

## Marketing of Farm Produce

The following report of the directors with regard to marketing of farm produce was read by Peter Wright, of Myrtle:

Your directors have for some time considered the necessity of a system of marketing and distributing all farm products that would have a tendency to encourage mixed farming, by enabling farmers to secure a price for stock and farm commodities that would be suitable and sufficiently remunerative to be an incentive for the Manitoba farmers to enter into the production of this phase of agriculture. A sub-committee of the directors was appointed to confer with the directors of The Grain Growers' Grain company

with a view of soliciting their co-operation in this undertaking. Several conferences have been held throughout the summer and every phase of the question has been considered.

### Consumer and Producer

The prices secured by farmers for stock and other farm produce have discouraged the production of food animals, poultry and produce, Winnipeg being the only centre of population for the consuming of these commodities within reach of the Western farmers, the freight charges to other large centres of population being practically prohibitory. The existing methods of distribution even to places of close proximity such as Winnipeg, where produce of different kinds passes through several hands from the time it leaves the farm till it reaches the consumer's table makes the price of the commodities, for which the farmer does not receive a living price, almost prohibitory to many who have to depend on the daily wage for their existence. The unsatisfactory method of shipment and handling of farm products at country points is also a barrier. Farmers take their produce to country stores which almost invariably have not the proper facilities for taking care of the same, frequently storing the butter and eggs and other perishable commodities in cellars along with promiscuous goods such as oils and various other articles.

The effect of it all is that the consumer of farm produce invariably pays from two to three times as much as the farmer received for it. This winter the consumers of milk in the city of Winnipeg pay 40 cents a gallon for milk and the farmers within a radius of twenty miles of Winnipeg receive 20 cents a gallon. Potatoes that have been sold by farmers in car lots, f.o.b. Winnipeg, in the fall at 30 and 35 cents a bushel, are now selling for 75 cents up to \$1.00 per bushel. That difference applies to almost every commodity that the farmer raises. The farmer sells his No. 1 Northern wheat at 1½ cents a pound and buys it back in flour at 3 cents per pound; and oats which sell at around 1 cent per pound he buys back in oatmeal at 4 cents per pound. The farmer sells hogs from 6 to 7 cents per pound and buys back the bacon and ham at from 22 to 25 cents per pound. It is quite evident the solution of the high cost of living in town and city, and the stimulating of the production of food products of the farm is to narrow the spread in price the farmer gets and the consumer pays.

### Co-operation the Solution

Your directors are firmly convinced that the solution of the problem is in the inaugurating of a system of co-operative distribution, and in our judgment that can be brought about only by the organized farmers establishing agents at central points to dispose of the products of its members. After careful thought, we submit for the consideration of this convention, the following outline of a scheme:

To care for the products of the Manitoba farmers by establishing an agency in Winnipeg equipped with cold storage and other necessary facilities for distribution, such agency to be in a position to procure a market in other places for any surplus product that could not be absorbed in Winnipeg.

The association to be organized at every principal shipping point to collect and care for farm produce tributary to those points. The equipment necessary at those points to be properly arranged, storage for grain, the engagement of an operator who could not only care for the farmers' grain by providing in addition to special binning for those desirous of shipping in car lots, but also make provision for all small lots and wagon loads. That operator keep in touch with stock being prepared for sale and collect in car lots to ship to central agencies.

### Collection of Produce

At every principal point in Manitoba there are, in certain seasons of the year, farmers who have one or more beef cattle and one or more hogs who are now at the mercy of the local butcher or the itinerant broker. Arrangements could be made during the summer season with the railway companies to have

refrigerator cars on trains running on schedule time about once or twice a week, as the demand required it, where farmers could place their perishable product and have it shipped to the cold storage plant in Winnipeg, thus assuring the farmer that the product will reach the market in the same condition it left the farm.

The operator at those points could also be an agency for distribution of farm implements and staple commodities that would be purchased through the central agency.

### The Grain Growers' Grain Company

This proposition may be given effect to in either one of two ways—the first, and, in our opinion, the most practical and most easily accomplished, is to increase the capital stock of The Grain Growers' Grain company sufficiently to enable the establishment of those agencies at country points and having central agencies at Winnipeg, as a department of The Grain Growers' Grain company. The continued success of The Grain Growers' Grain company in the handling of grain warrants the conclusion that they could also handle farm produce co-operatively did their capital warrant them in undertaking it.

The alternate proposition would be the Grain Growers' association becoming incorporated as a co-operative society and carry on the work co-operatively.

We invite the freest discussion at this convention on the matters involved in the above proposition, and as to its practicability and the best method of giving it effect.

### GOOD DIVIDENDS PAID

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### IHC Service Bureau

The Bureau is a clearing house for agricultural data. It aims to learn the best ways of doing things on the farm, and then distribute the information. Your individual experience may help others. Send your problem to the IHC Service Bureau.

