

Beef Production in the West

Continued from Page 9

feeds and cattle were both cheap. Not all the most successful makers of beef use the same methods or feed the same rations. There are five general ways in which beef production can be cheapened on the smaller farms.

To Get Cheaper Beef

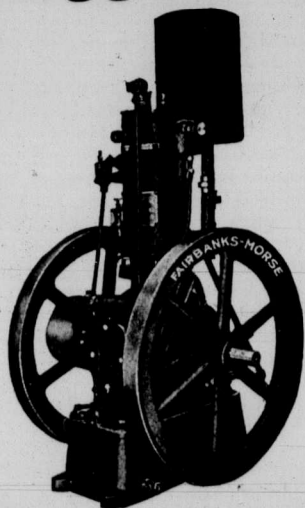
These five are: The use of legumes, such as clover or alfalfa; the use of concentrated feeds, such as linseed oil meal; the use of corn silage, roots and barley and oat straw; the use of feeds high in carbohydrates, such as barley and corn, and the better care and use of pastures. It is not essential that all these be used in every case. Sometimes the cheaper alfalfa may partly replace the concentrates in a ration, but in general, all five aid in making better beef at a cheaper cost. No beef cattle farm can afford to be without alfalfa if it is at all possible to grow it. It is possible to grow it successfully on any Western Canadian farm if the land is naturally well drained, seed bed carefully prepared, good seed used, and care taken each fall to leave a good growth for winter protection. Carelessness over the latter point is the cause for failure of a great many growers. Alfalfa not only helps the crop yields when used in a rotation, but furnishes the cheapest source of protein to help in balancing the ration. It is not alone in fattening rations that alfalfa works well. For breeding cattle, growing cattle and calves the alfalfa is particularly valuable, not alone for its protein content but for the lime, phosphorous and other mineral matter it contains. It brings growth and thrift in stock, and adds year by year to the fertility of the land and the size of the crops. A large part of the necessary protein or muscle forming and growth making portion of a ration for breeding cattle or stockers may be supplied by the alfalfa. However, where alfalfa is not available oil meal should be used if it can be bought anywhere around \$30 per ton. Even with a full feed of alfalfa, fattening cattle of whatever age make larger and cheaper gains and put on a higher finish when supplied with a concentrate. Experiments show that the addition of three pounds of meal a day to a ration of barley and alfalfa increased the rate of gain .3 of a pound a day, reduced the cost per 100 pounds of gain 37 cents and increased the profit per steer \$2.90. The pasture land on the average Western Canadian farm is sadly neglected. Because of this neglect the yield of feed and the number of livestock that can be carried is often not more than half what it should be. Of course this refers not to the range, but to small permanent pasture seeded on the farm. When seeding use the right kind of seed and plenty of it. Do not pasture too heavily in the fall, and manure as often as possible.

Corn and Roots

Corn silage or roots make an economical stock feed in Western Canada. Where it is possible to grow good heavy corn, silage makes a cheap, efficient roughage. It will cheapen the cost of wintering the breeding cows and feeding the steers. However, corn is not as yet a sure crop in Western Canada, and hence silage cannot be recommended for all cases. Roots will take the place of silage and make an excellent succulent for the calf, breeding cow and fattening steer. Analysis shows them to contain a large percentage of water, therefore they should only be used in the ration as a succulent or roughage. Oat and barley straw should also be used. For breeding cows it is especially valuable as a winter roughage. For the fattening steer it is valuable during the early parts of the feeding period. Here it is that plenty of bulky feeds can take the place of part of the grain ration. If the straw is run thru a cutter it can be mixed with the grain or fed in bunks alone and will be eaten more readily by the steers.

Barley should form a large percentage of the fattening ration. Analyses show barley to contain 65.3 per cent. of digestible carbohydrates, while oats contain only 50.3 per cent. Barley, however, is usually higher in price than oats, and of course this must be taken into consideration when determining the ration.

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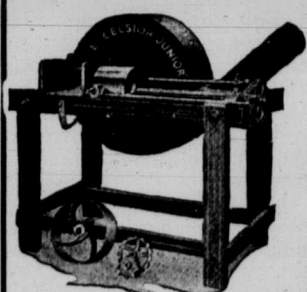
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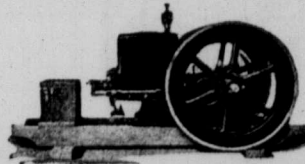


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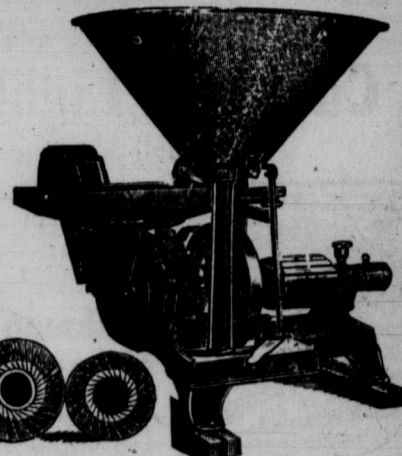
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