

FARMER'S ADVOCATE

AND HOME JOURNAL

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Vol. XLVI.

Winnipeg, Canada, April 13, 1910

No. 916

FARMER'S ADVOCATE AND HOME JOURNAL

ESTABLISHED 1866

Canada's Foremost Agricultural Journal
Published Every Wednesday

SUBSCRIPTION PRICE

Canada and Great Britain, per annum, in advance..... \$1.50
(if in arrears)..... 2.00
United States and Foreign countries, in advance..... 2.50
Date on label shows time subscription expires.

In accordance with the law, the FARMER'S ADVOCATE is sent to all subscribers until an explicit order is received for its discontinuance, accompanied by payment of all arrears.

British Agency, W. W. Chapman, Mowbray House, Norfolk St., London W. C., England.

Specimen copies mailed free. Agents wanted.
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FARMER'S ADVOCATE
OF WINNIPEG, LIMITED,

14-16 PRINCESS ST., WINNIPEG, MAN.

EDITORIAL

Basis of Land Values

Reports of land transactions indicate that improved land is selling at higher prices this spring than ever before. Good quarter-sections in Manitoba are changing hands at as high as \$9,500 each, a trifle less than \$60 per acre. Well situated farms, with good buildings and clean fields, are selling even better than this, while average quarters are exchanging at from \$7,000 to \$9,000 each. Other farms are selling at much lower figures than these; in fact, "improved land" in the oldest settled parts of the West can be bought at one-third or less than one-third these prices.

Farm values are based on a number of factors entirely within the owner's control. Situation is not the most important point in value-making, though it counts to some extent. Well located buildings, conveniently arranged and in good repair, naturally enhance the value of a farm; trees planted about the buildings or at the entrance to the farm make the property more valuable; a clean soil, not exhausted of fertility by careless cropping methods, adds dollars to the value of every acre; a garden is an asset that counts in increasing the selling price, while other factors such as fencing, arrangement of fields and so on add value.

The meaning of these conditions is obvious. It pays in dollars and cents to make the farm a home as well as a grain mine; it pays to keep the buildings in order, to plant trees, to fence properly, to conserve fertility, to actually "improve" the farm. There is no investment for capital that will give returns equal to what is possible to earn by investing it intelligently in improving a farm. There are thousands of men starting to farm this season who should take to heart the lesson taught by the difference in value between farms that

have been actually improved and farms that have been merely abused. Don't wait twenty-five years to find out whether or not this assertion is true. Consider the situation that now presents itself in the older settled districts of the West. Remember the cause of the difference in value one farm with another, and remember the wild land you are taking up is in the same condition today that these farms were a quarter of a century ago. Wild land is being taken up this spring that can be made to increase in value on an average of two dollars per acre per year for the next twenty-five years, and during that time be made to produce more by three or four times over what an adjoining carelessly managed farm now of equal value will do. The basis of farm land values is careful farming. Remember that it will pay when you want to sell.

Potato Growing in the West

In 1909 the production of potatoes on the prairies came close to filling the demand. Everything considered growers were satisfied, though some damage by frost about digging time caused local losses.

Some enthusiasts noting the rapid growth of towns and cities wisely procured planters, power sprayers and diggers so that they could attend to a large acreage without delay and without undue expenditure for hired help.

Potatoes have proven to be a paying crop on the prairies where the soil is suitable and the work has been done intelligently. Indications of an early spring are forebodings of another satisfactory season with this crop. Up-to-date machinery and thorough cultivation will give increased returns.

Seeding to Grasses or Clovers

Last week a prominent Manitoba farmer in discussing recent changes in methods stated that he no longer adopted the summer-fallow as a means of preparing for higher yields. He prefers to seed down a considerable area each year and make use of as much manure as possible. This system is popular over a great area in the Neepawa district. Farmers who in bygone years summer-fallowed at regular intervals, now never think of such practice, except under very extreme conditions.

It is possible that there are sections in the wide Canadian West where summer-fallowing is an essential to maximum returns from the fields. However, there is no doubt but that if farmers in many localities would spend more cash on seeding down to grasses, clovers or alfalfa, and less on the labor entailed in summer-fallowing, the cash returns in five or ten years would be increased. Thorough cultivation and judicious seeding down has been the making of many farms. Try it consistently for five years on at least part of your farm and report results.

Encouraging Horticulture

The Western Horticultural Society at its annual meeting in February decided on a change of name, and is now known as the Manitoba Horticultural and Forestry Association. This change does not in any way remove the privileges formerly accorded to those residing beyond the borders of Manitoba. Neither has the work undertaken been made of lesser value.

An excellent premium list has been prepared, including apple trees, plum trees, currant bushes, raspberry bushes, strawberry plants, willows and poplars, climbers and flowering plants. Any member can have his choice of a dozen collections, provided the supply is not exhausted before the application reaches the secretary.

This association has done much to draw attention to horticulture by holding meetings and issuing pamphlets and reports, but the premiums give the members an opportunity to show their practical interest in the good work. Those who are in horticultural work to any extent prefer to buy direct from a reliable seed house or nursery, but the novice often prefers to make a modest start by the premium route. The association's premiums are northern grown stock and, therefore, should thrive well if given a fair chance.

A Tip That Went Wrong

Between the first of October, 1909, and the end of March, 1910, wheat prices advanced approximately 10 cents per bushel. Wheat in the closing days of September last year was selling in Winnipeg at a fraction over 95 cents per bushel. It sold in the closing days of March at a fraction over \$1.05. Anyone who has watched the price of wheat day by day as quoted weekly in this paper knows that the advance in price has been gradual ever since last fall; knows that there has been no spasmodic spurts, the taking advantage of which by the seller might result in his securing a higher price than might be obtained some time later. The wheat market this year has been on a very steady basis, and the holder of wheat at the end of March can cast up his cost of carrying and the interest on the money involved and be certain that he is figuring his profit or loss upon the highest price quoted for wheat during the six months.

The charges for carrying 1,000 bushels of wheat in the storage elevators from October 1 to March 31 would be \$62.50, figuring at the regular rates charged for storage, three-quarters of a cent per bushel for the first fifteen days and one-thirtieth of a cent per bushel for each day thereafter. The value of 1,000 bushels of wheat, October 1, at 95¢ per bushel would be \$952.50, and the interest on this sum for six months at 6 per cent. would amount to