

NEWS AND INFORMATION FOR THE BUSY FARMER

(Furnished by Provincial and Dominion Departments of Agriculture)

In a recent address, Hon. T. L. Kennedy advised cattle breeders to look well ahead if they wanted to be successful in the future. He pointed out that disease-free cattle are proving the wisdom of their owners by bringing the highest prices paid. He stated that one breeder who followed this lead does not know that there is an economic depression.

Farmers Buy Collectively

An official of the Ontario Marketing Board said that farmers and farmers' organizations are showing their natural business acumen these days through utilization of every possible means of lowering costs of production. This same speaker intimated that judging from reports received by him farmers are practicing collective purchase of supplies in increasingly large numbers. Fertilizers, feeds, boxes, barrels, insecticides, fungicides, and many other articles and materials that aid in production and marketing are being purchased through group orders. Savings not only in purchase price but also in freight costs are thus effected through carlot discounts and carlot freight rates.

Fraudulent Trucking Practices in Live Stock Shipments

"For some time rumors had reached the Provincial Department of Agriculture suggesting unfair practices by certain truckers carrying live stock. These became so insistent, a quiet investigation was made by G. Duncan, Ontario Marketing Board, to ascertain actual conditions with the result that the occurrences complained of, instead of being isolated and far apart, were found to be rather general in a large section of the province. Farmers have been defrauded of sums varying from \$20 to \$450 in one transaction. The common method of duping farmers is by truckers issuing worthless checks. Another is to retain various sums ranging from \$20 to \$100 from the proceeds of the day's sale of live stock. Excuses offered by truckers in these instances are many; the most common being that the stock has not been sold, or that the money was needed for repairs to the truck and always the promise is made to pay the balance the following week. Several instances of this 'promise to pay' have extended from 1930 to the present date.

"These conditions reflect on the legitimate trucker who, in most cases, is unaware of this serious menace to his business. Usually the first move is to cut rates per 100 pounds of cattle shipped in order to increase volume. Eventually these reduced rates become less than the cost of operating and then pilfering commences. Farmers would be well advised to employ only truckers who are known to be reliable."

Big Enrolment

There are about 500 students registered in the summer agricultural courses at O. A. C., Guelph. The students are school teachers from rural districts and inspectors from all parts of the province, and they will spend several weeks at the College, taking a complete course in agriculture. The attendance is larger than it has been in many years.

Ontario Farm Organizations Show Large Annual Turnover

"Figures from the Federal Agricultural Economics Branch reveal that during the past year 42 Ontario farmers' co-operatives, embracing nearly 28,000 members, did an average yearly business per member of \$587. This does not by any means represent all of the co-operative effort in the province. It does tend to show, however, that farmers are uniting in their efforts to keep in business. The sixteen million and a half dollars' worth of business conducted by those included in the above figures represents sales of live stock, wool, dairy products, poultry products, fruit and vegetables, seed and grain and miscellaneous products and the purchase for resale to members of such articles as machinery, feed, fertilizers, twine and other equipment.

Bean Market Strengthening

"Enquiries from Great Britain to the Ontario Marketing Board for Canadian beans have developed the fact that there are very few beans available and practically none at present prices either for the export or domestic trade.

An offer was recently received from an importer in England for large quantities of beans at a price considerably higher than prices here, but exporters have had to report that there are not sufficient stocks in storage or supplies available to accept the offer.

Further survey of the situation seems to indicate that the Ontario bean crop is going to be considerably less than normal this year and the comparatively quick change in the situation from a depressed market at low prices to a live demand and shortage of supply is very encouraging from the standpoint of the industry.

Weekly Crop Report

Peel County reports that frequent showers during the blossoming period of alfalfa causing practically a failure in seed setting. According to indications now there will be little alfalfa seed produced there this year. Waterloo district suffered from too much rain, with the result that much fall wheat was beaten down. Haying was delayed and much of it is of poor quality. A big movement of finished steers to market is noted; with the best lots netting the farmers 6c a pound. Birds, particularly starlings, have caused tremendous damage in the Western Ontario counties and means are sought to prevent their increasing depredations. The corn border has made an appearance in western counties and as weather conditions have been favorable to its existence, a heavy infestation is feared. Corn and tobacco crops in Essex will be lighter than last year. Frequent rains have improved spring crops generally over the province. The Oxford Farmers' Co-operative has just finished its season of the sale of hatchery stock, with the largest sale in any season. Welland had almost 50 per cent. loss of fall wheat due to Hessian Fly and the oat crop there is rusting badly. Hastings reports that 2,049 white cheese were boarded on Belleville board and sold at 9 3-16 cents. Throughout the Muskoka district, grain crops are more promising than last year. Live stock markets seem to be strengthening in Peterborough, hogs bringing as high as \$4.35 recently. Spring grains look promising in Prince Edward and pastures are good for the time of year. The yield of canning peas is below normal. Promise of seed yield in Victoria is below average. Lambs are being marketed in large numbers in Frontenac and bring \$7.00 to \$8.00 per head. Price of hogs and spring lambs is up in Renfrew.

PIGS ARE CASH, NOWADAYS

(By Ernest J. Farmer in Toronto Star Weekly)

For the sad decline in backyard agriculture in the last few years there has been some compensation in the marked development in backyard ranching which has taken place in the same time. Various laboratories, testing serums and searching out vitamins, have come to require considerable numbers of animals of the types most suitable for backyard stockbreeding operations, and the resulting demand has acted as a powerful tonic upon a languishing industry.

Of these small cattle the ones most favored by the bull movement are the cavies, or guinea pigs (*Cavia cobyana*). At one time a pair of these animals could be bought for two and one-half dimes, one-quarter of a dollar. The present market is vastly more favorable. For month-old piglings, weighing from eight to twelve ounces (preferably under 10), the laboratories may pay 70 cents per head, sometimes higher. They buy only from dealers or large ranchers able to supply considerable numbers as needed, but the backyard rancher with a few odd piglings can get 50 cents without much trouble.

Prices for breeding stock correspond. Male and female guinea pigs are called technically by the names, which sound quite insulting as applied to such pleasing little creatures, of boars and sows, respectively. A young mature boar, sound in wind and limb, is worth about one dollar; a sow, from that sum to a dollar and a half.

Guinea pork is rated a prime table delicacy, but with the pigs selling at a dollar a pound on the hoof it is too expensive for general use. The fox ranchers buy a considerable amount, but pay the lowest price. To the foxes, "pigs is pigs;" they make no effective protest if their pork is a long way past its first youth. They prefer guinea pig to rabbit as being less hairy.

Such figures apply to the common, or range cattle. Fancy stock has not risen to any such heights as in the case of Persian cats, etc., but \$10 may be paid for an animal with show possibilities. A choice boar might bring a little more.

Guinea pigs are of three coat types. "Brazilian" pigs have short, unusually silky fur. The "Abyssinians" have the fur in whorls or cowlicks, giving it a very rough appearance. The "Peruvians" have very long fur; they are distinctly show animals, and, like Persian cats, much more troublesome to raise than their short-haired brethren.

Beautiful But Dumb
The colors are complex. Solid colors, especially among the Brazilians, are astonishingly rare. A Brazilian of one solid color, if a good pig, is worth extra money.

A rancher can usually count on a few dollars annually in prize money if he will take the trouble to exhibit his best pigs. In addition, the prizes include bales of hay and bushels of oats. Only a practical guinea pig raiser knows how welcome the latter are. On a guinea pig ranch there is no such time as between meals.

The pigs are agreeable little creatures, with their squirrel-like heads, snappy bright eyes, buntly little bodies and legs hardly reaching from their bodies to the ground. Their little ones are particularly attractive, being born fully furred, with their eyes open, and able to navigate about as well as their parents. They are very talkative, but their calls are so soft as never to be a nuisance.

They seem never to learn to know their owners, but always bolt for the corner of the pen when one goes to pick them up. An experimenter rigged up a metal plate in such a way that various small animals had to stand on it to feed. At intervals he rang a bell and immediately shot through the plate an electric current, strong enough to be painful. A rat learned after seven experiences to hop off the plate the instant the bell rang. After two hundred shocks the guinea pig was still taking his medicine by which time the experimenter's patience gave out. Their lack of enterprise makes them

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REORGANIZE DAIRYING

Involving reorganization of the dairy industry in Ontario, Hon. T. L. Kennedy, Minister of Agriculture, has announced the launching of a five-year plan to capture for Ontario farmers the cheese market in Great Britain. The plan, formulated after a year's consideration by departmental officials, calls for:

1. A process of amalgamation and elimination by which Ontario cheese factories will be reduced in number from 774 as at present, to 150.
 2. Creation of 20 new storage plants in an effort to achieve better grading necessary in an export business.
 3. Encouragement of farmers to insure increased production.
- The Minister declared that the plan's success depended largely on the attitude of the farmers. The Government could not compel, but only encourage amalgamations of cheese factories. If the amalgamations were put through, the farmers could produce butter and cheese at three cents per pound less than before.
- When the plan gets under way, it is expected that officials will be sent to England to organize a sales staff. "What has been achieved in the apple trade, we will try to duplicate in cheese and butter manufacture," said Colonel Kennedy, adding that the Big "O" brand of the apple trade would be used on the dairy products.

It will pay you to advertise in The Chronicle.

TRADE IN FARM PRODUCTS

A statement just issued by the Dominion Bureau of Statistics estimates the total of Canada's trade in farm products for the fiscal year 1931-32 at \$308,480,201; of this amount \$224,728,269 represents farm products exported while \$80,751,932 represents farm products imported.

easy to keep in confinement. They are very gregarious and may be kept in good-sized herds, but two strange boars will inevitably fight until one is dead. Often both die.

They are very free from disease, but a west-end rancher lost 70 pigs out of 200 by keeping them in the top storey of a frame shed during the very hot spell last June. Probably he could have saved them all by transferring them to the cellar or other cool spot for a few hours. A rancher near Mimico, who keeps about 1,000 pigs, let the whole battalion out on the fresh grass after a winter on hay, oat, and carrots, and left them too long. They gorged themselves, as larger cattle do at times on clover; many were in agony when he drove them to their quarters and about 200 died.

A Pig-and-rat Ranch

One rancher has a system to rival that of the famous cat-and-rat ranch, on which the cats ate the rats, the rats ate the cats and owners skinned both. He keeps his pigs in a two-story shed at the back of his lot. All summer they live in the lower section, which has a dirt floor. In the fall they move upstairs, where he has a stove. On the ground floor he scatters mushroom spawn. In a few weeks he has a fine crop of mushrooms which he trades for enough fodder for his pigs for next year. This man has probably made a larger income from his pigs on less than a tenth of an acre than many an Ontario farmer has from a hundred acres during the last year.

The juvenile rancher greatly appreciates the ability of a herd of pigs to mow a lawn with neatness and dispatch.

A small pig-and-rat ranch, operated by two high school boys, opened in September with five pigs. It now has 18, without further purchases. The owners expect to be shipping by June or July, when they shall have 50 pigs.

Meanwhile they cover their cash outlays, at least in part, by the sale of rats. The rats are the boys for quick results. The only rat raised is the albino rat (*mus rattus*, var. *albus*).

The baby rats are repulsive, red and hairless. But at three or four weeks they are about the size of adult mice, fully clad in white fur, and as playful as kittens. Rat cages are usually built with fronts of wire mosquito netting.

There is a steady market for six-weeks-old rats at 15 cents apiece. The ranch mentioned, starting with three rats, has sold 25, now stocks 30 and would have done better if an old rat had not turned cannibal and devoured 22 young ones.

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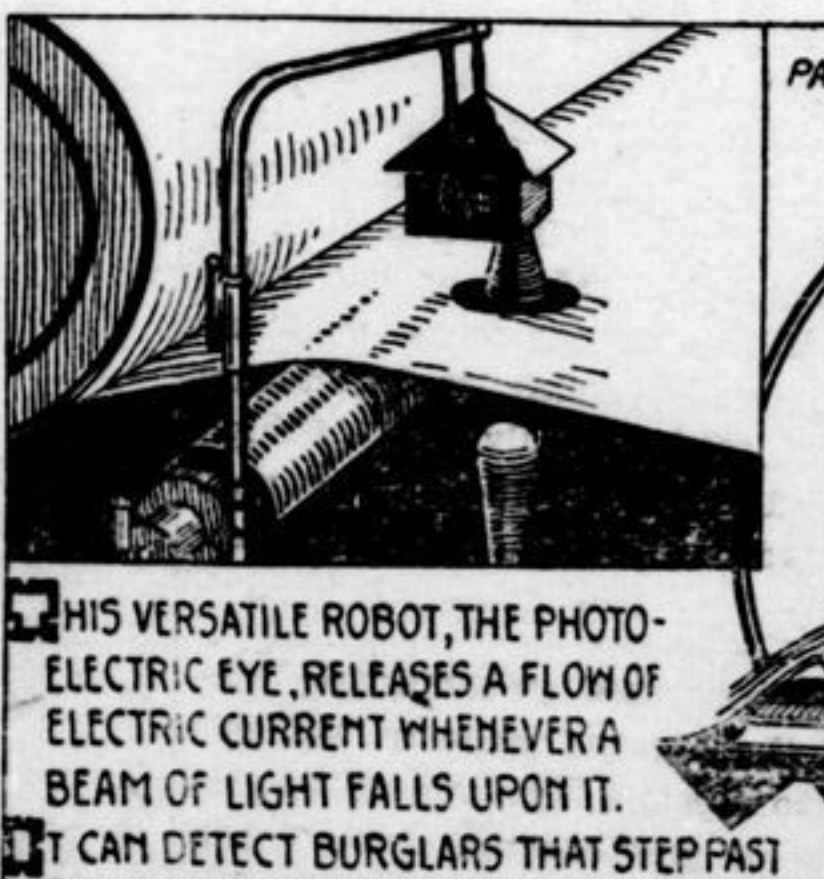
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"TELLING TOMMY"

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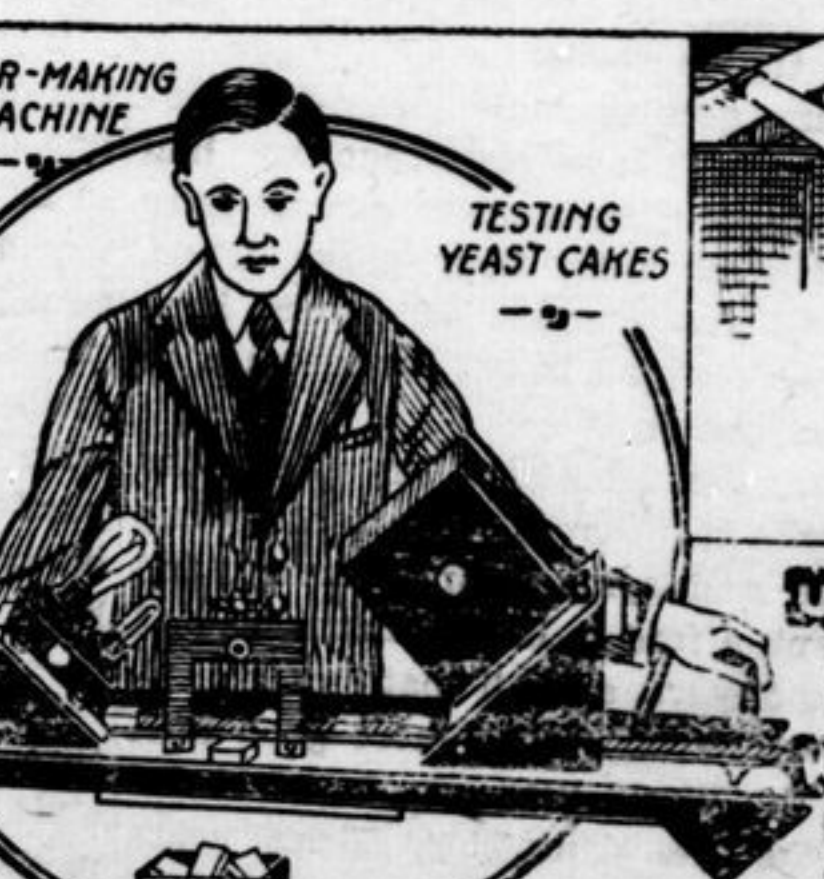
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