

The development of our bacon trade is a purely commercial undertaking and we must early recognize that we cannot sell to the British merchant unless we give him what he wants. This granted, thrifty management and good feeding should yield a return this year which will more than compensate for all the labour involved.

POULTRY

To anyone who has not carefully followed the direction of poultry development in Canada, an understanding of the status which the poultry industry has now reached must constitute a distinct surprise. Whether viewed from the standpoint of the farmer or of the produce trade, it is now one of the best organized and most progressive of any of our live stock industries. Co-operation amongst farmers in marketing is improving the product and realizing for them a higher price than they have hitherto been able to obtain. The re-organization of methods by the trade is providing a great loss in handling, is assuring to the consumer a better article and establishing our export business upon a firm basis.

It is estimated that Canada and Cuba, during the last twenty years, received from the United States about three-fourths of all the eggs exported by that country during that period. This situation, however, has now changed. As against an importation in 1913 of 13,240,111 dozen, we imported in 1915 not more than 3,783,952 dozen. On the other hand, while in 1913 we exported only 147,149 dozen, in 1915 we exported 7,898,322 dozen. This constitutes a net increase in production, in two years, of at least 17,100,000 dozen. Practically all of these exports went to the United Kingdom.

Notwithstanding the surplus in Canada which these figures indicate, prices during March and April have remained at an extraordinarily high level. For the first quarter of the year 1916 the price to producers, selling co-operatively, has been at least 4c. in advance of the price received, for the same period, in 1915. For the month of March, it was at least 5c. in advance and for the month of April at least 3c. in advance of last year's price for these respective months. The demand for eggs for local consumption, for storage purposes and for immediate export, has rarely been so keen as at the present moment. This situation is clearly reflected in the prices just quoted. Heavy domestic consumption in the face of high price for meats, partly explains this condition. Confidence in the export demand, on the part of the produce trade, confirms it in another direction. Notwithstanding increased production, the egg and poultry business in Canada is in a very strong position at the present time.

Under these circumstances, we believe that it will be a very wise practice to hatch as many chickens, as it is possible or practicable to handle. Early hatched chickens make good winter layers. Rough grains will probably be produced in abundance in Canada this year and the feeding of poultry at a profit should be materially assisted from this source. Eggs at winter prices are a paying proposition in any event. Poultry, alive or dressed, under present and prospective market conditions, can unquestionably be reared and finished at a profit. A good flock of poultry, if carefully handled, will serve to prevent waste on the farm and promote economy in living expenses, such as is particularly necessary when all farm products are becoming so marketable and so dear.