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The Farmers' Beef Ring

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How Fresh Beef May be Obtained for the Farmers' Table in Summer

The problem of securing fresh meat in summer in districts distant from a good butcher shop is one which gives many farmers much concern. Too often the solution of it is that the farmer and his family must eat salt-cured pork all summer long with an occasional "treat" of "tough beef" purchased from a butcher shop. This difficulty of securing fresh beef has been overcome in many districts by the organization of a "Beef Ring." This method of providing fresh beef has proved so successful and economical in so many localities that it is deemed worthy a trial in every district. It is the object of this leaflet to present a system upon which such beef rings have been and can be successfully operated.

The organization may be composed of from 16 to 40 members, representing as many families, and in some localities is operated throughout the entire year. In Manitoba, however, in the winter the farmer can so easily kill and keep his own beef fresh until used that the beef ring is unnecessary. Usually the most successful rings are those with 20 members and which operate during twenty weeks beginning May 1st or 15th. This covers the larger part of the summer season and in this way each member may furnish one animal during the season. A twenty-member association will, therefore, be described, for with a few alterations the same organization can be suited to a smaller or larger membership.

For a twenty-member ring the animals slaughtered should weigh from 750 to 800 pounds each, thus dressing out about 400 pounds and giving each member twenty pounds of beef each week. The carcass is so cut up that each member gets a boiling piece, a steak, and a roast each week. In case of small households two families may take one share between them and thus supply only one animal. Should a member require and receive more than one share per week, the matter may be adjusted at the end of the season according to the price per pound fixed by the society at the beginning of the season, the usual price being from 7 cents to 10 cents per pound. The society should be organized in the winter, as there is plenty of time for it then, and by organizing early it will give the members a chance to procure animals suitable for slaughtering if they do not have them already. Some person must