

Fitting Cattle for Export

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As the British markets furnish us with the only available outlet for the surplus of our finished cattle, a careful study of the requirements of those markets is necessary in order to understand what class and quality of animals will command the highest price. Usually the top prices yield the largest profits. Probably there is no other article of food which the Englishman is so particular about as his roast beef. He must have that of the best, if within reach, and is willing to pay a handsome price for the better quality, while the commoner and unfinished carcasses have to compete with many other cheaper and more attractive foods.

NO UNFINISHED CATTLE WANTED.

The time has been when it was profitable to send unfinished cattle across the sea to spend a few weeks or months on the fields or in the stalls, afterwards to be placed on the markets as British beef. But the embargo has ended that line of trade, and now those markets are open to cattle from Canada only to land and be slaughtered at the port of entry within a few days of arrival. These facts all clearly indicate that it is only well bred cattle, full of quality, and finished in such a manner as to furnish beef of the kind which pleases our discriminating customers, that will give the satisfactory returns which should and can be got out of a trade to which there is scarcely a limit if we supply a first-class article.

We are fast getting a firm hold of the bacon trade by growing the right kind of hogs and finishing them with proper feed, so that packers can produce the class of bacon which is in demand. From their splendid success we can learn much and get helpful encouragement to work along similar lines in producing and fitting cattle for those leading markets of the world. We must begin by having the right sort of bullocks or heifers to fatten in field or stall or pen. It is the special bred cattle that stand a good chance of giving profitable returns for labor and cost.

MUST HAVE CATTLE OF RIGHT TYPE.

With the manifold ways of assistance given by our Federal and Provincial Governments to the dairying interests, and comparatively little to the interests of beef producers, feeders in many localities are suffering from a great difficulty in securing suitable cattle to fit up for the export trade. It is only the progeny of good bulls of the beefing breeds and cows in which there is the tendency to flesh up when not giving milk, that stands the test of fitting for foreign markets successfully. Having secured good cattle, one of the most important parts of the business is well in hand. The next consideration is how shall the feeding be done so as to get the best results? Here and there are feeders experimenting with dehorned cattle fed loose in pens. So far we have no account of cattle so fed, failing to give better returns compared with those fattened in stalls. The liberty to move about apparently promotes a better assimilation of the feed consumed, and the cost of labor in

caring for them is materially reduced. Besides the bullocks are kept strong and sound on foot, the same being satisfactory to the shipper, and tending strangely towards the increasing of his cash balance at the end.

In stall or pen fattening a large percentage of the daily feed must be of a succulent nature. Roots formerly, and ensilage more recently, supply that necessity. Many successful feeders use both roots and ensilage in preparing the rations. Others still adhere to the old time method of using roots only, with the dry foods, and many of them certainly have not failed in producing highly finished exporters, while occasionally we learn of successful feeders who have discarded roots entirely and pin their faith very strangely to ensilage as the mainstay in their winter fitting operations.

THEY MUST BE PROPERLY FED.

The careful examination of the many different reports from the feeders using these different kinds or a combination leads to the conclusion that so far as the proper fitting



Shorthorn Heifer Cicely, property of and bred by Her Majesty the Queen; winner of Shorthorn Female Championship at the Royal and Highland Shows, 1899.

of cattle for the export trade is concerned it can be well done with either one or both combined. When the question of cost relative to results is to be decided there is more difficulty met with, as it has not been satisfactorily demonstrated by experimenters that the one method has any decided advantage over the other in that respect. Without doubt, fully as much of the success in profitable production of the well-finished export bullock is to be attributed to other sources as to the kind of succulent feed used. The comfortable housing, the kindly treatment, the quantity and quality of roughage, the kind of grain or grain mixtures, and the regular watering, with plenty of exercise and cleanliness combine in turning out cattle in that bloom which proves so attractive to the buyer that it induces him to pay the highest price to secure them. They in turn give him much satisfaction in handling, and when the consumer is reached he finds the beef so much to his taste that he sounds out the praises of the Canadian bullock and advertises our country as a place where we have got the men, the climate, the feed, and the cattle which can furnish John Bull roast beef second to none and an article that suits his dainty palate to a nicety.