

Beef Rings.

Butchers' rigs distributing fresh meat to farmers' families are to be seen at much greater distances from towns and villages than were thought of a few years ago. In some of the older counties, it is possible that every farmer, if he wished, could have a supply of fresh meat brought to his door in this way at least once a week. But that this condition of things is not general, is evident from the inquiries received at this office regarding the working of beef-rings.

A beef-ring is an association of farmers, numbering from sixteen to twenty-four, usually, who are banded together for the purpose of securing a supply of fresh beef each week during the summer months. A usual method of operating such an association is that each member undertakes to supply one heifer or steer for slaughtering during the season, some specifications as to age and size being usually agreed upon; one dressing 400 lbs. is a very suitable weight. One animal is killed on a certain day of each week by a butcher who is paid a certain sum per head, usually from \$2 to \$2.50, for his work, which includes the weighing of the carcass, and the cutting of it up into the required number of pieces, each of these also to be weighed, and weight recorded. Each man comes for his portion of meat the next morning, and each time he receives a different cut from what he got the previous week. By the end of the season he will have received at least one piece of every portion of the carcass. In the case of small households, one member's portion can be divided between two families. The hide, tallow, heart, liver, etc., revert to the supplier of the animal, though usually the butcher sells the most of these for him. At the close of the period, if any member has not received as much meat as he supplied, he is paid for his overplus at a price agreed upon at the start, the money coming from those who got more meat than they furnished.

Chart one shows side divided for 20-share beef-ring, each member getting a roast, a boil, and a slice of steak, the numbers, as below, going together:

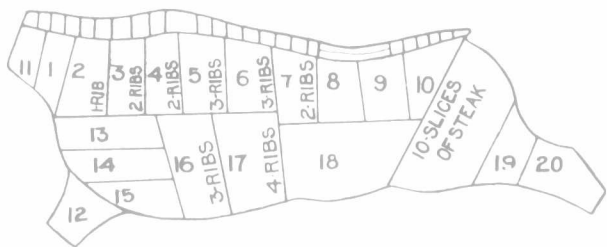


Chart for 20-share Beef Ring.

Roast.	Boil.	Steak.
1	14	1
2	13	2
3	19	3
4	16	4
5	17	5
6	18	6
7	15	7
8	12	8
9	20	9
10	11	10

SIXTEEN-SHARE CHART.

A chart for a sixteen-share beef-ring, commonly used, is as follows:

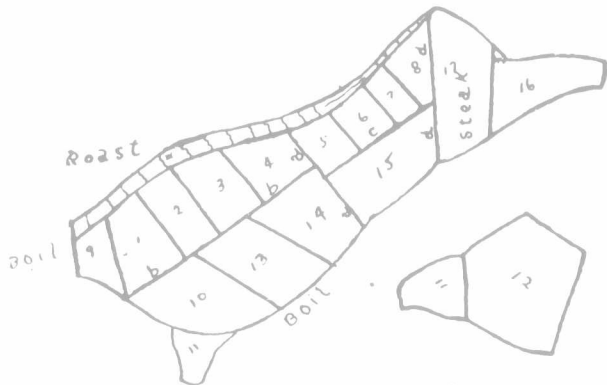


Chart for 16-share Beef Ring.

This chart represents one-half of beef lying on table ready to saw. Before letting this half down divide it in the middle by running a saw across at "a," between roasts 4 and 5, leaving two ribs on hind quarter. After laying both quarters on the table, divide fore quarter at line "b."

No. 9 represents neck. Saw neck off, leaving three joints on it.
No. 1 represents roast No. 1. Saw roast No. 1 off, leaving three joints on it.
No. 2 represents roast No. 2. Saw roast No. 2 off, leaving three joints on it.
No. 3 represents roast No. 3. Saw roast No. 3 off, leaving three joints on it.
No. 4 represents roast No. 4. Saw roast No. 4 off, leaving four joints on it.
No. 11 represents front shank. Saw front shank off above upper joint.

No. 14 represents second rib cut. Saw it off, leaving five ribs on it.

No. 13 represents first rib cut. Saw it off, leaving four ribs on it.

No. 10 represents brisket.

No. 12 represents shoulder, which lies directly under brisket, as represented in chart.

Then take the hind quarter and divide at the line "d."

No. 15 represents flank. Cut flank off at line "c."

No. 5 represents roast No. 5. Saw roast No. 5 off, with three joints on it.

Nos. 6, 7 and 8 represent sirloin. Divide these three to as nearly the same weight as possible.

No. 17 represents steak. Cut steak into slices, giving a slice to each person.

No. 16 represents hind shank after steak is taken off.

After this half of the beef has been cut up, it is divided between the first eight persons, as shown by time-table, giving each person a roast, a boil piece, and a slice of steak. Then the other half of the beef is taken down and cut up in the same manner.

John Scott, Ontario Co., Ont., secretary of a 20-share beef-ring, writes us as to the system under which it is worked. It does not differ materially from what was suggested above. In the cutting up of the side, however, there is a very marked difference, each side being cut into ten portions, two of the portions being made up of two pieces each. This does not give such an equal division of meat, so far as quality is concerned, as does the dividing of the side into twenty pieces, besides steak, but the cutting up takes less work.

CHART FOR TWENTY-SHARE BEEF-RING.

Mrs. E. S. Hunsberger, Waterloo Co., Ont., who in 1907 sent to "The Farmer's Advocate" an account of the workings of a beef-ring of twenty members, for which her husband was butcher, also sends a chart of a side of beef as divided by them.

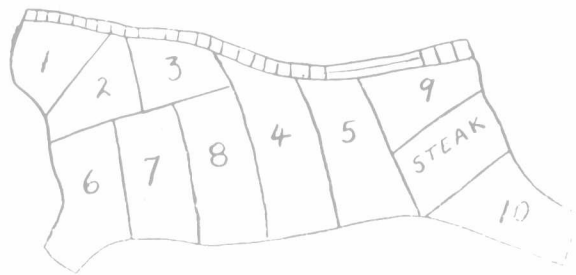


Chart for 20-share Beef Ring.

As will be seen, it is cut into ten pieces and steak. The steak is cut into eight slices, a slice to each piece except Nos. 9 and 10, which are supposed to contain steak. Each portion, as prepared and weighed, is hung on one of a row of twenty hooks, each one of which is numbered with a member's number, and has his share for that week. A reproduction of a part of sheet on which are recorded accounts with members of beef supplied and received, is given below.

Names of Members	No.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Moses M. Weber	1	16	3																		
Chas. P. Martin	2	18	2																		
Allan Quickfall	3	18	2																		
Joe B. Snider	4	18	2																		
Jacob Besch	5	20	2																		
John Pomeroy	6	18	2																		
Edna Nunn	7	18	2																		
Dan Thawley	19	1																			
Amey Schmitz	20	1																			

Beef-ring Account Sheet, Partial View.

Figures entered show beef received by members the first week from animal supplied by Moses M. Weber. When sheet is filled, the totals at the foot of columns, added up and down, show the dressed weights of the different animals supplied by members. Totals of columns added crosswise show the amount of meat received by the different members during the twenty weeks. The sum of the totals below and those at the right-hand side should, of course, correspond. Much care in weighing both the carcass and the pieces, and in marking down the weights, is needed in order that this may be the case.

Crops in the Dominion.

The Census and Statistics Office has issued its May bulletin on the condition of crops and live stock for Canada.

The reports made at the end of April show that good progress has been made with spring seeding in Ontario and the Western Provinces, but that in Quebec and the Maritime Provinces little more than a beginning had been made. Ontario and Alberta are in the lead with spring wheat and oats, the former with 89.34 per cent. of the spring wheat and 74.74 per cent. of the oats in the ground, and the latter with 97.50 of the wheat, and 73.13 of the oats. Ontario had also 72.94 per cent. of the barley seeded, and Alberta only 39.17 per cent. Manitoba and Saskatchewan had nearly equal proportions of the wheat land finished, the former with 90.68 per cent., and the latter with 92.60 per cent., but both were slow with oats and barley. British Columbia had a showing of 78.33 for spring wheat sown, of 81.66 for oats, and 39.17 for barley.

Ontario and Alberta are the only Provinces with a substantial showing of fall wheat, and, whilst in the first-named the condition at the end of April was 95.47 per cent., in the second it was only 81.66 per cent. Alberta also showed considerable loss by winter-killing and drouth, the proportion of the area sown being 22.46 per cent. [Subsequent newspaper reports from Alberta would indicate a much larger loss by drouth.—Editor]. In British Columbia, the loss by winter-killing was 5 per cent. of the area sown, and the condition at the end of April was 100.

The hay and clover meadows suffered, by winter-killing, 12.80 per cent. in British Columbia, and 11.65 per cent. in Quebec, but in all the other Provinces the loss was comparatively slight. The condition of these crops was good in all the Provinces, ranging from 81.85 in Quebec, to 102 in Prince Edward Island.

An excellent report was made for all classes of live stock, their condition for all Canada at the end of April, compared with a standard, being 94.49 for horses, 91.09 for milch cows, 89.59 for other cattle, 93.70 for sheep, and 95.10 for swine.

American Winter Crops.

The Crop-reporting Board of the Bureau of Statistics of the United States Department of Agriculture estimates, from the reports of correspondents and agents of the Bureau, as follows:

On May 1st, the area of winter wheat to be harvested was about 29,044,000 acres, or 714,000 acres (2.5 per cent.) more than the area harvested in 1909, and 4,439,000 acres (13.3 per cent.) less than the area sown last fall (33,483,000 acres).

The average condition of winter wheat on May 1st was 82.1, compared with 80.8 on April 1st; 83.5 on May 1st, 1909, and 86.7, the average for the past ten years on May 1st.

The average condition of rye on May 1st was 91.3, compared with 92.3 on April 1st, 88.1 on May 1st, 1909, and 89.4 the average for the past ten years on May 1st.

The average condition of meadow (hay) lands on May 1st was 89.8, compared with 84.5 on May 1st, 1909, and a ten-year average on May 1st of 89.5.

The average condition of pastures on May 1st was 89.3, compared with 80.1 on May 1st, 1909, and a ten-year average on May 1st of 87.6.

A grower in Southern Kansas, who harvests about one thousand tons of alfalfa per year, and is working with it nearly every day from the second week in May until November 10th, insists that alfalfa, under the same conditions of rainfall, is much easier to save in fair feeding condition than red clover. He finds the side-delivery rake especially excellent for turning over the green or wet windrows to the sun and air, with the least loss of leaves, and, cured thus, after being wet, the natural color is better preserved. "That alfalfa hay has a higher feeding value than almost any other, even when saved under the most unfavorable circumstances, should be impressed upon the inexperienced."—[From Coburn's "The Book of Alfalfa."]

From a bulletin for April, 1910, published by the International Institute of Agriculture, Rome, Italy, it is learned that the area sown to winter wheat in 1909, in the various wheat-growing countries of the world, was greater than what was harvested last year by from 1 to 15 per cent. The condition of the crop on April 1st in European countries and in India was slightly better than the average. In the Western Central American States, owing to smothering with ice, less favorable condition of the crop is reported.