

The Establishment of Co-operative Pork-Packing Houses.

[Contributed by J. W. Clark, Brant Co., Ont.]

Everyone is familiar with the history of the wonderful development of the export-bacon trade in Canada during the past ten or twelve years. In 1890 our export of bacon, lard, hams, pork, etc., amounted to less than 8,000,000 lbs.; in 1900 it had risen to about 136,000,000 lbs. The Province of Ontario has been the chief exporter, but the time has come when we may expect to see a change in this respect. Much of Quebec, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Prince Edward Island is admirably adapted to dairying, a branch of farming which is rapidly extending from Montreal eastward, as well as in Ontario. The dairy districts produce the class of hog from which the finest Wiltshire bacon is made, and in these districts hogs are put on the market at as low a cost per pound as in any section of Canada. General dairying and hog-growing should go together, as neither will reach its highest paying condition without the other. The eastern and northern sections of Ontario produce a better class of hog than the corn belt of Western Ontario, or, in other words, the section of Ontario which more nearly resembles Quebec and the Maritime Provinces in climate and grain products produces the best class of bacon. In some respects these Provinces are better suited than Ontario for the development of this industry. Land is generally cheaper, pasturage surer, and roots and other crops easily raised. Two conditions are necessary in order to develop this industry in Quebec and the Eastern Provinces, especially the latter,—an abundance of coarse grains, which by attention to agriculture can be profitably produced, and the establishment of packing companies (or the extension of those already established), which will fully meet the requirements of the best markets both at home and abroad.

* During the past year or two, I have had frequent requests from other Provinces for information regarding the establishment of co-operative packing factories, such as have recently been put up at several points in Ontario. The practical result of these co-operative movements has been demonstrated by the Danish farmers, who are becoming more and more interested in improving the quality and shape of the pig, as through this medium alone they have succeeded in placing their bacon and pork in a foremost position, both for quality and shapeliness of side, on the London market, while the fact of these co-operative factories being established all over Denmark shows to what a success they have been brought.

There are several points, however, that should always be observed in connection with the establishment of these pork-packing industries on the co-operative plan. In the first place, they should be installed as nearly as possible along the Danish lines, with only farmers as stockholders, and each one allowed to hold only a limited amount of stock. No speculators should be permitted to invest in the company. In the next place, it is absolutely necessary that the individual subscriber shall have faith in his own company. The practice of farmers subscribing stock in these movements and then selling their hogs to the highest bidder, often to firms competing against their own company, is all wrong and entirely different from the "modus operandi" in Denmark. The success of Canadian co-operative factories is absolutely regulated and controlled by the loyalty of the farmer, who has, as yet, scarcely realized the importance of operating along truly co-operative lines. Still another necessary feature is that all proxies should be concentrated in the hands of a council of not more than seven (preferably five) of the very best men among them, brainy, practical, business men, who are not likely to be led away by fads, or driven from wise business principles by factious opposition.

It is of the first importance that behind the business management of the concern there shall be a thoroughly practical and experienced curer, who will send forward only uniform goods of the highest quality, that will, when tested on the British market, grade with the best Irish and Danish bacon. To turn out this class of goods particular attention must be given to the sort of pig grown and the method of feeding the same. To produce the highest grade of Wiltshire sides the packers require a long, deep, smooth pig, possessing a light head and shoulder and even back, not too broad, but well covered with firm flesh, not fat; at the same time he must not be a razor-back. The sides from ham to back of shoulder must be long and deep, the underline straight and free from flabbiness; the ham smooth and tapering, with the greatest amount of flesh on the outside. The pig should be healthy, vigorous, and a good feeder, weighing when ready to market from 175 to 200 lbs. I believe that Yorkshires produce the greatest proportion of pigs of this type, with the Tamworths next. The thick fat American or lard types are not wanted by packers. Pigs should be fed good, wholesome and carefully-selected food—skimmed milk, potatoes, roots, green food, barley, peas, etc.—in a properly-balanced ration without

any undue stuffing. If the farmers do not intend to observe these conditions, they had better leave the business entirely alone, as otherwise they are only retarding the efforts of other Canadians who are striving to place our bacon on the market in the highest possible condition in competition with the Irish and Danish products. A good deal of money has been lost during the past year on hogs, the English market not justifying prices paid in Canada. For instance, we have had pigs for a whole year ranging in price from \$6.50 to \$7.50. Such a condition of affairs was never before known in the trade. The farmers have, however, received the benefit and the packing companies have suffered, largely because they have been climbing over one another to get pigs, irrespective of cost, doing no culling and taking undesirable animals just as quickly as they would the best. This kind of thing will right itself in course of time, but not before the packing houses lose a lot of money.

A co-operative packing factory should not be started until a capital of at least \$250,000 has been subscribed, which will be sufficient to ensure a killing capacity of two to three thousand a week. Small plants are objectionable because the refrigerating system costs very little less and the management and expenses are the same, minimum production always being the most expensive. Such a factory cannot be put up for less than \$100,000 to \$125,000. Farmers holding stock in such a company should deliver their hogs at the factory, take an advance of sixty or eighty per cent., have them slaughtered, cured, branded with the name of the factory, sent forward and realized on through the medium of a first-class English agency.

Eastern Canada has for some time shown a good deal of interest in the subject of co-operative packing-houses, but, so far as I am aware, Manitoba, the Northwest Territories and British Columbia have not given it much consideration. Possibly the information given above may prove of value to the people of the West as well as the East. Any community interested in the co-operative system outlined above should send a representative committee to visit and carefully inspect the operations of a working factory, such as the Farmers' Co-operative Packing Co., Ltd., of Brantford, Ontario. They will find the Manager, C. F. Hodges, or Mr. Joseph Stratford, Manager Farmers' Binder Twine Co., both able and willing to give the fullest information in regard to the co-operative movement in all its phases.

Brant Co., Ont.

J. W. CLARK.

Value of Wheat Fed to Hogs.

Mr. Brennan, speaking at institute meetings in the Territories, gave the following personal experience in feeding wheat to hogs: In the year 1900 he had in his possession 500 bushels of inferior wheat which, if marketed, would have brought only 45 cents per bushel, or 500 x 45 = \$225.00.

He fed practically all of this to hogs, cattle, and poultry, and sold

\$162.00	worth of pork on local market.
110.50	" " pork to Indian Head Farm.
35.00	" " pork—private sales.
125.00	" " beef.
20.00	" " poultry.

\$452.50

There was also something over a bushel of the wheat unfed, which, if marketed at 45 cents, would have brought the proceeds up to \$453.00, or 90.6 cents per bushel.

Select the Best Milking Ewes.

The importance of breeding from ewes which are known to belong to a good milking strain of sheep cannot be overestimated. The lamb which has for dam the heaviest-milking ewe in the flock is, as a rule, the first ready for the market when the time comes for disposing of the first fruits of the flock. Ewes, like cows, differ very largely both as regards the amount and the quality of the milk which they yield. During the early stages of their growth, lambs depend almost entirely for their sustenance upon the milk which they obtain from their dams, and it will be almost invariably found that the heaviest and plumpest lambs in the flock are those whose mothers are the heaviest milkers.

Dr. Rutherford Appreciated.

At the recent annual meeting of the Veterinary Association of Manitoba, Dr. J. G. Rutherford, the newly-appointed Chief Veterinary Inspector of Canada, was unanimously elected an honorary associate. The following resolution was also carried without a dissenting voice:

"Resolved, that this Association rejoices in the elevation of one of its members to the most important post in the Dominion open to the veterinary profession—that of Chief Veterinary Inspector to the Dept. of Agriculture, and wishes to place on record its appreciation of Dr. Rutherford's work, as the founder of this Association and one of its most active members, and hereby renders him its heartiest congratulations and wishes him the greatest possible success in his new sphere."

FARM.

Corn the Most Profitable Crop.

As to what spring grains I think most profitable for planting in this locality, I must say "corn" with all the emphasis that I can, and so would ninety-nine out of one hundred Essex farmers, for different reasons: First, because it is a cheap crop to seed with, as one bushel (price, 56 cents) will plant six acres. Second, the cultivation which corn receives, both before and after planting, leaves the ground in excellent condition for the succeeding crop; usually oats, which also pay well. Third, I cannot give you official returns as to the yield per acre of corn in this part of Ontario for the past year, but believe I am safe in saying an average of 100 bushels per acre on the ear, which will shell 67 2-3 bushels of shelled corn, at 57 cents—\$38.57 per acre. Now, sir, this is a market price, but we all believe we can make more than this per acre by feeding it to either hogs or cattle, and I might go into figures to show what we can make of our corn crop in this, but will refrain, as I might be making my letter too lengthy.

Some may say, "Oh, but corn takes so much time!" But I claim that it pays better for the time given to it than any other grain crop that we can grow in Ontario, and my experience is not limited to Essex County, as I formerly owned a farm in Wellington County jointly with my father. Corn may be grown and marketed without the expense of costly machinery for harvesting or threshing, or if we go to this expense, there is no more work with it than with wheat or oats, and we may be sure of a fair return every year, for we have had good crops of it here for thirteen years in succession, and for many years before that, I am told by the older farmers. As to the best mode of seeding, I would prefer a sod field, either that which had been meadow or pasture, and in good condition; if not in good condition, it should be manured well in the fall previous or through the winter and plowed about four or five inches deep early this spring and harrowed down, let lay awhile and then well worked with the disk harrow, and the better the cultivation before planting the larger will be the return. One bushel will plant six acres, but some prefer to put in more seed, especially if early planted or if the season be wet or cold, and if it comes too thick, to thin it out, leaving not more than three or four plants in a hill; some would plant one bushel on five acres, while others put it on six. Now, the time for planting would be from May 6th to 24th in this section. Use a 3- or 4-legged marker to mark field both ways, legs to be 3 ft. 6 in. to 3 ft. 10 in. apart. Plant with hand planter; one man will plant five acres per day. In about five days after planting, or as soon as you can see the first plants, harrow with light harrow. In two weeks after planting, cultivate both ways with two-horse riding cultivator or with single cultivator, and continue to cultivate every ten days until ears set. This will be a thorough cultivation and will pay both in corn crop and succeeding one.

The best varieties are the Dent varieties: Flint varieties do not yield as heavy a crop. Of those I would say Ohio White Cap Dent, Yellow Gord Seed, Bailey, Leaming, Gold Mine, are all good varieties. Where those varieties would be too late, plant Yellow Flint, White Flint, Compton. Now, sir, I cannot finish without saying that corn is food for everything, both man and beast, while the cured cornstalks are equal to hay, and will yield one ton per acre, worth at least \$3, which, with the market price of the grain (\$38.57), makes \$41.57 per acre, while the cob is also valuable for fuel or as manure.

Yours truly,

Essex Co., Ont.

J. F. BELL.

A Beaver Colony.

Quite near Hartney, on the Souris River, there is a colony of beavers. The animals have selected for their home a place where the bank of the river is comparatively low and overhanging the deep water, which in winter is kept warm and open by the influence of strong springs. Young poplar trees selected from the grove along the shore afford plenty of food, and the chips from the freshly-cut green wood can be noticed scattered on the ground wherever the animals have been at work. It is said that the beavers have occupied this winter home for several years, and are increasing in numbers. The man on whose farm the interesting animals have located uses every means in his power to prevent the destruction of the creatures. This is perhaps the only family of beavers to be found within the settled portion of Manitoba.—Hartney Star.

Your premium knife to hand, and I find it a useful article; not too large to carry, and of first-class steel, and can recommend it to every body as a splendid premium. JAS. SMITH
Lambton Co.