

THE BREAK IN CATTLE PRICES.

Chicago Live Stock World

We have had a long period of high prices for beef cattle. Top notchers began breaking records early this year, and 1902 has sent statisticians away back to war times for records of high prices for prime beefs, and the classes of cattle that most of us get our beef from have ruled above normal prices for the prime steers. These prices have been unnatural and were a result of unusual conditions. The production of cattle has not kept pace with the increase of population in this country in the last few years and, at the beginning of the drouth last year, there was not a normal supply of cattle in the feed lots, on the farms and ranches of this country. With the coming on of that drouth cattle owners and feeders in the greatest producing states of the union, Illinois, Iowa, Missouri, Kansas and Nebraska, became panic-stricken, rushed their stock of young and unfinished cattle to market and the beginning of the year found the available supply of beef cattle greatly reduced. Feeds of all kinds were higher than they have been for years, demand for meats was abnormally heavy, and prices for beef cattle did the inevitable, went to the highest level seen in many years.

Nothing was surer than that these prices could not last. While the corn-feeding states were rushing their young cattle off on account of feed conditions the great ranges were saving all but the ripest of their vast herds, and in addition were diligently taking great numbers of the young, thrifty cattle from the drouth states and putting them on the rich pastures of the ranges. The opening of the season for marketing rangers found these cattle in splendid beef condition, prices higher than had ever been known in range history, the cattle suddenly began coming in large numbers, and, together with the moderate marketing of native cattle, put the supplies on market above the immediate beef demands and, with a bumper crop and cheaper prices for corn just ahead of us, the inevitable has happened. Prices have broken sharply and it is fairly safe to predict that they have not yet seen the bottom.

DO NOT CROSS THE BREEDS.

The advice given in the heading to this short article will not be heeded by very many of the men that read it, if we may judge of the future by the past. In this country there seems to be a recklessness concerning the crossing of breeds that is truly astonishing. To breed up is commendable, but crossing breeds is not breeding up. When a man takes scrub cows and breeds them and their female progeny to males of some good dairy breed he is doing a commendable thing, and helping both himself and the community in which he lives. But when he tries to cross two distinct breeds, such as the Shorthorns and Jerseys, and attempts to continue that indefinitely he is on the road that does not lead to success. The usual argument is to use the dairy cow to get a calf that will have great milking tendencies in her and to use the beef animal in the same mating to give the same calf great ability to lay on beef. Poor, poor calf! How much is expected of her! She must keep up the reputation of both parents. It is the old attempt to get something for nothing, to cross so that the progeny will make a certain amount of food into butter and

milk and also into beef. Happy owner of such a cow! He will be able to get two values out of every pound of feed. After the first cross he will probably keep on crossing and as a result will finally get—nothing or about that. The man that goes into reckless crossing of the breeds is simply undoing the work of past generations, at least if he uses the milk producing strains with the beef producing strains. The mixing of blood is also the mixing of color, the more you have of one kind the less you have of the other. Breed pure breeds or breed up toward pure breeds, but do not attempt to cross breeds for the sake of getting the highest service of each kind.

How Is the Country to Increase Its Beef Supply?

It is very plainly seen that in the rapid narrowing of the western cattle ranges in public land by entry and settlement, the increase of beef must come from some other source, says the "Indiana Farmer." What is it? Plainly, it is a fact that this increase must come through the pure bred cattle. The country can come to this as certainly as it did to pure bred swine, which is the rule now, and not the exception as in beef cattle. Pure blood will increase the beef supply by making 1,200 to 1,400 cattle in twenty-four months, whereas such beef now requires, as a rule, thirty-six months—that is, the same acres which now produce feed stuffs for 1,000 pounds of beef will, with pure bred cattle, produce 1,500 pounds of beef, though growing no more grain or forage. But another condition towards which we are moving rapidly, and which, of course, must add in a marked measure to the additional increase in beef production, is that of feeding a balanced ration, in which protein, carbohydrates and fat are duly proportioned, and so saving much of the feed products now grown on the farm. Corn, now the chief reliance for feeding in all stages of live stock growth, is low in protein, but the latter can be produced abundantly on the farm by growing cowpea and soy bean, both rich in protein, and so used as forage as to balance corn in its high qualities in the other respects. And so the beef supply is to be increased by pure blood in breeding; by growing protein foods as well as fat and by a large saving in feed stuffs by using these in balanced rations. The agricultural colleges and experiment stations are doing a great work along all these lines, and a marked advance is being made by farmers.

Stall Feeding Range Cattle.

The Idaho station has been conducting some experiments to ascertain if it be possible to successfully stall feed the common range cattle. The food consisted of chopped rye, chopped wheat, chopped barley, bran, shorts, hay and silage. In reporting on the experiment Prof. French says:

"In Bulletin No. 24, a report was made of experiments in feeding steers to determine the economy of stall feeding cattle with food products on the farms of this section. The results were fairly satisfactory under the conditions which prevailed at the time. Since then we have had a new stock barn supplied with water from an artesian well located on the farm. The feeding tests reported in this bulletin were made under the improved conditions mentioned. The animals were

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