

## NOW BUY SHEEP.

Prof. Thomas Shaw, of the Minnesota Agricultural College, was asked by the Northwestern Agriculturist what would become of the sheep industry under free wool? Is there a possibility of raising sheep for mutton at a profit? What is secret for feeding of mutton? He replied:

1. The price of wool has a bearing upon the profits of sheep husbandry, yet, if wool were put upon the free list tomorrow, sheep would be raised at a profit, if raised in a judicious way.

2. There is a glorious possibility of making a handsome profit from raising sheep even now, when so many farmers are evidently looking for a short cut to send all their sheep to the shambles in the quickest possible manner. I would that I could persuade the farmers of Minnesota, all of them, to invest in breeding ewes at this very moment, providing they have none on their farms at the present time.

3. The secret of feeding for mutton is, first to have good common ewes and good pure bred rams of any of the dark faced breeds; second, good undulating land; third, a variety of grasses, for summer food; fourth, a variety of cheap winter foods, such as clover hay, oats, screenings, oilcake, bran, roots and corn silage; fifth, a fine dry winter climate; sixth, protection, such as can be provided from the timber that is rotting in the northern part of the state; seventh, a faith in the future of business, such as any farmer ought to have at this time; eighth, a knowledge of feeding and caring for sheep, such as is possessed by the students of the Minnesota school of agriculture, after they had spent three winters in the regular course of study; and ninth, the wisdom to keep them away from the market when it is glutted with sheep from the ranges.

The average mutton sheep in England and Canada are better than those in the United States. As a rule the first prize winning mutton sheep at our largest shows are bred in England. For the last fiscal year Canada sent more than 300,000 sheep into the United States markets, paying \$1.50 per head of duty on the sheep, and 75 cents per head of duty on the lambs. The facts may not be flattering to our national pride but they are facts nevertheless.

This state of matters need not of necessity continue. But it will continue so long as sheep continue to be raised in the United States on present lines. We want more pure blood of the mutton breeds infused into our flocks, in fact we must have it. Then we want to give our sheep suitable care and suitable food, both summer and winter. We can raise sheep of the very best types if we only set about it. But we will not succeed so long as we are content to let the sheep very largely take care of themselves, so

long as we are watching the tariffs on wool at Washington, rather than keeping the burrs out of it at home, and so long as we go in and out of the industry with every change of the markets. The best young men in Minnesota today are those who have been most carefully reared, and the same is true of the best sheep.

## SOME STRAWBERRIES AND VEGETABLES

Wm. M. Lee, jr.,  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles up the Natcheez, has an acre in strawberries that will be in full bearing the past year. His varieties are Wilson, Michael's Early, Warfield, and Ganby for very late. The Warfield is his first choice, though a pistillate. To secure fertilization, he has planted two rows of Warfield and a single row of one of the other varieties on either side. His method of planting and general care will not differ from the usual practice elsewhere, except the irrigation. From his success last year, Mr. Lee is confident of a fine crop of luscious berries for the home market the coming season.

This gentleman will also grow garden vegetables quite largely, intending to make a specialty of celery and later of asparagus. He finds no difficulty in growing fine cabbage and tomatoes. His is bottom land, with no peculiarity of site or soil; the latter is light and early. It is partly sub-irrigated. Livingston's Favorite is his best tomato. Acme stands next. Has no trouble with blight. His experience extends to both early and late cabbages. For early the Jersey Wakefield has the preference. Flat Dutch has done well for late. This year about five acres will be devoted to garden vegetables of various sorts.

## A MINNESOTA LESSON.

## Wheat vs. Dairy.

Gov. Knute Nelson, of Minnesota, is a pretty good governor and a first-class farmer. He says that when it had been demonstrated that good wheat could be raised in Minnesota they supposed the limit had been reached. Then they found out they could raise corn, grass, cattle, horses, hogs. Now it had been demonstrated that they could make butter and cheese equal to any in the world. This development he thought due to the industry, energy and intelligence of the people, helped on by the chinch bugs.

For chinch bugs need rain; and you have the Washington proposition to a dot. Gov. Nelson remarked the contrast between the poverty, unrest and discontent in the wheat growing districts as compared to the dairy districts was like that between light and darkness. The Minnesota farmers who depended on wheat alone were in a deplorable condition. Let Washington heed the lesson.

A great work is being done by the dairy schools in nearly all the eastern states. Gov. Nelson says the dairy school is not only a training school for the boys, it is a normal school, where the creamery man

or the manager of the cheese factory may take lessons in the higher branches. The Minnesota dairy school is the best equipped in the country, with competent instructors and all the facilities to furnish a complete dairy education. The governor detailed the efforts being made to stamp out the sale of oleo and fraud butter, and pledged his best efforts to the execution of the law. "In these days of low prices for wheat, financial failures and business depression, the state turns to its dairy interests as the rock of salvation." He commended co-operation and denounced in scathing terms the fraud creameries that had been like a blighting frost on the dairy interests in some localities.

## STOCK ECONOMICS.

Kindness is dollars in the dairy.

A stockman who makes money says that now, in the wool tariff excitement, is a good time to buy sheep. Mutton will pay, whether wool does or not. Make note of it?

All the environments of the dairy must be congenial, shelter from cold, an abundance of pure water and many other things which although small in themselves yet in the aggregate go to make up the sum of success.

A poor beef year was 1893; yet Montana stockmen shipped about \$6,000,000 worth of cattle. During the last three years 650,000 were shipped and 142,000 head consumed in the state; value, over \$30,000,000. Cattle have wintered well so far, though the number on the ranges is unusually short.

English sheep breeders have overcome the "free wool" difficulty by improving their breeds, so that they produce more wool than ever before, and likewise mutton, especially mutton. Fine sheep bring good prices there now, perhaps the highest average known in the history of British farming.

Never forget that there is great profit in mutton sheep for the farmers of the alfalfa region. We do not mean from the great flocks of the ranges, but in keeping a small number of the best mutton breeds on the home farm. With bounteous alfalfa pastures and ricks, the owner may be ready at all times to take advantage of the markets. The early lamb crop of the mutton breeds brings rich returns almost any year. A few roots constitute a beneficial change in the sheep ration.

It has become patent to many of the large flockmasters of the western ranges, especially those of Montana, that they have bred too far in the direction of fine heavy fleeces. Now that they have got them they discover that it is the longer, coarser, more lustrous wool that brings the most money. Like the intelligent men that they are a change is sought, and Cotswold and Lincoln bucks are being brought in to cross upon the Merino ewes. In some cases the Southdowns will be used. This change will enhance the quality and value of range mutton.