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Flour-Mill By-Products

IN the marketing of Canada's big wheat crop it might be well to consider the advantages that would accrue to the country if all or nearly all of this year's crop were converted into flour at home. As is usual, the great bulk of the western crop of upwards of 90,000,000 bushels and the eastern crop of one-third of that amount will be exported as wheat, which means that it will be converted into flour abroad, and other countries, instead of our own, will reap the benefits to be derived from the by-products resulting from the milling process.

Years ago the by-products of the mills were thrown away as useless. Today they are the most profitable part of the output. Wheat by-products are of more economic importance as feed for live stock than the grain itself. Fully twenty-five per cent. of all the wheat ground into flour every year is put on the market in the form of bran and shorts or middlings. We have no figures showing the value of the bran produced in Canada, even under our somewhat limited milling facilities, but it is estimated that the annual value of the bran produced in the United States, both from grinding home-grown and foreign Canadian wheats is \$25,000,000. Some mills have reduced the business to a science and are producing standard grades of bran the same as standard grades of flour.

The feeding value of wheat bran is beyond question. Average wheat bran contains from 14 to 18 per cent. of protein, a most valuable and expensive nutrient of foods, 4 to 5 per cent. of fat, and 55 per cent. of carbohydrates. It contains about 8 per cent. of fibre, from one-third to one-half of which is capable of being digested and utilized by farm animals. Compared with other grains and farm products, wheat bran contains a larger amount of protein and fat than corn, oats, rye, barley, spelt or the various varieties of wheat. These grains usually contain from 10 to 14 per cent. of protein and from 2 to 5 per cent. of fat. Under favorable conditions animals can digest about 75 per cent. of the nutrients of wheat bran. Bran is an excellent food, when judiciously fed, for horses, cattle, sheep and swine. As a condiment, it has exceptional value.

While the chief value of wheat bran or middlings is as a food for stock, yet it has a large value as a fertilizer for the land. There is no farm grain which produces as valuable manure as bran. A ton of wheat

bran contains 55 pounds of nitrogen, 52 pounds of phosphoric acid and 30 pounds of potash. If purchased in the form of a commercial fertilizer, the nitrogen would cost 15 cents per lb., the phosphoric acid and potash each 5 cents per lb., making the manuring value of a ton of wheat bran worth \$12.90. As about 80 per cent. of the fertility of the foods consumed by live stock is returned to the soil, \$10.32 would be the value of the fertility of bran returned to the soil when fed to live stock.

Therefore, if we consider only the value of bran as a food and a fertilizer we have a very strong argument in favor of grinding the bulk of our wheat in Canada. If this were done the farmer would have more choice feeding material for his horses, cattle, sheep and swine, and during the feeding process would greatly in-

crease the productive power of the land. In addition, there would be a new industry in every town or village worth having. When wheat is exported the land gives of its fertility to produce the crop. If this is not restored by some means the land's power to produce will soon deteriorate.

Bacon Hogs Scarce: Good and Bad Brining Same Price

Competition among the packers for hogs appears to be unusually keen and prices rule steady and high for this season. At this date a year ago select bacon hogs sold on Toronto market for \$5.35, and lights and fats for \$5.10 per cwt., or at about \$5.00 per cwt. at country points. Prices today are nearly \$1.00 per cwt. higher and if the keen competition of the past few months among the packers continues, are likely to remain high for a time. We are approaching the season, if, indeed, we have not already entered upon it, when prices drop to the lowest level of the year, due, so the packer claims, to large arrivals of poultry and game on the English market, lessening the demand for bacon. Whether the usual drop will come this season remains to be seen. At the moment it looks as if it would not be as serious as in the past.

As we have stated, the usual fall slump is due to the lessening of the demand for bacon in the English market; there may be another reason. It is during the fall months that our farmers have more hogs to sell and it may be that this has some influence in lowering prices. This fall hogs seem to be very scarce and the packer is compelled to keep up the price in order to get a supply sufficient to keep his packing plant running. And many of them are not doing this at the present time and are bringing in American hogs in bond in order to keep their contracts for the British market.

While the large increase in the number of packing plants in recent years and the keen competition for hogs is of the greatest benefit to the farmer, it tends to injure and not to improve the quality of the product. In order to get hogs the packer, or rather the drover, does not discriminate but pays one price per lb. for selects, fats or lights, consequently there is no incentive to the farmer to produce selects as he can get as much for the badly bred, ill-fed hog as for the select bacon hog. The situation is, therefore, not without cause for alarm. As was shown in the discussion on this topic in these columns the past summer, there is

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crease the productive power of his land. On the virgin prairies of the west the soil may be rich enough to produce paying crops for many years. But the time will come, if it has not already arrived on the older farms of Manitoba, when the soil must be nourished, and that right well, if anything like paying crops of wheat are to be produced.

It would be well, therefore, to begin laying the foundation early. If every grain elevator in the west or in the east for that matter, had milling facilities, and all or nearly all the wheat delivered were ground into flour on the spot, the farmer would have a market at his own door and there would be fewer complaints regarding the grain standard. The by-products could be utilized for feeding stock and maintaining the fertil-