

# FARM AND DAIRY

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### SOME ASPECTS OF AGRICULTURE IN NORFOLK COUNTY, ONT.

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**What Cooperation Has Done for the Farmers and Fruit Growers of the County. Much of the So-called Useless Lands Known to Exist in Norfolk can be Utilized at a Profit.**

THE county of Norfolk in common with all other counties has its own peculiar problems to grapple with. Mr. E. J. Zavitz in his reports on Co-operative Forestry has told of the sand lands of the county which have been robbed of their forests of giant pines and which are now said to be so poor that you cannot raise your voice on them. Part of these lands are only suitable for reforesting, but a certain proportion of them, which are commonly considered to be worthless for farming purposes and are being abandoned, are simply

the result of a system of farming that is nothing less than robbery, and which is foolhardy in the extreme because of the fact that the robber robs himself.

In the great majority of cases on these lands, rye is grown year after year in many cases the owners have given up trying to seed the land to grass because they say they cannot get a catch. Of course they cannot get a catch when they burn their rye straw each year as soon as the threshing machine leaves the farm, and sell the rye at first opportunity; and this is done in very many cases.

But, it is not impossible to grow the legumes on these lands. Only last week I saw a wheat stubble which had been seeded down with clover but not a sign of clover was seen except on the hills. The reason for this was

evident. Scattered over these knolls was a fair covering of manure and wherever a particle of manure could be seen the clover was growing nicely. I know of two farms where a splendid crop of cow peas was grown and plowed under this year on these light sandy lands. I know of different orchards which have been planted within the last two years on land that was considered to be blow sand, and they were growing nicely

last summer. Therefore, it would appear that many of these farms may, by judicious cropping, be brought to a fair state of fertility and made to yield profitable returns in certain tranches of agriculture.

#### IDEAL FOR POULTRY

Professor Graham tells me that the soil and climate of this section is almost ideal for poultry culture. Surely with cheap land and present high prices for poultry produce available, this should be a profitable branch of agriculture. Of course

these farmers there is being successfully developed a system of co-operation that has thoroughly convinced me during the half year I have spent in the county, that the salvation of the farmer lies in co-operation. Although the subject is becoming almost hackneyed I feel its importance warrants my mentioning briefly some of the things which it has done for the farmers of the county and for the county as a whole.

#### THE APPLE CROP AND CO-OPERATION

Six years ago the apple crop of the county was meagre in quantity and poor in quality. Although an occasional orchard was producing a small amount of fruit of fair quality and yielding perhaps a small profit, under moderate treatment, the average orchard was a dead asset to its owner. To such an extent was this true that many men were cutting their apple trees for firewood. Not

only was this true but slowly and steadily the farms of the county were being abandoned. All branches of agriculture were backward.

IN THE winter of 1906 the Norfolk Fruit Growers Co-operative Association was organized with a membership of 17. The members began to co-operate to produce better fruit. Their old, unsprayed, unpruned, uncultivated, unmanured unprofitable orchards began to be sprayed, pruned, cultivated, manured and to become profitable. The membership increased to 52 in 1907, to 152 in 1908 and to 188 in 1909, and the quantity of apples in the county suitable for barrelling has been doubled in the same time. Then by co-operating to put up a uniform pack of fruit and by dint of diligent advertising, chiefly by putting

their fruit before the public, the price received for apples has been likewise doubled.

#### CASH RETURNS FOR APPLES

As a result the 188 members of this Association will receive about \$60,000 for their apples this year. Orchards will net their owners from \$2.50 to \$6.50 a tree. I know of one orchard of one and one-half acres which will net \$440.00, and another of five and one-half acres which will net



General View of Ontario Horticultural Exhibition in Toronto Last Month, showing Norfolk County Exhibit at Right.

No county in Ontario has come to the fore as a fruit growing district so rapidly as has Norfolk. Four years ago, Norfolk fruits were scarcely known; to-day they have a Dominion-wide reputation and are well-known in Great Britain. This change is due chiefly to advertising. The Norfolk Fruit Growers' Association, of which Mr. James E. Johnson, Simcoe, is manager, believes in letting people know that Norfolk fruit is good fruit, and that the association backs every package with its name and reputation. All over the exhibition, illustrated

above, the word, "Norfolk" was prominent.

it will require a considerable amount of care and expense and time in order to obtain results, but with land at \$5 to \$10 an acre it surely is a practicable proposition.

The land in the county of Norfolk is not all like this and the farmers are not all farming in the way mentioned above. There is land in the vicinity of Simcoe worth \$150 an acre and men farming it who are experts in their business. Among