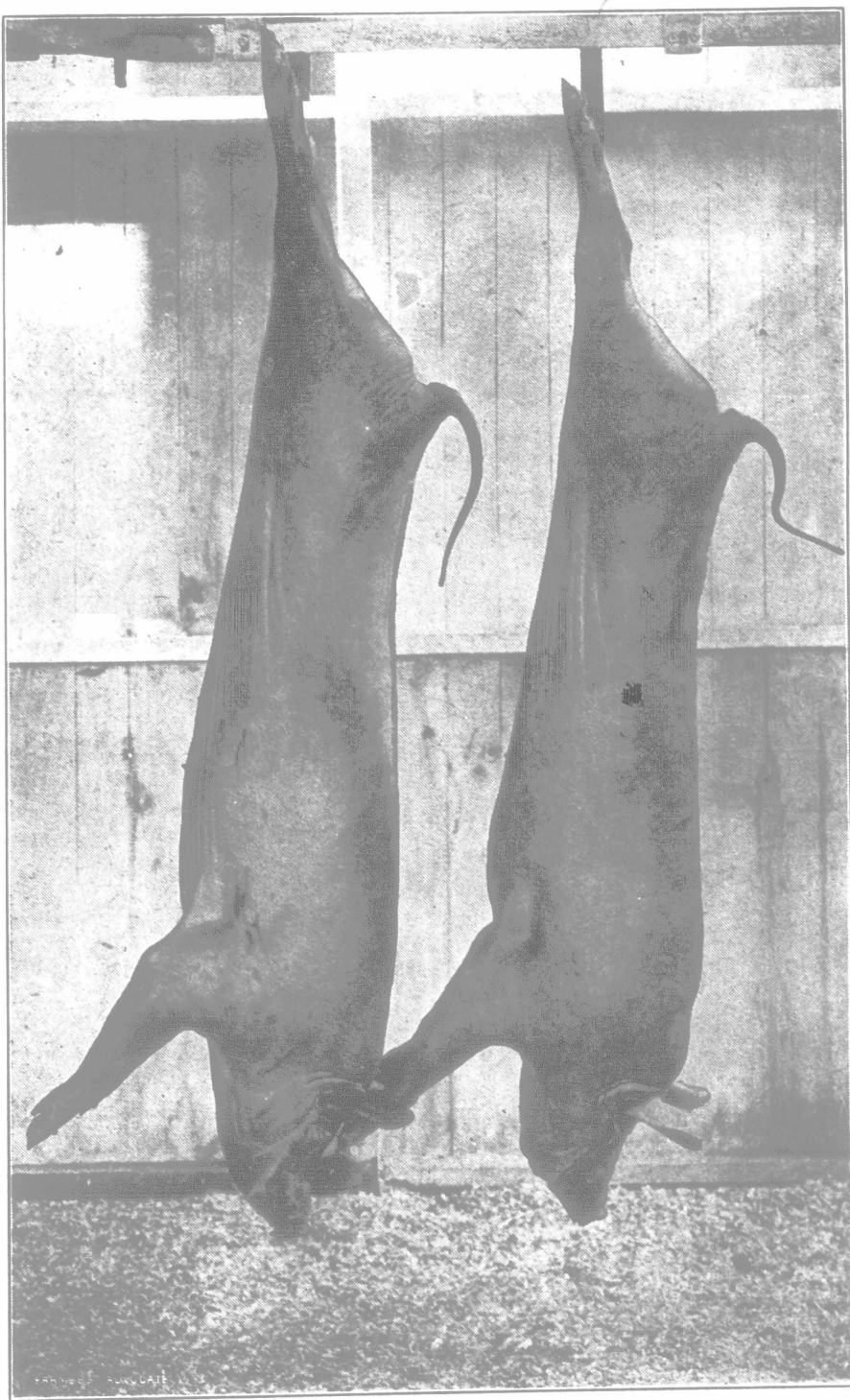
Had a farmer, living near Ottawa, whose crop was visited by members of the Seed Branch last season and who sowed forty dollars' worth of barley on a rented field which he was required to leave seeded with clover and timothy, had his barley tested before sowing he would not be the sad man he now is. His barley crop proved to be so light that it wasn't worth harvesting. When some of the seed which he sowed was tested later only 8 per cent. of it grew. Fancy making such a mistake as that in a year when greater production was such a necessity! Let no farmer make such a mistake this year, as the need for production is even greater than last year.

But the loss of the crop wasn't all. In this field there were some wild mustard plants which grew up and went to seed along with other weeds and the barley, none of which was cut or harvested but went into the soil again. The farmer hadn't the time or labor to spend on it, and the owner evidently didn't look after it.

It may be that such extreme cases are rare, but look out for the seed corn this year and any Western oats that may have been frosted.

T. G. RAYNOR.

A woman who knows whereof she speaks, deals with the work of the women on our farms in this issue. Many farm women are working altogether too hard not but even these would do more if strength permitted. The women of the farms are doing their share.



The Champion Bacon-hog Carcasses at Guelph Winter Fair.

Exhibited by J. E. Brethour & Nephews, Burford, Ont.

to make a brave and vigorous effort to increase our live stock. Such a policy is, in fact, a necessary sequence to our increase of arable land, for unless we also increase our live stock and dung we shall not be able to make the best use, or even any adequate use of the land we are breaking up at so great a cost. Any increase of arable land should be accompanied by an increase of live stock, not only because of the need for more dung to keep the soil in physical condition, but also because proper arable croppings produce not only more food for man but more food, also, for stock.

The policy that is imperatively called for in 1918, is one that will maintain to the full all breeding stocks in the country, and that will aim at increasing them in the near future by rearing all young animals to maturity and usefulness. No young animals—whether suckling pigs, lambs, or calves—should be slaughtered for food until our live stock stocks have been increased to the same proportion as our arable land has been increased. This should, broadly, be our policy.

What is probably the most satisfactory feature of