

The Farming World

For Farmers and Stockmen

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The Western Cattle Trade.

OUR Western correspondent this week deals with a most serious grievance in connection with the fat cattle trade of the West. People in Eastern Canada, unacquainted with Western conditions, can hardly understand what this means. The season for transporting all farm products in the West, be they live stock or grain, is necessarily short, and any delay in getting shipments under way and to their destination, may mean serious loss to both the producer and shipper. Where the hauls by rail are so long, the utmost despatch is necessary in getting products to the consumer.

Of late years there has been a very rapid development in the live stock industry of the West, which has been fostered in no small degree by the Canadian Pacific Railway in granting cheap rates for the transportation of pure-bred stock from Eastern Canada to that part of the Dominion. But all these past efforts of the railway company and others to develop this trade will be without avail unless the Western farmer and rancher has afforded him reasonable facilities and reasonable rates for transporting his fat cattle to the Eastern markets. According to our correspondent, these facilities are not being provided this season, and the cattle raiser of the West is face to face with a serious problem in that he has been induced to buy better breeding stock in order to grade up the quality of his cattle, and yet after doing so, finds his work seriously hampered because of insufficient and inadequate accommodation in getting his finished product to market. Should he decide to go out of cattle raising and to confine his attention to wheat growing, who could blame him? And yet such a decision would work injury to Eastern breeders who to-day find a very profitable market in Western Canada for a great deal of their pure-bred stock.

Where the haulage is so long the very best accommodation must be provided for watering and feeding cattle at sectional points. But it seems that very poor accommodation has been provided by the C.P.R. in this particular. What with lack of cars, poor accommodation etc., the cattle raisers' and the cattle shippers' position is not a very enviable one. But it is to be hoped that some remedy will be forthcoming at an early date. It would be a serious loss to the whole country to have the Western

cattle trade given a permanent set back, just at this juncture.

Buying Cattle for Feeding.

This is the season when cattle are bought for feeding purposes. And a word of advice at this juncture may not come amiss. The buying in of a lot of cattle for feeding is a work that should be done with the greatest amount of care and it is not every one who can make money out of the transaction. There are several things to be considered, such as the price of feeding stuffs, the prospective market prices, the age of the animals and their breeding and individual quality.

The price of feeding stuffs is likely to be higher this winter than usual, unless present indications are deceiving. Particularly is this so with the rough feeds and the coarse grains such as oats, peas and barley. The following table shows the prices per bushel of these commodities at Montreal on Oct. 2nd of last year and this:

	1901.	1900.
Oats	39c	29c
Peas	82c	67c
Barley	54c	47c

The main cause of this advance in prices as compared with a year ago is the big shortage in the American corn crop, which necessitates a greater demand for all kinds of coarse grains. Not only are prices for rough feeds higher on this side but there is a decided shortage in these lines in Great Britain. The price of feeding stuffs will therefore be of greater importance to the farmer contemplating buying cattle for feeding purposes. If feed is higher and there is no corresponding increase in the price of cattle the margin of profit will dwindle down to a pretty small compass if not altogether wiped out. Of course where the farmer has all the feeding stuffs on his own farm he is not running any great risk and if he understands the buying and fitting of cattle for market, should obtain good returns from the venture.

With cattle bought in at the present time for feeding it is hard to forecast what the price will be when they are ready for market. Just now, and it has been so for some months back, really first class shippers' and butchers' cattle are in demand and are mighty hard to get. In fact, at Toronto cattle market during the past few weeks there has not been nearly enough of this first quality to supply the demand, while the common and inferior stuff was all too

plentiful and a drag on the market. In figuring on a future market therefore the only safe plan is to feed only first-class quality, and these should not be bought at too high a figure. A safe rule which some successful feeders follow is to buy the cattle at least one cent per lb. less than there is a prospect of selling them for when ready for market.

The age of the animal put up for feeding purposes is of importance in estimating future profits. Young animals will make more increase in weight in a given time than those that are older and they will do it on relatively less feed. It is worth noting, however, that the heavier the animal is at the time of purchase the more will be the gain on the increase in value per pound made by the fattening process.

While the other factors we mention are important none are of greater importance than the breeding and quality of the animal itself. Perhaps more money is lost through selecting inferior or scrubby cattle for feeding purposes than through any other source. An animal of correct form for making beef and of the right quality will give a good account of itself in the feeding stall. And generally speaking, the best breeding and the best quality for feeding purposes go hand in hand. Breed exercises an important influence on quality. The first thing a good judge of feeders will do when inspecting an animal is to see how it handles. Good handling, which means a rich, soft and elastic condition of the skin, especially over the ribs, is a pretty good indication of good feeding quality. Then, in addition to good form and good handling, an animal should have good stamina or constitution. With these well developed in a young animal, and with other conditions favorable, the skillful, intelligent feeder should make good money on his investment.

The Exporters Advise Dairy-men.

We have received from Mr. J. Stanley Cook, secretary of the Montreal Butter and Cheese Association, the following for publication, addressed specially to Canadian dairymen:

"At a general meeting of this Association held on the 10th inst., it was resolved to issue a circular to the dairymen of Canada, strongly advising them to turn their attention to butter more generally, and to discontinue the manufacture of cheese entirely after 1st November, for the following reasons:—