

## Canada's Pork Industry

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results of feeding experiments agree with those carried out at Canadian stations in that the cost of gain per pound increases with age and live weight. In Denmark especially it is confidently believed by feeders that hogs that are kept thrifty and growing from the time they are weaned until ready for market at five and a half to seven months old, weighing about 200 lbs., are more profitably fed than those given longer time to finish or carried to heavier weights.

The value of milk and whey in feeding was everywhere exemplified. The commission saw very few pigs being fed without one or the other, and nowhere were these foods fed without a care for the greatest profit.

Roughage in the form of roots or other green fodder is considered an essential part of the successful pig raiser's food supply. These, it is generally believed help materially to maintain thrift in breeding and growing stock. Nowhere can these be cheaper grown than in Canada and no pig raiser can afford to be without them.

Another lesson gathered in each country visited is the importance of carefully grading the ration according to the age of the pig and the object in view. Everywhere young pigs were fed on easily digested food rather light in character and with only a small percentage of green food. As the pigs get older roughage is increased to cheapen the ration and strengthen and keep in tone the digestive organs. As the finishing approaches the ration is made stronger which hastens the fattening and ensures a high quality of meat. A study of the feeding throughout the report will impress this important lesson.

### The Marketing End

The members of the commission are aware that many Canadian farmers understand well the economical production of pork. They are also familiar with the cry of a large number who claim that they cannot make pig raising profitable even at the high level at which prices of hogs have been maintained during the past two years. This, however, does not fully explain the gradual serious decline in the production of hogs that has for some time been going on, more especially in the province of Ontario, on which the export bacon trade chiefly depends. Another problem than that of feeding confronts the Canadian pig raiser. Between the feeding pen and the market there is a great gulf fixed and to bridge this most concerns the pig raisers. The commission hear it in their respective neighborhoods, the market places, the institute meetings, the winter fairs, in fact wherever farmers congregate to discuss their industry, that the bacon industry has no stability, and that the producers do not receive their share of the returns from the market. In the face of this we have the continuous high prices that have maintained, not in the summer alone when values are almost always high, but right through the autumn and into the winter even at the holiday season when so many householders are expected to be using poultry. But, say the great army who have sold their hogs, "What would have happened had we all continued raising hogs at the rate of 1903? allow the supply to reach a high point and the great gulf is ready to yawn at us as ugly as before. We are getting along very well without the pigs. Satisfactory help is not easy to get and our calves, foals and fowls are making very good use of the skim milk." This is the feeling that is experienced throughout the country and enables the wise, persistent hog raiser to make a fine profit from his swine.

Then there is the grievance about buyers paying at the flat rate for all kinds light, ideal and heavy. Much pains have been taken to produce the long, fleshy singer which brings the producer no more than the cheaper fat pig that is produced in the corn belt. The packers again get the credit of reaping the fine returns from the superior hogs after purchasing them at the same rate as the less valuable kind. The packers blame the buyers and the buyers keep on as they have been doing while no concerted effort is being made to bring about a satisfactory

solution of the problem. The farmer is following his inclination but what is to become of the bacon industry?

### Working Together

In Ireland, in England, and in Denmark, the commission compared this with the state of the industry which in those countries was found to be sailing upon a comparatively smooth sea. It is true that producers and packers in the Old World, have not always seen alike and even yet troubles and doubts arise. Each country in its own way, manages to solve these problems, not by dropping the industry but by discovering the weak points and applying what appears to be the best remedy. In some cases the packers have taken the initiative in others it has been left to the producers. In England we have examples of both. The Harris Wiltshire cures allow no grievance to grow. With the least evidence of dissatisfaction the farmers are asked to meet the packers to examine for themselves the point at issue. Such meetings are not confined to interviews in which the books are revealed to prove a theory but the whole question is threshed out until confidence and harmony are restored. The packers in this, exercise good business judgment as they know well that their success depends on the supply and kind of hogs they are able to get from week to week and from month to month. Co-operation between the two is alike good for the packer and the producer.

In the eastern counties co-operation works out in another way. The buyer became a dominating factor and having no important business at stake he undertook to take more than his share of the returns of the industry. The impression gained foothold that an understanding between buyers had been reached but this did not drive farmers out of pig raising. The Eastern Counties Farmers' Co-operative Association engaged an experienced salesman and trusted him to find a market. This man drives an automobile up and down the roads and farmers are so well satisfied with the results that they will raise in that district more pigs than anywhere else in Great Britain.

In Ireland the commission heard some grumbling about the buyers. The pig fair system of selling is not quite satisfactory. Buyers usually arrive at the town the evening before and it is felt that competition is not always as keen as it ought to be. Here, however, buying on merit is the rule for every bunch of pigs calls for a long discussion and the good pigs got the preference. Then the old established packing firms announce their prices for first class hogs and usually set it high enough to get most that are offered.

Still some dissatisfaction with conditions of buying hogs prevails in Ireland and it is confidently predicted that unless co-operative curing becomes general in parts of Ireland where pigs are sold alive, that it will not be long before auction markets are operated as in England and Scotland. This it would seem should be a good solution for much of the buying difficulty in Canada. It ought to do away with the flat rate system of paying alike for all kinds, good or bad. It would do more, it would stimulate competition which is limited to a minimum in many country sections in Canada.

Co-operation is, however, the best solution as indicated in Ireland and Denmark. The members of the co-operative bacon factory at Roscrea are satisfied with their lot as pig raisers looking for full returns from their hogs. Between them and the market there is nothing to obstruct the vision and there is no one to blame but themselves if the prices received are not those quoted for the highest class.

In Denmark the industry has grown rapidly and substantially and is thriving as a well watered tree in good soil and all on the principle of co-operation. Co-operation in Denmark had its origin in dissatisfaction with the packer and on its own success it continues to bring prosperity to the pig raiser and contentment to the farmer.

Co-operation in Canada, can it succeed? Some say 'no, it has been tried and failed.' Was it not a poor kind of co-operation that failed? The intention of organizers was of the best, much hard work was done, farmers put in a lot of money and well equipped factories were put in operation; business connections that promised well in the Old Country were made and co-operation in the bacon



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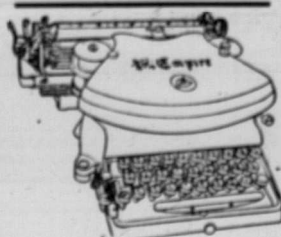
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industry was launched, but it did not last. Where was the weak point? It was not in the hogs, for there were plenty and of good bacon type; it was not in the factories for these have proved their own success in the hands of proprietary firms; it could not have been the market for this has never ceased to grow for the Danes and others who send on the good bacon in regular quantities. Was the system of co-operation defective? It would seem so, at least for the disloyal members who soon commenced to bite at the dangerous bait of rival houses who received every encouragement to cast their bread upon the waters, to be gathered in larger loaves in the not too distant and very certain future. No, co-operation did not prove a success in the pig business nor could such a brand of it have succeeded in any business in which it might be tried. It would have as surely failed in Denmark with such poor staying material. The early organizers

in that country saw the rocks ahead and added a penalty clause to the rules. It required only a little patience and honor to teach the Dane that co-operation was the correct method and since then it has proved not only to the Danish but to the Canadian farmer as well, that wisely conducted co-operation is a sound principle.

The failure of co-operative bacon curing in Canada, has valuable lessons. The success of the system in Denmark and in Ireland, has still more valuable lessons. With the instruction that these impart there should be no need of failure in every attempt at co-operative bacon raising, curing and selling, in districts of a country so well adapted as Canada for the raising of swine. A successful co-operative society requires a strong leader and a faithful membership. Unless a community is made up of such a class, who will bind themselves for a term of

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We are still anxious to have our readers send us in good photographs of farm scenes. Something that will interest everybody. Do not send us any more threshing scenes as we have had a great many of them already. Send us pictures of good farm homes, or stock, or beautiful scenery, or groups of officers of farmers' associations. These are all interesting. Be sure to choose good, clear photographs and send them in flat. Do not roll them as it spoils them.

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