

English customer is, in the main, a conservative and consistent purchaser of one brand of bacon. If his supply from a certain quarter falls short he seeks another more regular source of supply, and as a rule depends upon it as long as it continues to be satisfactory.

The reputation of Canadian bacon is steadily improving on the English market. We are approaching nearer to Danish prices than ever before, and Canadian bacon generally has probably never had a better reputation. The great lack is quantity. During these periods of ebb we lose the business purchased during previous periods of high tide in deliveries. This all means waste of money when at a later period, under heavier delivery, we have to buy back the business once again.

During the past two seasons several features have retarded the extension of our bacon trade. With fair to good prices throughout the season the packing houses have not had sufficient hogs of any sort to keep their plants going at anything like their full capacity. This is attributed to the growing prosperity of the farming class, together with a scarcity of farm help.

An unfavourable feature of the situation for several years was a tendency on the part of farmers to market their hogs in an unfinished condition. Sometimes from lack of grain, oftener through fear of taking lower prices later, hogs were sold in such condition, or at such weights, that the whole trade suffered from a surfeit of light or unfinished product. This tendency is becoming less pronounced in Ontario, as hogs in that province are being better finished now than in the past, but in the province of Quebec, where too little coarse grain is grown, too many hogs are marketed in an unfinished condition.

The bacon industry of Canada, worth some eighteen million dollars annually, is surely worthy of the earnest support of farmers. The chief weaknesses are the irregular supply and a failure in many sections to meet the requirements of the trade by not producing the type of hog called for. The difficulty regarding supply may be overcome by a closer study of the question of the production of winter and spring litters and the cheaper production of hogs at all seasons. The farmer who feeds his growing hogs and breeding stock in a close pen on an almost exclusive diet of grain is not going to continue to raise pork for the reason that he cannot make it profitable. He must use green crops, roots, dairy by-products and other refuse, and care for his animals in such a way that the very best returns will be received from the food given.

The most urgent need of the bacon industry is a steady, persistent support, begotten of the belief that year in and year out hog-raising pays when pursued along right lines. If this is done there are great possibilities for Canadian bacon. Because of distance from market and the demand for an exceedingly mild-cured article, Canadian bacon has not, up to the present time, sold on even terms with the best Irish or Danish brands, which are within a couple of days of the market. However, with improved cold storage facilities on steamships and at British ports, the difference in price between Canadian and the more popular European brands is gradually being overcome, and the finest Canadian is rapidly approaching the top price paid for bacon in Britain. Our bacon occupies a position some shillings per hundredweight better than American and with its growing popularity with the English consumer, it should be the bacon of the people in just the same way that Canadian cheese is the cheese of the people of Great Britain. That it may occupy this position, however, there must be, on the part of the farmers, persistent and increased raising of hogs during periods of low prices as well as high; the hogs marketed must conform to market requirements as regards type, quality and weight, as described in the foregoing pages of this bulletin. To the extent that Canadian hog raisers comply with these conditions they do their part towards building up a very desirable and valuable trade with Great Britain and other countries looking for bacon of high quality; on the other hand, those who persist in raising hogs spasmodically or of poor type and disposing of them either too fat or too thin, are very effectively damaging the industry that is doing much for the prosperity of Canadian agriculture. The packers, too, must continue