

FARMING

VOL. XVI.

OCTOBER 4th, 1898.

No. 5.

A Ten-Days' Milking Competition.

For several years back, at the Provincial Fat Stock and Dairy Show and at the Industrial and other fairs, we have had a two-days' milking competition, in which only the milk product and the fat and the solids not fat have been taken into account. At none of these tests have the quality and quantity of the food consumed been considered when making the awards. All this has been satisfactory as far as it goes, but we do not think it goes far enough. We are of the opinion that the time has come for a milking competition extending over a longer period of time, and one in which the food consumed is taken into account as well as the milk produced. A milking test in which only the product is considered tells but half the story, and, though there are many reasons for believing that some of the cows which have come out on top under the present system would do so if the food consumed were taken into account, still we would like to see it conclusively proven.

We know that there are several obstacles in the way, such as the extra expense and the time and labor necessary to conduct the test properly; but we think these could be easily overcome by active co-operation on the part of the breeders, the breeders' and dairy associations, and the exhibition authorities. A ten-days' test would be sufficient, and this could be arranged for during the Industrial Fair. The Industrial is the first large fair held during the year, and breeders in fitting their cows for the dairy test could do so without its interfering with their attendance at the other fairs held later on. Such a test could begin, say on Tuesday of the first week of the fair, and continue till Thursday of the second week, thus covering a period of ten days and running concurrently with the exhibition. Arrangements could be made for those intending to compete to bring their cows in a week, if need be, before the test began, and, if one of the cattle-sheds were devoted exclusively to this purpose, there should be no great difficulty in having the test carried out satisfactorily.

A ten days' milking competition has or will take place in connection with the Omaha Exhibition, particulars of which were given in our issue of August 23rd last, and there does not appear to be any very valid reason why we could not have one in Canada in connection with the Industrial Fair. It would prove an interesting feature at the fair, and the results obtained would be more conclusive and more valuable than those obtained, as heretofore, from a test in which no food consumed was taken into account. We would like to hear from breeders and others in regard to the feasibility of this plan. We think it is possible to have such a test, and that arrangements should be made early for conducting it in connection with the Industrial Fair for 1899.

Do Packers Pay a Sufficient Premium For Bacon Hogs?

Those who have followed the weekly market reports in FARMING for the past month or two anyway closely will have noticed that the difference in the prices paid on the Toronto market for choice bacon hogs and for thick fat hogs has been from twenty-five to forty-five cents per hundred pounds. In last week's issue there was a difference of only twenty-five cents between the prices paid for these two qualities of hogs. This is really a remarkable state of affairs. For the past two or three

years nothing has been brought so prominently before our breeders and farmers than the necessity of having the right kind of hog for bacon-producing purposes, and yet we find that the packers and buyers throughout the country will at the most not pay more than fifty cents per cwt. for choice bacon hogs than for thick fat hogs. In fact, many drovers in the country make very little distinction between the two and will very often pay as much for one kind as the other.

With this condition of affairs existing is it any wonder that our farmers and breeders are not taking to the raising of choice bacon hogs as readily as was to be expected under the circumstances. So long as the farmer can get within a few cents, if not as much, per cwt. for his thick fat hogs as for the bacon type he will not be very eager to discard the former and adopt the latter. Breeders of what are termed the thick fat hog and farmers who raise this variety claim that they can produce pork cheaper with it than with the so-called bacon type. If this be true, then the packer or drover must be willing to pay him a sufficiently higher price per lb for the bacon hog to enable him to make a good profit by the change. Though the farmer realizes as well as anyone else the importance of supplying the export bacon trade with the right kind of goods he is not governed altogether by sentiment in the matter, and unless he can see his way clear to make that kind of pork raising more profitable than what he has been accustomed to he will not change from the old method. If he raises the thick fat hog, and makes a profit out of it at \$4.25 per cwt., he is not going to change to the bacon type, which sells at \$4.60 per cwt., unless it can be proven to his satisfaction that there is more money in raising the latter kind.

The following item from Hodgson Bros' Liverpool market report of September 17th gives a fairly good idea of the prices obtained for choice Canadian bacon and the American quality, which is made from the thick, fat hog, "Singed Wiltshire, Canadian 40/55 lbs., 50s. to 56s.; American 40/50 lbs., 35s. to 40s." Here we find a difference of 15s. to 16s. in the price per cwt. (112 lbs.) paid for cuts of the Canadian and American varieties. If these figures be taken as a guide are our packers making a sufficient distinction between the prices paid for choice bacon hogs, that will produce the former quality, and thick fat hogs, that will produce the latter kind? We think not, and unless they are willing to make a wider difference between the price of the two than they are now doing it will be hard work to educate the farmer to change his methods.

The Kind of Cattle it Pays to Fatten

The following extract, taken from the Chicago Live Stock Report, will be of value to those who intend feeding cattle the coming winter:

"In nothing is the importance of a right start more vital than in the fattening of live stock, and particularly cattle, for market. Many elements contribute to success, but, unless the start is right, skill and care count for but little, and failure is stamped upon the undertaking from the very outset, unless indeed fortunate circumstances, such as a combination of high-priced beef and low-priced feed should intervene. It is of the greatest moment, therefore, that the feeder should select the right kind of cattle for fattening. We say kind and not breed, for while there are several good beef breeds there is but one beef type which is possessed by the several breeds in common. With some feeders a steer is a steer, and the idea that one animal