

The Breeding and Care of Horses

The inaugural Spring Stallion Show of the Renfrew Agricultural Society, held in Renfrew on Friday, April 23rd, was a most successful effort. There were in all seventeen entries, fourteen heavy horses, and three light horses, and as a rule they were excellent types of the different breeds they represented.

Dr. J. H. Reed, of Georgetown, was present, and delivered an address on the breeding and care of horses, using live animals as illustrations. In the course of his address the speaker stated that farmers are not making as much money out of horses as they might. This is owing to the fact that the majority of them are not breeding horses of the proper type. In order to raise horses of the proper type one special breed should be taken up and developed. All horses of one type that are good, sound, healthy animals are in demand in any market and better prices can be realized for them, they being just as easily raised as the scrub or mongrel horse.

Speaking on the subject of brood mares the Doctor said that, as a rule, farmers do not pay as much attention to the selection of the brood mare as they should. Great care should be exercised in the selection of the mare as well as of the stallion and no farmer should ever use a mare to breed from that is blemished or vicious. A low, well set, big, roomy mare is the proper type for the farmer to breed from, good sloping shoulders, big quarters, and perfectly sound as to legs and feet. When breeding a mare of this type with a sound, well-bred stallion, a good foal is generally the result.

If a foal from such a mare as this proves to be a filly, it is a decided advantage to the farmer to keep her. She will be a source of income to him each year if carefully bred.

Dr. Reed strongly advised farmers against the cheap stallion. He stated that no man who imported a stallion of quality could afford to travel him at a low fee. The result is the owner of the cheap stallion gives him an offer at a very much lower price. Dr. Reed characterized the cheap stallion as "the bane of the horse breeders of Canada."

More attention should be paid to pedigree. If a farmer is offered two animals of equal merit, one being a registered animal and the other not, it is in his interest to take the former because he will breed a better animal to breed from owing to the fact that he will be more prepotent and will transmit his characteristics to his progeny in a marked degree, whereas one cannot expect a half-breed to breed true to type.

In breeding from grade mares, Dr. Reed said that care should be taken not to breed from a great heavy stallion. A cross of this kind, while probably giving a heavy horse, is not advisable owing to the fact that the offspring will likely be coarse and soft. A grade horse that has three or four crosses of pure-bred blood is almost as valuable an animal for selling purposes as the pure-bred, but will not do for breeding from. An animal to be a good seller must be of good blocky conformation, wide between the shoulders, which must slope well back, and with well sprung ribs, and well muscled and symmetrical hind quarters. The feet should be of the best quality of nice flat bone, and it is desirable to have a well sloping pastern. Care should be taken to see how the animal stands, and a great deal more attention should be paid to the walk.

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