

LIVE STOCK.

Canada, Her Hogs, and the Bacon Trade.

A small bulletin was published recently by the Live Stock Branch, Ottawa, explaining the position Canada now holds in relation to the bacon trade, and setting forth the condition of the hog industry in the Dominion at the present time. The war, according to this publication, has proved a great leveller, and, while Danish bacon may still be considered the standard for all bacons consumed in the British Isles, her former impregnable position in the British market has been disrupted. The swine industry of Denmark has suffered very severely; her killings have been greatly reduced, owing to the lack of feed supplies, and the breeding and general pig stock of the country has been much diminished. Germany has entered the Danish market, has outbid Great Britain and caused the trend of trade eastward instead of westward. This temporary rift may develop significant proportions, and there exists, says the Live Stock Branch, strong possibilities that Denmark may further and yet further reduce her trade with the United Kingdom. Canadian trade returns show that from 1904 to 1914, the year of the declaration of war, our export bacon trade materially decreased. British trade returns, on the other hand, show that Denmark's exports increased each succeeding year from 1905 to 1914. Since that time, however, Denmark's exports to Great Britain show the tremendous decrease of over 73,000,000 lbs., while those of the Dominion have increased in a most marked degree, as the following figures prove. Our export for the fiscal year, ending March 31, 1914, amounted to 23,620,861 lbs.; for 1915 to 72,036,025 lbs.; for 1916, 114,150,309 lbs.; in fact, we increased our trade during 1915 just as much as Denmark decreased hers.

The position occupied by the United States must not be ignored. In 1913 that country exported bacon to Great Britain to the value of \$29,754,475; in 1914, of \$26,057,745, and in 1915 of \$61,978,773. It must be fully understood, however, that the United States does not produce Wiltshire sides; these being the distinctive product of the bacon hog. These facts point out two things very plainly: the one, that our strongest competitor, Denmark, has allowed us to absorb a great part of her former trade; the other, that we are more than ever bound to stay with the production of the "Wiltshire side," the product of the bacon hog. The United States has controlled, and will evidently continue to control the fat-hog trade. In spite of all these circumstances the publication points out that our swine industry has already dwindled to dangerous proportions and may degenerate into nothing better than a local trade. In the last estimate of census there were on June 30, 1916, fewer hogs in Canada than at any time in the past decade. In fact, since 1911 there has been a marked decrease in every province of the Dominion. During the past five years the total number of hogs in Canada has decreased by almost one million head. Particularly unfortunate is this ominous decrease in the face of the rare opportunity that is offered us to further extend our Wiltshire-side trade with the British market; a business that for the year ending December 31, 1915, was valued at approximately \$15,957,652.

The Live Stock Branch also declares that the fat hog has no place in Canada, except to supply a limited local demand. Lard or fat hogs can be produced more cheaply in the corn-belt region of the United States than in Canada, and after our small, local demand for this class of hog is supplied we come into direct competition with a product produced under more favorable circumstances than our own. While there are discriminating drover buyers, not all realize the value of buying on a quality basis. The buyers must realize that they very effectively determine the system of breeding and feeding, and that they should, therefore, buy according to grade.

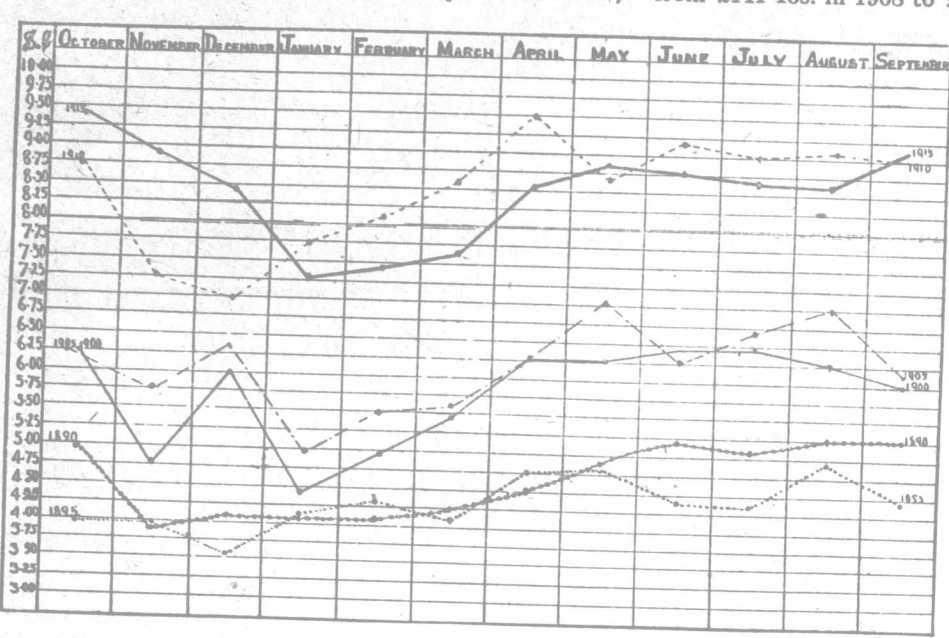
The publication furthermore deals with the matter of supply, and claims that the irregularity in the production of our hogs has been greatly responsible for what has often been wrongfully termed over-production. Irregularity breeds a surplus; regularity distributes to avoid a surplus. For example, the British market requires a certain number of Wiltshire sides every week. Let us say that this number represents the product of 15,000 hogs. This means a total trade of 780,000 hogs per year. If we produced and marketed these hogs as required, we would have an outlet for just that number of hogs; we could depend on marketing that many. On the other hand, if we produced and marketed the greater part of our hogs in the fall of the year, the period of lowest prices on the British market, what would be the result? We would find a market just exactly the size of the trade for that period. An over-supply is created; we have congested the market, and lower prices follow as a consequence. In the year 1912, at the Union Stock Yards, Toronto, there were 248,962 hogs marketed. Of this number 80,639 were marketed during the months of November and December; or something over 30 per cent. of the total. In 1913, however, the percentage was reduced to 18; in 1914 it stood at 28 per cent. Invariably the lowest prices of the year have ruled at these times, and the larger the percentage the lower the price. Wiltshire sides are a perishable product; they cannot be held over, and must, therefore, be marketed when ready. The product of these hogs marketed during the months of November and December go on the British market when turkeys, geese, ducks, fancy beef and mutton are pouring in from all over the world for the Christmas and New Year's trade. On the other hand, during the months of June,

July and August, when the British market is at its best, the supply of Canadian hogs is at its lowest point. From June 1 to October 1 is the time the Canadian packer can make the best use of hogs. It is also pointed out that we need a good crop of hogs each month of the year, and that we have yet to meet the man who doubts the good prospects of next year's markets. If each farmer maintains even one, or at most two, sows and manages these and their offspring properly there can be built up in Canada a very important and remunerative industry, not only yielding a permanent profit to the farm, but as well, materially assisting in preserving the commercial stability of the Dominion.

The chart accompanying this article shows that, year in and year out, the price of hogs is highest during the months of April, May, June, July, August, September and October. It will be noticed that the winter months show the lowest prices. The chart starts with the month of October, as the end of this month marks the beginning of the low-price period. Prices are, fed and watered, Union Stock Yards, Toronto, Ontario.

A Word to the Farmer Who Sells Live Stock and Feed.

Due to the shortage of grain and the general high price of feeding stuffs, the liquidation of cattle, both in Canada and the United States, has been going on apace. While there are farmers who have little feed except hay, who might find it very difficult indeed to winter the customary number of cattle, there have been those who have had considerable feed but have sold it as well as their cattle in order to cash at once everything marketable on their place. The wisdom of this latter practice is questionable. While the price of feeding stuffs is high, the price of all kinds of meat animals is also high, and if one should balance the whole matter we believe there is considerable argument for the retention of more meat animals and the feeding of hay and grain on the farm. Prof. Geo. E. Day, of the Ontario Agricultural College, never speaks without thinking, and his remarks are based on experience. At the Guelph Winter Fair,



Variation of Hog Prices by Months for Years 1890, 1895, 1900, 1905, 1910, 1915

to a number of stockmen assembled, he made the following statement: "No doubt there are many men who are compelled, through circumstances, to sell at least part of their stock, and to these we have nothing to say; but what of those who sell their stock merely because the price of feed is high, and they wish to sell their crop? Let us see where such men stand: One, they are disposing of stock under conditions which do not favor securing full value for young or thin stock. Two, they are selling their hay, which is the most abundant crop this year on Ontario farms, at prices which are low in comparison with the prices of concentrates, and the price they are obtaining is less than they could have obtained for it had they fed it to good stock. Three, they are allowing to go to waste a lot of material, such as is to be found on every farm, which can be given value only when fed to stock. Four, they are robbing their farms of fertility, and are reducing the productiveness of their farms for years to come. Five, when Providence once more favors us with an abundant crop, and it is seldom Providence does otherwise in this favored country, their farms will be found bare of this most valuable asset, and to restock these farms will require much more money than was received for a like amount of live stock sold during the fall and winter of the present year.

These men are facing all these disadvantages, and braving all these losses, in order that they may sell a few bushels of grain at a high price, and the most remarkable feature of the case is the fact that, with good stock and any kind of reasonable management, they could have obtained more money from their season's crop had they retained their stock.

Surely that man must be blind indeed who cannot see where the needless sacrifice of his stock is going to place him in the very near future. Live stock will continue to be, as it has always been in the past, the most important factor in successful farming, and it looks as though its importance is likely to be multiplied many times for some years to come, by the war. He who can conserve his live stock will surely reap a reward, and, in addition, will perform a patriotic service for his country and empire."

Enormous Shorthorn Interests in Britain.

EDITOR "THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE":

I have been engaged upon developing some official figures, from past sales spread over the last nine years, to find out the enormous interest of the Shorthorn breed of cattle in the United Kingdom. Since 1908 there have been sold in England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales 52,017 pedigreed Shorthorns of the total value of £2,062,997 7s. 7d. From an average of £33 12s. 2d. for the 5,399 head sold in 1908, the per capita value has risen to £60 1s. 2d. per head for the 5,838 sold in 1916. Here are the returns of the nine years' sales set out in English £. s. d. I cannot attempt to convert the figures into dollars, not being of the mathematical mind.

Year	Head sold	Average £. s. d.	Aggregate £. s. d.
1916	5,838	60 1 2	351,222 0 0
1915	5,957	44 3 6	263,149 15 0
1914	5,272	38 9 7	202,857 18 0
1913	6,031	40 15 6	245,903 11 9
1912	5,494	36 5 2	199,208 8 0
1911	6,364	33 5 8	211,817 15 0
1910	5,548	36 7 5	201,793 14 4
1909	6,114	33 12 6	205,598 12 3
1908	5,399	33 12 2	181,445 12 9
Total	5,2017		£2,062,997 7 7

(The normal exchange value of a pound sterling is \$4.8636.)

In the case of the annual sales at Dublin, the average head has jumped from the "thirties" ruling in 1909 to 1912, to £50 18s. 2d. in 1916. The growth in the averages secured at the Duthie, Marr and J. D. Webster joint sales, has been little less than wonderful, i.e., from £141 15s. in 1908 to £443 2s. 0d. in 1916, with the "£200" average topped on four occasions in the meantime.

The rise in prices at the Aberdeen Spring Show and Sale shows a leap from the humble "twenties" from 1908 to 1913 to £48 14s. 7d. in 1916. Singularly progressive are the averages of the Aberdeen collective sales, held in the autumn, from the "forties" in 1908-9-12-13-14-15, to £85 13s. 0d. in 1916, with a £52 13s. 6d. average sandwiched in in 1910. Birmingham's spring show and sale has kept a good level average, albeit the £62 6s. 9d. of 1916 was beaten in 1910 by one of £62 15s. 6d. The chief note to strike about Birmingham's sales is the rapid rise in averages at the autumn sale; a jump from £49 19s. 10d. in 1915 to £68 15s. 6d. in 1916.

The story of the Perth sales is a wonderful one. In 1908, 353 head sold, averaged £35 6s. 1d. By 1914 that average was doubled, for then, 391 head made £73 14s. 9d. apiece, but the increase has not stopped there, for by 1916 the original £35 6s. 1d. had swollen to £86 3s. 5d. for 480 head. Penrith's progress has been steady and its average has nearly doubled itself in nine years, i.e., £23 18s. 2d. for 48 head in 1908, and £45 11s. 3d. for 256 animals in 1916. The rise of the Edgcote Shorthorn Company's average from £82 14s. 10d. in 1912 to £196 12s. 6d. for this year is a striking one. So, too, is the leap made by the Cazalet stock on the averages reached in 1915 and 1916. They have improved from £114 apiece to £150.

The Royal Ulster averages, too, show a steady development of some £15 per head in nine years.

In nine years at Perth 3,707 head of Shorthorns have made £200,162 10s. 6d.; at Aberdeen Spring Sale 2,240 head have made £69,154 5s. 0d.; at Aberdeen autumn sale 1,539 head have fetched £73,087 17s. 6d.; at the joint sales of calves, held by William Duthie, J. Marr and J. D. Webster, 351 calves have made the wonderful figures of £73,227 5s. 0d. Then at Birmingham spring sale 3,168 cattle have made £162,529 17s. 0d. in nine seasons, while in eight seasons at Dublin £80,028 15s. 0d. have been paid for 2,032 head. At the Royal Ulster Show and Sale, held in Belfast, 3,071 head in nine years have made £75,506 16s. 9d., and at Penrith 1,041 head have fetched £35,846 6s. 3d. The Edgcote Shorthorn Company—a small company of breeders who have not been in the game long—have reached £30,962 8s. 0d. on 261 head sold in five years. They sell bull calves and yearlings chiefly, and they have already made a fortune at the game. Thus, in a few figures, usually dry as dust, but this time very enlightening, I prove to you in Canada what an immense hold upon the farmers and stock-keepers of Britain the Golden Shorthorn has. The war has brought prosperity to the breed. We are well maintaining our foundation stocks. We are not encroaching on our capital. We are turning out new zealots to the Shorthorn cult; in short, we are getting well and timely ready for the coming boom that

must ensue. Please do when I say A. as to how much cattle Britain has. Our pigs are ers pay (14-lb.) for easily won a

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