



FARMERS' FORUM

NEWS AND COMMENT OF SPECIAL AGRICULTURAL INTEREST - EDITED BY E. CORA HIND



EDITORIAL COMMENT

ALBERTA'S SHORT COURSE AND BREED MEETINGS

Operation and results of the experiment tried in Alberta this year of holding the livestock breeders' meetings in Edmonton in conjunction with a series of short course lectures at the University of Alberta were watched with more than usual interest. Final and complete judgment is not possible but consideration of a few of the facts would lead to the conclusion that the outcome was very satisfactory. Attendance figures were maintained throughout, a feature which is not always the case. Representation was secured from all parts of the province from as far south as Medicine Hat, as far north as Athabasca, and east to Vermilion. Around 100 persons attended every session and every lecture. Local accommodation and equipment for modern lecture work was excellent and afforded the maximum opportunity for the securing of information. In addition the presence at the short course of departmental officials and professors from the University afforded unusual means of securing answers and decisions to questions which so often go unanswered at purely livestock association meetings. In other words, those attending the combined meetings secured the maximum of service and opportunity for gaining information at one and the same time.

This plan of holding meetings has much to recommend it. Complaints are being registered along practically all agricultural fronts today that the science of the industry is too widely separated from the practical; that there is too wide a gap between the laboratory and the farm; that there is no adequate means of contact whereby laboratory acquired knowledge can be correctly applied to the improvement of farm operations.

Perhaps this is so, but close observers will say that the contact is closer now than it has ever been. High prices for comparatively mediocre products are not conducive to a close study of the economics of the farm by those actively engaged in the managing of them. Low prices for comparatively good products have an inverse action, so that today many agriculturists who had little use for the trial grain plot, the experimentalist in livestock feeding, and the specialist in any line of agricultural research are seeking with an open and retentive mind any source of relief from the almost intolerable production and marketing combination of today for farm products. The next few years will be the turn of the colleges of agriculture, the experimental farms and the various extension services of the provincial and Dominion departments of agriculture. Men on the land are more in need of scientific information and direction now than ever before that they may become enabled to make receipts and expenditures meet.

Short courses such as the one held at Edmonton last week whereby breeders and feeders of livestock gather to hear and learn of the most up-to-date and economic methods of feeding and handling stock, offers one of the most satisfactory contacts which both science and practice could desire.

MANITOBA DAIRY CONVENTION

The 47th annual convention of the Manitoba Dairy association which now includes the producers, buttermakers, and manufacturers sections and the Dairy Cattle Breeders' association annual, was an unqualified success and fully justified the executive officials in holding the same in spite of the depression and the tightness of money.

The attendance of producers was an agreeable surprise as it had

A BUSY CHAIRMAN



T. J. COYLE

Winnipeg, chairman of the committee for arranging for the address and presentation to Dr. Ruddick, at the recent dairy convention. Mr. Coyle did all the correspondence between the provinces in securing the co-operation which made the address and presentation Canada wide.

been feared that relatively few might make the effort to attend.

The spirit of all the sections was good. There was no foolish optimism. Every speaker realized the seriousness of the situation. On the other hand it was recognized that in spite of very low prices it would be unwise to reduce production. The trend of the addresses and discussions was much more along the line of reducing costs of production and manufacture to enable Manitoba butter to enter world markets, sell at world prices and return something of a profit to both manufacturer and producer. The improvement of dairy herds to secure a greater production per cow found considerable place in the discussions. Through the whole week ran the idea that while dairying, along with all farm practices, had been hard hit, the thing was to stay with the job.

Many readers, more especially those who through the years have met and listened to and talk with Dr. J. A. Ruddick, dairy and cold storage commissioner, will be keenly interested in this convention being the scene of his last official visit and addresses. There is no doubt that his presence and his sketches of the early struggles in dairying in western Canada had a marked influence on the spirit of the convention.

The rehearsing of past troubles lived through and conquered had a stimulating effect. The present generation is assuredly not willing to admit that they are less able to meet and conquer difficulties than their fathers and mothers were.

The fact that all the provinces of Canada had joined in furnishing the funds to make the presentation of the illuminated address and the encyclopedia gave a feeling of co-operation and a drawing together of all Canada that was very much to the good.

The idea of the artist, J. D. Duthie, in making the frontispiece of the address a shield with all the provincial arms of Canada in their proper colors, surmounted by the Imperial crown and wreathed with

maple leaves, was a very happy one. The heads of the various breeds of dairy cattle which adorned the corners of the following pages reflected great credit on Miss Colly who drew them; Ayrshire, Holstein, Jersey, Guernsey and French-Canadian they were all there and all lifelike. A very appropriate setting for an address to a dairy commissioner. The only regret was that all who contributed could not have the opportunity of seeing and hearing the address and of bidding Dr. Ruddick a personal farewell.

The butter show was the largest that any province of Canada has ever made and in number of exhibits has only been exceeded by the Royal Agricultural, Toronto. The quality was well up to the quantity and received much commendation from the judges.

Viewed from every angle "dairy week" in Winnipeg in 1932 will be a mark for future conventions to aim at and too much praise cannot be given to the various committees and the dairy commissioner and his staff for the unremitting labor, in advance, to perfect every detail and see that the whole convention moved with smoothness and precision.

THE SWAN RIVER VALLEY SCHOOL OF AGRICULTURE

By PROFESSOR T. J. HARRISON

The people of the Swan Valley, who are noted for their initiative and resourcefulness, have again demonstrated these qualities in the establishment of a local school of agriculture. Confronted with the fact that the College of Agriculture was three hundred miles distant and that in these years farming left little or no margin of profit for the technical education of the family, the Agricultural society conceived the idea of organizing a school that would give instruction on problems pertinent to the farmers in the valley, and at the same time would be within financial reach of the average farm boy.

With the usual courage of the people of this district they decided at the outset to make it a boarding school. This necessitated a building equipped with a dormitory, kitchen and dining-room as well as class rooms. The Swan River hospital board came to the rescue and presented the Agricultural society with the old hospital building and about four acres of land. This property is located on a little promontory in the bend of the Swan river on the outskirts of the town. The building required considerable alterations and repairs before it could be used. The governments were persuaded to allow this to be done as an unemployment relief measure.

The cots for the dormitory were donated by a construction company, the mattresses, kitchen equipment and dishes were supplied by the provincial department of agriculture. A few of the members of the Agricultural society, under the direction of a carpenter, made the tables and benches for the class room and dining-room. The ladies belonging to the local Women's Institute made and hung the curtains. The school provides only a cook. The students take turns at doing the janitor work, waiting on table and washing dishes, etc. The staff of lecturers is being supplied by the Extension Service of the department of agriculture, the Agricultural college, the board of grain commissioners, International Harvester Co. and local ministers, bankers, farmers, insurance men, etc.

For the first year it was decided to operate the school for only one month during the late winter. In the late spring or early summer a course for the farm girls will be put on.

The fees for the boys, including board and tuition, etc., for the month was set at \$18. If the boy could not find even this price he could bring with him supplies such as meat, flour, potatoes, vegetables, butter, eggs, etc., and this would be applied on his fees. It is interesting to note that many

THREE OF A KIND



MONA PONTIAC WALKER 134648.



STRATHMORE LADY MCKINLEY 143399.



PRIMROSE LILY PIETJE 15517.

These are three cows from the Canadian Pacific railway herd at Strathmore and all have very fine records.

Mona, born December, 1924, has highest milk production in 4-year-old class, 1930, giving 29,202 pounds of milk and 1,071 pounds of butterfat.

Strathmore Lady, born July, 1925, highest in both milk and butter production, 4-year-old class, in Canada, 1931, with 25,569 pounds of milk and 1,102.5 pounds of butterfat.

Primrose, born March, 1925, first prize dry cow at Vancouver and Victoria, 1930. Highest butter production in Canada in 1931, 28,271 pounds of milk and 1,210 pounds of butterfat.

Of the students availed themselves of this privilege.

The school will accommodate from 25 to 30 students and as an evidence that the venture was well justified it should be stated that before the school was operating one week practically all the available space was taken.

The young men in attendance are about twenty years of age, practically all have attended high school, many having secured grade XI standing. They all have had practical farm experience and are at the school to improve their knowledge of agriculture.

The school is administered by a board of trustees appointed by the Agricultural society. The presiding officer, principal or dean is Charles Murray, the representative of the department of agriculture in that area. Much of the success of the enterprise must be credited to Mr. Murray, who has labored early and late and has faced many difficulties in the establishment of the first school of agriculture of its kind in Manitoba.

GRAIN AND HOG PRICES

By PROF. G. W. WOOD,
Department of Animal Husbandry,
Manitoba Agricultural College.

An interesting question that arises in the minds of swine producers is one that involves the relationship between the market price of pigs and the value received for the grain used in growing them. Everyone knows that when grain prices are high and hog prices low that producers frequently ship their pigs to market regardless of their size and condition and market their grain through the elevator. If the opposite condition prevails, a very rapid increase in the breeding stock takes place and many men start anew in the raising of hogs.

It is always difficult to arrive at hog production costs as there are so many factors to consider and frequently the results and returns secured by pig raisers are so variable. The amount of data available on the feed requirements both for breeding and feeding pigs is quite extensive and by using these figures in a conservative way one is able to arrive at a figure which may be used in determining the value received for the grain fed to pigs.

Other Items

In addition to the grain used, there are other items of expense entering into the cost of hog production which must be considered. These are the carrying charges of breeding stock, cost of buildings and equipment, grinding of grain, service fees, salt, minerals, pasture, green, feed, and protein supplements such as digester

NOTICE

The annual meeting of the Canadian Aberdeen Angus association for 1932 is scheduled for the Fallis hotel, Calgary, evening of March 29.

tankage and skim milk. In addition to these various items we have the labor involved in caring for both the breeding and feeding stock. By using reasonable figures on the cash costs in producing pigs one is able to deduct from the cash received from the sale of the pigs that portion of the returns which covers the grain used.

In this brief article I wish first to analyze the cost of producing weanling pigs and later to consider the cost of feeding and fattening them for market. In both cases grain feeds of different values are used. I have assumed that the sows are producing on an average one and one-half litters per year or in other words four breeding sows producing six litters per season. The number of young pigs raised to weanling age per sow will ordinarily show a great variation, this being one of the most important factors in determining the cost of weanling pigs. All the costs entering into the maintenance and keep of the sow will necessarily have to be charged against the young pigs. In arriving at the cost of producing weanling pigs, two different figures are here used. In the first case where ten pigs are raised per sow per year and in the last case where seven are raised.

The following gives some of the costs of maintaining a breeding sow for one year:

Interest on sow (value \$10) at 5 per cent.50
Interest on buildings and equipment \$25 at 5 per cent.	1.25
Depreciation on buildings and equipment at 10 per cent.	2.50
Death loss on sow at 10 per cent.	1.00
Service fees	1.50
Pasture, green feed, etc.	1.00
Protein supplements to balance grain (100 pounds digester tankage or 200 gallons skim milk)	2.00
Miscellaneous25

\$10.00

The above buildings and equipment includes not only the shelter for the sow but also for the feeding and fattening of the pigs. A low valuation is intentionally placed on both the brood sow and buildings. If more money is invested in the breeding stock and shelter, the cost of producing weanling pigs will be relatively higher.

Grain for Sow

The amount of grain to nourish a brood sow per year and raise the pigs to weanling age varies somewhat, but figures available show that this amount is slightly above 2,000 pounds. By knowing the cash costs of maintaining the sow and the amount of grain used to feed her, we are able to arrive at the cost of producing weanling pigs with grains at different prices.

Cost of raising weanling pigs when sow produced ten per year:

Grain per lb.	Value of 2,000 lbs. grain	Cash cost	Total cost	Cost per pig
1/2c	\$10	\$10	\$20	\$2.00
3/4c	\$15	\$10	\$25	\$2.50
.01c	\$20	\$10	\$30	\$3.00

If only seven pigs are raised instead of ten, the cost per pig will be increased to \$2.86, \$3.57, \$4.28 respectively according to the above prices for grain.

In the above estimate no allowance is made for labor either for caring for the sow and litters or for grinding the grain and the many other labor consuming items.

In arriving at the value of grain used by feeder pigs, it is necessary to make some definite allowance of grain

(Continued on page 28.)

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Important Dates to Remember

Feb. 29—Entries Close for Annual Swine Sale, Brandon.
March 7—Entries Close for Winter Fair, Brandon.
March 14-18—Winter Fair and Fat Stock Show, Brandon.
March 17—Annual Sale Bulls and Females, Brandon.
March 18—Annual Sale of Swine, Brandon.
March 21-25—Regina Spring Show, Regina.
March 23—Bred Sow Sale, Regina.
March 24—Angus, Hereford and Dairy Cattle Sale, Regina.
March 25—Shorthorn and Red Poll Sale, Regina.
March 29—Canadian Aberdeen-Angus Association Annual, Calgary.
March 31—Purebred and Grade Horse Sale, Saskatoon.
March 30-April 2—Calgary Spring Show and Bull Sale, Calgary.
March 28-31—Saskatoon Spring Show, Saskatoon.
April 4-9—Edmonton Spring Show, Edmonton.