



Government of the Province of Saskatchewan
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Care, Feeding and Management of Beef Cattle

In the Canadian West slowly and surely the more or less wasteful methods of the big ranches are giving way to the more careful and economical ways of the farmer and feeder. The farmer is able to feed and finish his steers during the winter months, while the big rancher formerly used to sell his cattle direct from the range in a semi-ready market condition. As mixed farming becomes more general the farmer will depend on his own acres for the production of feed, and will utilise it to the best advantage by feeding and selling it in the most profitable form, namely, live stock.

Selection of Sire.

One of the most important steps in the breeding of beef cattle is the selection of a sire. The sire must be of pure breeding, and approved beef type, must possess the best characteristics of the breed he represents, must have rugged constitution and pronounced masculinity. The choice of breeds is optional and depends largely on surrounding circumstances and the inclination of the breeder. Herefords and Galloways are prepotent and are splendid rustlers, suitable for range conditions and open lot and winter feeding. The Hereford has the advantage in size and early maturity; the Galloway in the possession of an extra heavy coat and the lack of horns. Aberdeen-Angus are noted for their feeding and finishing qualities. Shorthorns for their size, substance and general utility. The breed is not of such great importance as the selection of a bull combining as largely as possible good breeding and strong conformation. Where care is exercised in this regard a pure bred sire from any of the best known beef breeds will give good results.

Grading Up.

It is always advisable to stay with sires of one breed if possible at all. This is known as "grading up." By this means the scrub or less valuable blood in a herd is reduced and the more valuable known blood lines increased. This tends to increase the prepotency of the females which are more likely to throw good beef stock. When one realises that in five generations or, roughly speaking, twelve or fourteen years, commencing with a pure bred bull on the one side and an utter scrub on the other, the amount of scrub blood may be reduced in the offspring to one-thirty-second the value of this process is apparent.