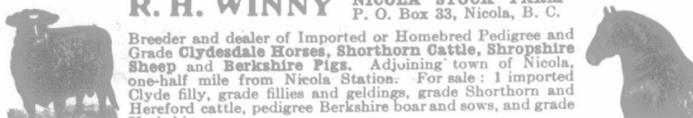


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and by the wool dealer, as supplying a desirable fleece.

MUTTON REQUIREMENTS AND SUPPLIES

Some interesting data was secured from the leading firms buying Western sheep and also from those importing Eastern mutton. The extent to which the West falls short of supplying even the existing demand for mutton was variously estimated at from 40,000 to 100,000 head. The former figures applied rather to the Winnipeg market, and the latter to the whole country, including British Columbia. All firms agreed that there was no danger of the supply being stimulated to the point of over-production. The chief sources of outside supply named were: Ontario, Maritime Provinces, Australia and the United States, Winnipeg houses draw largely upon the three first named, and Western houses upon the two last named sources. It was pointed out that American and Australian mutton costs between 4 and 4½ cents per pound, dressed, in freight charges and duty, and the Western producer has this great advantage over foreign competitors at the outset.

WESTERN MUTTON SUPERIOR

These firms handling both the native and imported mutton were agreed that the Western product is superior in quality and flavor to that imported. Not one of the firms consulted recommended breeding for an early lamb crop, on account of the greater risks involved. It was admitted, though, that the early fall market is a better one than can be expected later. These firms were also agreed that the feeding of a bunch of lambs through the winter with the idea of marketing them on the strong spring market would be a profitable enterprise if cheap food were available and care and judgment in feeding were exercised.

Apart altogether from the cash returns and the undoubted possibilities for profit from mutton and wool sales, there was remarkable accord between the sheep-raisers who sent in returns as to the advantages of sheep-keeping as an aid to agriculture and as a source of convenient, cheap and tasty meat supply for the farmer's own table. Perhaps a few extracts from the reports will cover this part of the subject better than any generalizations. They clearly reveal that in the minds of many the direct profits are of secondary importance to the effect of sheep keeping upon grain yields and as an aid to good farming.

A Prince Albert farmer says: "A bunch of sheep will kill more weeds on a farm than two teams of horses, and every farmer should have a band of sheep for that purpose, besides the profit they make."

A Broadview farmer says: "I claim that sheep are one of the best four-footed animals that ever stepped on to a farm for the average man as a money-maker. The advantage of raising sheep to other stock is, they need no tying up or clearing after them in winter. I feed prairie hay in winter and a little sheaf oats in spring after lambing. With proper care at lambing time the trouble with them is over, as I turn them to pasture."

A Valley farmer says: "Many would keep sheep if they had their farms fenced. To get full benefit from a flock of sheep one's farm would have to be fenced so that sheep could be allowed to run on fallows and destroy weeds. They require very little attention in winter."

A Birch Hills farmer says: "Every farmer should have a bunch of sheep. They are very easy to keep and of good value in the destruction of foul weeds. I fail to see any disadvantages."

A Prosperity farmer says: "It is an all-important matter. Sheep are harmless, perfect to handle, are managed in droves that need no tying or leading, come to call, need very little water, thrive with a cheap straw-and-pole shelter, require only weeds and scrub in summer and straw and screening in winter, digest all seeds swallowed, afford palatable nutritious meat in a handy-sized carcass, convert waste into wealth, and are altogether the most profitable of stock."

A Longberg farmer says: "The time is coming when sheep will be kept

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