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EDITORIAL

The Butter Situation

The situation as far as butter supply is concerned has become serious. Winnipeg houses, finding it impossible to secure supplies in Canada, were obliged to send to the United States. One firm recently imported between three and four tons, paying four cents a pound duty and two and a quarter cents a pound express charge. Stores now charge customers 40 to 48 cents a pound, and indications are for a jump to the half dollar mark.

Should not farmers of the West endeavor to take advantage of the high price situation? With city creameries paying 35 to 37 cents per pound of butter fat for cream, and prospects of that price being raised two or three cents, farmers should sit up and look into the advisability of spending some of their spare time attending to cows that will give at least 5,000 pounds of four per cent. milk in a year. The returns for a period of five years would be at least as satisfactory as those from a like period devoted to exclusive grain farming. Besides the land would not depreciate in value so rapidly.

Cattle Will Sell Higher

"It is always wise to walk when the crowd begins to run," goeth the old saw, but it is good policy to run if one is a little ahead of the mob and can beat them to the goal. A case in point is the cattle business. Unless one has travelled up and down this country and looked into conditions in every district he has no idea of the extent to which farmers have gone out of raising and finishing cattle for market. They have become disgusted with the business and the raw deal handed them by buyers, railroads, stockyards people and wholesale dealers. They "chucked" the business, stopped working for the "beef trust"

and pinned their faith to cereal production. Now a reaction is at hand and those not too prejudiced against livestock are preparing to profit from it. We venture the assertion that within the next two or three years sweeping improvements will be effected in transporting to market and the selling of our livestock and that these changes will open a new era for the man who is prepared to go ahead and profit from them. Livestock producers have been agitating for years for certain reforms in our marketing methods and those reforms will come. Cattle will be cheap again—poor ones always will be—but it will be some time yet before the livestock scarcity is made up, and in the meantime what are you going to do about it?

Buying a Cream Separator

When grain crops are good and prices are high the farmer of the Canadian prairies has an aversion to adopting dairying as one branch of agriculture to which he should pay attention. However, cream and butter prices at present are at a level that demands attention as well as the prospective returns from grain farming. Cream separators, consequently, are in demand. In the past ten years in Manitoba sales have increased about four fold. In the other provinces the last four years have seen creditable sales of separators. This is only as it should be. The West needs butter in annually increasing quantities. No part of America is better adapted to cheap production than are the districts lying between the eastern boundary of Manitoba and the Rocky Mountains. Moreover, large creameries demand cream to manufacture butter to meet town and city requirements. Cows and the cream separator, therefore, are desirable assets.

But the purchase of a cream separator forms a business transaction that merits much consideration. It is wise to deal with thoroughly established and reliable firms. Standard machines all have qualities that make them worth the price asked. Manufacturers have mastered the fine points of mechanical construction and have reduced the price to a minimum that is consistent with efficiency and wearability. For small herds, machines of 200 to 350 pounds' capacity can be bought at prices ranging from \$45 to \$65. For more cows a 450-pound machine costing about \$75, meets all requirements, while a 675-pound machine costing in the neighborhood of \$90, will handle the milk produced by a twenty-cow herd. Too many make the mistake of getting a machine of too small capacity.

Price is not the only consideration in purchasing. A good separator, if properly cared for, should remain in use for ten years or more. Repairs no doubt will be needed, so that it is wise to buy from a firm that shows good prom-

ise of being in business for at least that time. Machines have been put on the market with a guarantee that repairs would be furnished free for eight or ten years, but in less than half that time the manufacturers were not in the separator business.

Consider well the dairy business; think carefully about the purchase of a cream separator; deal with reliable manufacturers and pay the price that quality warrants.

\$31.00 per Head Profit on Steers

A farmer in northwestern Manitoba bought a bunch of 23 two-year-old steers last fall, paying for them an average of \$40 per head. He fed these steers loose in boxes last winter in a lean-to on one side of the barn, turning them out for water twice a day. They were fed on straw, hay and chopped oats and barley. Straw and half a gallon of chop twice a day was the ration fed up to April 1. Since then the straw has been displaced by hay and the grain allowance increased to one and one-half gallons of chop twice a day. The owner figures on selling these cattle about the middle of May, by which time they will average 1,400 pounds, and unless the market signs are wrong, will be worth 6½ cents per pound in their owner's yard, or \$91.00 each.

It cost less than \$20.00 per head to winter these steers, in which bill of cost a price is charged for the straw consumed, which otherwise would have been wasted. Their total cost was \$60.00 per head, which leaves a profit of \$31.00 each, or a total of \$713.00 for the farmer's winter work in caring for them. In addition to this he has enough first-class manure to cover a few acres of the farm.

And yet this man's neighbors declare there is no money in cattle feeding. They want to move out of the district because the weeds are getting bad and the land won't grow as much wheat as it did back in the nineties. They haven't seen yet that livestock is the basis of permanent prosperity in agriculture. Probably they will some time; if not, then the generation that comes after them.

Cream Prices Based on Quality

Grading cream and the quality basis as payment, was the motto adopted at the Alberta buttermakers' convention. All the cream received at the different government creameries throughout Alberta this year will be sampled and graded. He who sends cream possessing consistency and quality to marshal it into the ranks of first grade, will receive a premium of two cents for his cream over the man who is content to file below him. Good cream is the prime essential of good butter, and the best butter brings the best price. Therefore the fact should not be questioned whether or not such a move as that taken by the Alberta buttermakers is a wise one.