



The Farm Page



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United Farmers Making Strides Through Progressive Organization Attain a Nation Wide Influence

Activities Now Become Dominion-Wide and Include the Marketing of Produce, Co-operative Purchasing, Operation of Elevators, Sawmills, Insurance, Newspapers; Now Proposed to Enter Politics With Candidates Especially Selected.

By H. HIGGINBOTHAM
(Secretary of the United Farmers of Alberta)

To comply with your request, and state briefly the Why, the What, and the How of the Farmers' Movement in Alberta is not an easy task. Also, it is becoming more and more difficult to describe the activities of the United Farmers of Alberta as a Provincial Unit of the Farmers' Movement in Canada, without dealing in general with the Movement as a whole, as so much that has been accomplished, has been accomplished not by the United Farmers of Alberta, or by the Grain Growers of Saskatchewan and Manitoba alone, but by the concerted effort of these organizations acting together, and, more recently, with the help of the United Farmers of Ontario; while in the past year, British Columbia, Quebec, and New Brunswick have organized along similar lines—so that, at the present time, the Organized Farmers of Canada have strong Provincial Organizations in at least seven of the nine provinces of the Dominion. The Provincial units are bound together for concerted action in Dominion affairs in the Canadian Council of Agriculture.

Big Representation
The organization known as the United Farmers of Alberta has just recently held its Eleventh Annual Convention, at which a membership of over 18,000, including some 1,500 women was reported.

The United Farmers of Alberta came into existence by the amalgamation, eleven years ago, of the Alberta Farmers Association and an organization known as the Canadian Society of Equity, which had been established in Alberta by some members of the American Society of Equity who settled here. The organization was formed to further the interests of farmers socially, economically and politically.

Socially, the United Farmers of Alberta has done much in brightening rural conditions in Alberta. The eight hundred odd local associations covering the province from the International boundary to the most northerly settled parts of the Peace River are a social and educational factor, the value of which cannot be overestimated.

Conditions Revolutionized
Economically, the U.F.A. has, together with the sister organizations in Manitoba and Saskatchewan, revolutionized the conditions in the grain trade, and, by the co-operative marketing of live stock, almost eliminated the itinerant drover; while the effect of the farmers going into business for themselves has a far-reaching influence on all concerns doing business in Western Canada.

Elevators Established
The U.F.A. established the Farmers' Co-operative Elevator Co., Limited, by getting the Provincial Government to put up the money for the building of the elevators and allowing the farmers time in which to repay the money. In the first year eighty elevators were built which handled approximately 3,774,381 bushels of grain in the face of the keenest competition, besides live stock and supplies.
After a period of five years the Alberta Farmers' Elevator Company amalgamated with the Commercial Organization of the Manitoba Grain Growers Association, namely the Grain Growers Grain Company, which had been in existence twelve years.

Good Profits Shown
The first annual meeting of the combined organization has just been held, and the Profit and Loss account showed gross earnings amounting to \$3,047,395. Capitalization of the Company is \$2,891,000, and the net profits for the year 1918, \$441,760.

The United Grain Growers own 214 elevators, and operate another 129 under lease, 231 flour houses, and 181 coal sheds. They operate a large terminal elevator at the head of the Great Lakes, as well as an Export Company in New York, which, from September 1, 1917 to the end of August, 1918, under instruction from the United States Export Co., purchased and handled over 120 million bushels of oats.

Other Activities
In addition to the Export Company, the subsidiary companies of the U.G.G. include the U.G.G. Saw Mills, Ltd., which owns a large Lumber Manufacturing Plant, situated on its own Timber Limits in British Columbia, a Securities Company, which buys and sells land on commission, writes Rail and Fire Insurance, and also, a Publishing Company, called the Public Press, Ltd., which issues weekly the Grain Growers Guide, employed as the official organ of

the Farmers' Union in Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta, with a circulation of upwards of 52,000.

The Livestock Department of the Company in 1918 handled 4402 cars of livestock.

To Enter Politics
Politically, the U.F.A. has hitherto sought to influence legislation by the power of its membership, without taking any direct part in political activity. While much has been accomplished by this method, it has been felt, for some time, that, as the farmers comprise 60% of the population of Western Canada, they should be able to exercise some actual control of governing institutions of the country.

Accordingly, at the recent Convention, the United Farmers of Alberta definitely decided to enter the political field for themselves. The leaders propose that the new political organization shall be built from the bottom up, recommending U.F.A. members in different constituencies to band themselves together, call district conventions and nominate their own candidates.

The Central Organization will leave the district units absolutely free to take whatever action they see fit. It is felt that, if success is to be achieved in securing Democratic political control, the usual process must be reversed, so that the district conventions called by the people themselves will come together with absolutely no orders from any party or caucus.

This is a new experiment, and it may fail. If it succeeds it will mean a political revolution.

GETTING FARM WASTE IN THE PROFIT COLUMN

Not many years ago the packers ignored the value of the by-products, but now they claim to make all their profits out of this very thing, says a writer in the Scientific American. No part of the animal is wasted; as one humorist has said, "not even the squeals are wasted, as Henry Ford buys them for his automobile factory." A good many farmers may be skeptical as to this claim of the packers in its entirety, but no one doubts that the packers turn by-products to good account. It is interesting to note the great progress the farmers have made in a similar direction.

Several years ago farmers counted their straw stacks as valueless, and they were everywhere burned, but now straw is found to be a good fertilizer when spread. Of course it may not be possible to dispose of all the straw in this manner and the surplus may be burned. In some sections of Western Canada the Government has this year forbidden the burning of straw stacks. Another use to which straw may be put is in the manufacture of different kinds of rough paper and cardboard. In the wheat sections a cardboard factory might be operated and receive all their material from the surrounding community, thus giving a market value to a material that was once considered worthless.

Cottonseed, valuable both as a feed and a fertilizer, was formerly thrown away. It is now a by-product of tremendous importance, not alone to the cotton industry, but to innumerable cattle feeders.

The rinds and waste cuttings of Wisconsin cheese are pressed into large bricks and used for chicken feed. In the sugar beet sections the beet tops are used as ensilage and gives great satisfaction as cattle feed, while in some districts bean straw is being used as a standard article of feed. Even the Russian Thistle is being cut and cured for roughness in some parts of Western Kansas and Eastern Colorado.

These are only a few of the many by-products of the farm, and of which the farmers are finding more use for each year.

TIME TO THINK ABOUT THE GARDEN

It will soon be time to get the garden plot cleaned up, ready for the plow or spade. The ease with which garden produce can be grown and the important place such produce occupies in the economy of the home, makes the garden a problem which need not remain unsettled longer than necessary. Every home with available space should have

a garden where a variety of vegetables and fruits required for the table may be provided.

Many men have no garden because they know nothing about making one. They seem to think there is some mystery about it beyond the average individual and mean only for the fortunate one under whose magic touch every plant seems to thrive. With a little care, thought and work any one can have a nice garden. How about one this spring?

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The first great road builder of history was Julius Caesar, a warrior. The second great road builder was Napoleon. War gave the impulse to the two great road building eras in history. This war will be no exception to the rule. Watch the dirt fly now the war is over.

Brantford's City Council has gone on record as favoring all property qualifications for holding municipal office. The Trades and Labor Council of that city is giving support.

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