

Cooperative Live Stock Selling The Minnesota Method Described

By "Agricola."

COOPERATIVE enterprises of various kinds have been successfully operated in many sections of Canada and have done much to put certain industries on a firm and substantial basis. Individuals have long felt that cooperation should also extend to the selling of live stock, believing that it means better prices, larger markets and an improvement in quality and uniformity.

Canadians may be interested in the fact that such a scheme is already past the experimental stage. To the farmers of Meeker county, Minnesota, belong the honor of having pioneered the first venture. So successfully were the original plans worked out that the State now has no less than 40 similar organizations within its borders.

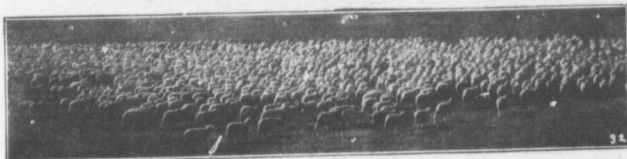
The system is very simple. The first move was to appoint a good manager. As soon as the work was well started, a shipping day was set aside for each week. On the previous day those farmers intending to ship telephone the manager to that effect, stating the number of animals, the kind of stock and the approximate weight, so that a car of suitable capacity might be ordered. If not enough for a carload is reported, he will telephone some of the farmers, who may have stock ready for shipment, in order that the required number may be secured. In case they are not available, he again telephones those who had reported stock, asking them to keep it until the following week, to save freight charges, which would be the same as for a full car. Thus, by not driving about the country to locate stock, as is customary with the regular buyers, much time and expense is saved.

The Manager in Action.

When, however, there is plenty of stock on hand, it is his duty to receive, mark and weigh the animals of each patron. A receipt, made out in duplicate, is given to each man, which specifies the number delivered, their weight and the mark used to identify his stock on the market. The system of marking is simple and very satisfactory for the purpose. A Roman numeral is clipped on the shoulders of all mature cattle and on the shoulders of veal calves, by means of a small pair of shears, just before they are unloaded from the wagons. Hogs are graded according to weight, and sheep are marked with a removable paint where it will not lessen the value of the beast. A record is kept of each man's

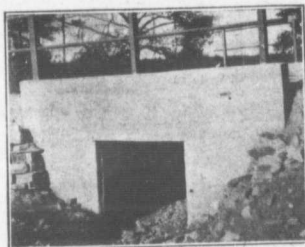


A Springtime Scene in Huron Co., Ont.



Sheep by the Thousands as Found in the Foothills of Alberta.

number, and all stock delivered by him that day is branded with the same number. The commission firm handling them on the central market reports the weights and prices received for all animals by their number or mark. The manager then makes a statement to each patron covering these points, showing the pro-rata share of expense incurred for freight commission and other incidentals. These being deducted, a



Because of its Permanence Concrete is Becoming Increasingly Popular for Small Bridges and Culverts.

cheque is mailed for the remainder. If the farmer is in need of money when his stock is delivered he may deposit his receipt at the bank and instruct the association manager to mail his cheque there instead of to him.

Two cents per hundred pounds for all live stock handled is set aside to form a sinking fund. This is to provide for unavoidable and unexpected expenses. The man whose animals have been killed or injured in transit, therefore, receives the approximate amount they would have brought had they been delivered on the market in good condition. Thus the fund is made to serve the purpose of insurance; the added expense is so small that no shipper feels the effect of it knowing that his own interests are being safeguarded thereby. Of course all animals must be delivered to the manager in good condition. If they have been overheated or roughly handled a record is made of the fact. Provided an animal dies or must be sold at a discount the loss must be borne by the owner.

The shipping of

live stock cooperatively has resulted in a marked financial saving to the farmers. Before the association was started the margin in price between the point of delivery and the central market was between 50 and 60 cents per hundred pounds for cattle and hogs. Now the margin is 28 to 33 cents, a difference of about 25 cents per hundred pounds. In one year this resulted in a saving of \$6,766.67.

The educational value of this movement is also important. They now realize that to obtain the highest market price certain market requirements must be fulfilled. The right type of animals, together with better feeding and breeding, sells for more money than inferior stuff. It has also shown results in better business methods, as the farmer has come to know the cost of each transaction from the time the stock leaves his hands.

How About a Silo?

Now Is the Time to Decide

A. BORROWMAN, Welland Co., Ont.

WE are going to build our second silo this summer. Our first one was built 12 years ago. It is an all cement silo, and is giving as good satisfaction to-day as it did when we first built it. It is fireproof and windproof. But our silo this year will be of staves on a cement foundation. The stave silo is a much more perfect structure to-day than it was a dozen years ago, and with labor so scarce it is a desirable form of silo; it is put up in just a couple of days. A cement silo takes as many weeks.

The point I would like to emphasize is that now is the time to decide on a silo for this year. In the first place, several silo firms give a discount of ten per cent. on all silos ordered early in the season. In the second place, if not ordered now, the silo might not be delivered this season. I understand that all silo manufacturers are rushed with orders; some perhaps more than they can fill. Another advantage in deciding now whether or not a silo is to be built is that it is still early enough to vary the corn acreage to fit the silo capacity.

We cannot speak too highly of the silo. With it we can produce winter milk almost as cheaply as summer milk, the cows are in better condition than they ever were on corn stalks, and the carrying capacity of our farm has been increased by at least 25 per cent. Silo filling is more or less of a burden, but on the whole it is not as much work as turning the root pulper was in the older days. We are all for the silo.

Another point from our experience that I will make mention of is that a silo of small diameter but very deep is preferable to the squat, wide silos we were at one time advised to build. The ideal silo for an average farm is one 10 feet inside and 40 or 45 feet deep. Of course to build a silo so high eight or 10 feet should be underground. In any high silo there should be an opening two-thirds of the way up for the blower turning the first of the filling, so as to reduce the amount of power necessary for elevating the feed.