

Farm Management Surveys

They are Designed to Get the Business Facts about Farming---By Alva H. Benton, Professor of Farm Management, M.A.C.

IN industry the study of management methods, cost of production and new processes are given little consideration in the beginning. This is so in agriculture, but the time has come when farmers and others interested in the progress of agriculture are recognizing the necessity of putting farming on a more business-like basis. Agriculture is the source of our present day existence; it is the basic industry of all industries. Farmers are the most necessary of all classes of workers. To live we must have food, and to have food we must have farms and farmers to operate them. Other industries are also necessary, of course, and these industries have drawn many of their ablest men from the farm.

In the industrial world, when demand was far in excess of production, little attention was given to the cost of pro-

duction and scientific management. With keen competition developing, however, and with the price of our productions increasing, the industrial leaders are recognizing the necessity of knowing their business, of finding cost of production and of establishing research departments. Private manufacturing and transportation firms invest immense sums in research laboratories and statistical bureaus, recognizing the value of research and investigation as fundamental in their respective lines of work. The various governments also devote much money to finding markets, and to investigating new processes of mining and manufacturing. Their results are beneficial directly to a limited number and indirectly to the whole people. How much more is it the duty of the government to foster and support agriculture, which is of such paramount importance, es-

pecially in a province which is overwhelmingly agricultural.

A Big Field For Investigation

In our progress and development, have the problems of the farmer been given due consideration? Are his problems being studied and is research being made adequate with the importance of his calling? Much has been done, but it is only infinitesimal with what remains to be done. The chief interest has been along the line of increasing and extending production. What untold wealth the introduction of Marquis wheat has meant to Canada. Twenty years ago corn had been considered only a vision for the Red River Valley. Today selection and research have given us varieties of great commercial value and untold possibilities. Breeding work with alfalfa and forage crops adapted to Manitoba and Western Canada conditions is being carried on, but few realize the possibilities. What an untold boon will be a variety of alfalfa that will seed in this climate and survive the winter. Diligent and painstaking work along these lines is now being carried on at the Manitoba Agricultural College with promises of success.

Most farmers know how to grow the crops they are growing, but the problem is to know in what order to grow them; to know how much of each to grow; to know how much and what kind of livestock to keep; to know when to sell what they have and through what channels. Experience in the United States and elsewhere shows that experiment station farms cannot be used in working out systems of farm management, or in collecting data on the cost of production that would be representative of actual farm conditions. The function of experimental farms is to experiment with crops and demonstrate their possibilities. They cannot be placed upon an ordinary commercial basis.

Finding The Most Successful Farmers

One of the most satisfactory methods of getting information on farm management systems is the farm management survey. This survey consists in selecting an area typical of a large farming district and securing from the farmers in this area information and data on their farm methods and operations. In any district there are always to be found some particularly successful farmers, some partially successful, and others who are unsuccessful. There are reasons for success and these can be learned if the proper information is secured. Most farmers do not keep records, but trained men with proper blanks for tabulating data are able to get surprisingly accurate results. The data from individuals is confidential, as only averages are used in presenting the results to the public. The continued use of this plan in various parts of the United States and in Ontario attests its value. The results are not the opinions of the investigator or the farmer, they are the facts, records from actual farm operations.

From such surveys the principal factors of farm success can be learned and these furnish a basis for advice to those who find their farming is not as profitable as it should be. Often one hears that successful farming rests largely with the man who does it; this is true, but the successful man does some things which the unsuccessful man does not. It is through the farm management survey that we are able to determine what methods the successful man uses.

Another phase of investigational work that is needed is the study of the cost of producing crops and other farm products. Some imagine that the present high prices of farm products have far exceeded the increase in cost of production and that the farmers are making unwarranted profits. Many of those who make these statements do not appreciate the great expense or the risk which the farmer takes. There is little or no data to either prove or disprove such statements, and this data cannot be secured unless figures covering a considerable period of time are carefully collected.

Determining Cost of Production

The government has fixed the price of wheat at a point which is considered to give a fair margin of profit. There is agitation on the part of some farmers for higher prices, but without some

The Grain Growers' Guide

accurate basis in support of it, the argument carries very little weight. There is a movement in England for government purchase of food stuffs after the war in order to keep down the cost of living and to prevent marketing profits on food necessities. To adopt such a policy would mean that the food producing countries must also do the bargaining. In the interests of the producers, is it not invaluable to have some data on the cost of production? In price-fixing hearings in the United States, the data on cost of production has been given much consideration, and in fixing the price of milk for the City of Chicago, with its 3,000,000 people, cost of production data furnished by the Agricultural College of Illinois is the basis agreed upon by the farmers and the consumers. Such data cannot be secured in a few days. It is the result of long and careful collection of the costs in terms of hours of labor, feed required, machinery and supplies used, so that it can be applied to the changing conditions and prices. The collection of figures on cost of production of farm crops and other products is of incalculable value in advancing the business side of farming. Few farmers have the time, experience or inclination to give to such work without assistance.

Investigations Covering Single Crops

Some very satisfactory results have been secured in the matter of cost of crop production by means of the enterprise survey. This is carried on in a similar way to the farm management survey, the difference being that questions are asked in regard to one crop only. Farmers know quite accurately how long it takes to perform the various farm operations, how much seed is required and what yields are secured. They can make estimates as to the cost of horse and man labor that approximate the actual costs. The most satisfactory results along this line, however, can only be secured in conjunction with the cost of labor, interest, depreciation and repairs on machinery and overhead charges which have been secured by careful work, as already discussed. The chief merit of the enterprise survey is that data can be secured from a large number of farmers in a short time.

For every-day use the average farmer finds most satisfactory a small account book, in which expenses and receipts can be kept under proper headings, and in which there is a place for an inventory at the beginning and end of the crop year. This will show the gain or loss in the farm business during the year, and will furnish most of the data needed in an income tax report. For the farmer who wishes to find the cost of producing a single crop and class of livestock, special forms may be used.

As soon as funds become available, the Department of Farm Management and Rural Economics of the Manitoba Agricultural College stands ready to carry on farm management surveys for the purpose of finding the best methods of farm management, and also accounting work for determining the cost of producing crops and other farm products. At present the department is preparing a practical and easily kept farmers' account book, which will be available for distribution through the Agricultural College by the first of the coming year.

Patriotic Funds

November 16, 1918.

Belgian Relief Fund	
Previously acknowledged	\$12,728.77
A. M. Bradford, Arrow River, Man.	10.00
Mrs. L. J. ———, Dropmore, Man.	2.11
W. W. Wood, Vantage, Sask.	2.00
Total	\$12,742.88

Blue Cross Fund	
Previously acknowledged	\$ 214.22
Cameron A. Carpenter, Ingebright, Sask.	3.50
Lois H. Sylvester, Warner, Alta.	.25
Josie E. Hulka, Carmangay, Alta.	.25
Erms Kirkpatrick, Laura, Sask.	.05
Otto Frieson, Laird, Sask.	.25
Ada Duke, Basswood, Man.	.05
Ivan Fawkes, Oak Lake, Man.	.25
James Quinn, Bowell, Alta.	.10
May Jeffrey, Lanigan, Sask.	.10
Total	\$219.17

Armenian Relief Fund	
Previously acknowledged	\$42.25
F. W. Godsal, Victoria, B.C.	5.00
Total	\$47.25

The New

LIGHTER DAY

High Oven
Coal or Wood

RANGE

There is greater ease of operation, better heat control and more economy on fuel with this range than with any other stove on the market.

A Great Cooker---A Quick Heater

The construction of this range allows the fire to travel up in the most natural way. This uses the full heat from the fuel used and also heats the oven in a much shorter time. All baking is done on a "standing" level—no stooping necessary to watch your roast or baking.



We have some interesting pictures we shall be glad to send you.

Clare Bros. Western Limited
Dept. B
MAKERS OF "HECLA" FURNACE
WINNIPEG, MAN.

FARM LANDS And their Relation to Trusteeships

THE undernamed Company has assets in its hands for realization, which belong to estates under its care, and which must be sold to enable these estates to be wound up.

Send for Lists, particularly those dealing with lands, improved and unimproved, in Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta, showing location, prices and terms. There are many bargains to be had and our lists are sent FREE.

THE STANDARD TRUSTS COMPANY

Trustees — Executors. 346 MAIN STREET, WINNIPEG
Capital, \$1,000,000. Reserve, \$600,000.
Branches: SASKATOON, LETHBRIDGE, EDMONTON, VANCOUVER

The

Farms
farm wi
power is
Porta P
cheapest
LAY P
in your
kind of
farm. S
engine.
100 lbs.
you can
gasoline
couple o
work
makes
profits. M
a hired
your car.