

Dairy Prospects in Assiniboia.

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From the producer's point of view, the outlook for dairying is probably more encouraging at the present time than it ever was. The ruling price for dairy produce has advanced considerably and continues to remain firm; weather conditions are most favorable, and succulent feed, although deficient during the early part of spring, is now amply supplied on the prairie pastures. This, combined with the increased demand for fancy butter, particularly creamery butter, should be an incentive to the producers to avail themselves of such conducive circumstances, which, from present indications, will prove profitable. The season of 1902 closed with a strong demand for butter, and before the end of the year the supply of creamery butter was practically exhausted. The supply of dairy butter was also limited, and at times the local trade demand was sufficient to consume all the butter marketed locally. Even yet, conditions remain very much the same, and a ready market is obtainable for first-class produce. Those exceptional conditions of the butter market, and the exceptional prices obtained for butter, have probably never been equalled previously, and the manufacturers and producers are naturally led to seek the causes which brought about those conditions. It is fully apparent that the consumption of butter has been increasing the past few years, and this, no doubt, was brought about, first, by the large influx of people to the West and British Columbia; second, by a larger supply of butter of a more uniform quality; and, third, by a better state of trade and a wider market. The price was also materially affected by the excessive and continuous rainfall in 1902, from early spring until past midsummer, with the result that the output of creamery butter showed a decided falling off, leaving a shortage on the market and a consequent advance in price. Those circumstances, however, are likely to prove beneficial to dairymen during

the present year, in so much that the season is opening with no old stock in storage, and a ready demand for fresh butter.

So early in the season it is with considerable uncertainty that any estimate may be formed as to what extent dairying will extend during the present season, but from present indications and data the situation is encouraging. The abundant wheat crops have not had such a widespread prejudice towards mixed farming as many supposed it would, by influencing them to discontinue milking cows. Many farmers already realize that the stock and dairy herd, although entailing considerable labor relative to attendance, is yet a very desirable and sure method to follow, bringing revenue at short intervals during the year when returns from grain products are not forthcoming. This has been the experience of many within the last half decade, when wheat per acre showed a yield much less than that of the past two years. It was then that dairying, and especially the co-operative system, so opportunely afforded means of gathering sufficient revenue to meet the requisites of every-day life, which otherwise was not readily forthcoming. The effect has been a lasting one, and instances may be cited where settlers who were thus benefited, and are now comfortably situated, are still satisfied to remain engaged in the dairy work supporting the co-operative system. So far this present season conditions have been admirably adapted for carrying on this latter, and the work is progressing favorably. To have it terminate thus, however, requires constant care and attention from both producer and manufacturer. Too much emphasis cannot be laid on their duties. From the raw material, in the liquid milk, to the finished product ready for the consumer, it is perishable in all its different forms, and unless precautions are inaugurated to guard against deterioration from start to finish, it will be impossible to place produce on the market the quality of which will find a purchaser. Western buyers repeatedly ask for fresh butter, very often mentioning some particular creamery or creameries, the output of which they are desirous of obtaining, and to secure such are ready to pay an increased price for it, rather than be obliged, in order to meet the demands of their customers for butter, to handle butter of second grade at a

reduction in price. This state of the market is becoming more critical every year, with the result that large quantities of dairy butter, showing a wide variation in quality, much being very inferior butter, has really no place in the Western market to-day, where a number of years ago it could be disposed of, although at a very much lower price than good butter. To the dairymen of the West this should be a warning. If from us the consumer cannot get what he desires he will seek the supply from other sources. Already butter has been coming in large consignments from across the line and from Ontario points, which, owing to the diminished manufacturing cost, despite the lengthy transportation, can be placed on the market at a price which compares favorably with Western prices. Therefore, to hold our nearest and best market, efforts should be made to meet the demands of the consumer, and to accomplish this, co-operation among farmers and manufacturers is essential; individually, success will never be achieved. It is to be regretted that merchants so much encourage the making of inferior butter by allowing the same price for it as butter of a much better quality. It is a noticeable feature in the co-operative system that about ninety per cent. of its supporters are people who have a reputation of making good butter. Despite those drawbacks, however, advancement is being made, and with the close of the present season many of them may be retro-active only.

The "Pastoralists' Review" tells of Mary's final success as a breeder thus:

So Mary, tired of wrinkly sheep
That "Shaw" the kemp and hair,
She bought herself a plainer one—
Her new-chum neighbors stare.
But Mary, who was not a fool,
Got frame and constitution;
And for short fibres, kemp and hair,
Grew wool in substitution.

Sunday School Teacher—Now, boys, speak right up and answer promptly. Who carried off the gates of Gaza? Every Boy (promptly and in chorus)—"Twan't me. I didn't touch them gates."



VIEWS ABOUT STRATHCONA.

1. Gold dredge, Otis, at work in the Saskatchewan. 2. Saskatchewan River at Strathcona. 3. West End, Strathcona. 4. Elevators at Strathcona. 5. Fire Brigade. 6. East End Strathcona.