

thorough test of their practicability these systems are made available to all, and where possible active assistance is given in installing them. Systems of accounts are also being outlined for firms doing a commission business in agricultural products, with a view of devising something that will be adopted ultimately by "the trade" as a uniform system.

It has been found that present methods do not give to the consumer the benefits of the unusually low and sometimes ruinous prices that producers receive in seasons of abnormal production. At this point the office steps in with a market news service, designed to promote a better distribution of perishable crops. The marketing methods used in large cities are being investigated, and studies are being made of the current market quotations. This part of the work also relates to general studies of supply and demand, as well as a determination of the market surplus produced within defined shipping-areas, and the relation of prices to receipts with a view to determining the point at which the market becomes glutted. A force of market reporters is at work in the various centres, their duty being to follow the progress of certain products from the time they arrive in a given city till they reach the ultimate consumer.

Producer and shipper are being educated to the best method of gathering, handling, grading, packing, and shipping farm-products, and also to the necessity for fixed market standards and strict grading, even where legal standards are not fixed. Much of this work has been confined so far to perishables, but it is intended to apply to all classes of farm-products, even to the point of establishing marketing standards for use in grading and shipping potatoes. A collection of typical boxes, crates, and carriers used in all sections is being prepared. The Government established a standard barrel and pack for apples in 1912, and a standard barrel for fruit and vegetables was similarly established in March, 1915, and becomes effective on the 1st July, 1916. In the case of perishable products every handling is conducive to deterioration, and every change of ownership or possession means, as a general rule, added cost. Considerable attention is centred at present on the possibilities of municipally owned wholesale and retail markets, where modern facilities at minimum prices can be offered to the farmer and dealer, to the end that they may conduct the business as efficiently as possible. The best municipal markets of the country are being studied with reference to the details of location, cost, construction, sanitation, maintenance, and the service, or lack of it, which they render to the public. There is a constantly increasing demand from municipalities for advice and aid in improving their marketing conditions. Most large markets are tending more and more to draw their supplies from distant points on account of better and more uniform service, but to counteract this the Office of Markets is making special efforts to help cities to develop a neighbouring food-supply.

Transportation and storage are also being studied, advice being given to producers or consumers in difficulties, but so far this is only advisory work, except where the office might undertake direct handling for demonstration purposes. Marketing by parcel-post and express is also being exploited with a view to eliminating the middleman, and the real value of the office in this direction lies in its efforts to bring growers and consumers together.

The work of the Office of Markets takes in the marketing of live-stock and animal by-products, ascertaining whether the existing rates and customs are equitable, and paying particular attention to methods of feeding, yarding, handling, and charges. The same system of investigation is applied to the marketing of dairy-produce, the cotton crop, and so on.

The Canadian Agricultural Department is also pointing to the shortest route between farmer and consumer. In the early years of the province, when grain was the principal produce marketed, the farmers, after trying various methods of marketing, solved the problem by establishing the co-operative elevator system, through which they can dispose of their grain at a minimum of expense and risk. With the advent of mixed farming the marketing problem has become much more complicated, and one of the most serious problems confronting the farmer is how to dispose of his live-stock at its full value. The Stock Marketing Association is simply an organization through which the farmers in a district unite to make up truck-loads of live-stock to be forwarded to a central market where competitive bidding is assured. The advantages are evident, and not one of the least is that where a number of marketing associations have been organized in adjacent towns along a line of railway they are able to secure special stock-trains. This system, while not as suitable to New Zealand as it is to Canada, is combined in Canada with what is known as community breeding, and a development of the system might be fraught with very good results.

What is perhaps more significant to New-Zealanders than the mere organizing of stock-marketing associations is the manner in which the movement, like any other movement, is put before the farmers by the Agricultural Department. A bulletin of thirty pages, which has run beyond its second issue, was published a little time ago by the Department of Saskatchewan, in which, after discussing the advantages of the system, the fullest directions were given for organization, with points on the essentials of success, information about the various markets, with the best advice on classification and marketing generally, freight rates on all classes of live-stock, the cost of feed and watering at various points, and finally simple forms for keeping accounts. The manner in which the Department assists the farmer in these and many other ways through the printing-press is a most impressive feature of farming education throughout America.

Farmers' Co-operative Demonstration Work.

The farmers' co-operative demonstration work began in the United States as far back as 1903, and its value was firmly established in the following year, when the spread of the cotton-boll weevil in Texas caused an indescribable panic, in which farms were abandoned and counties depopulated. To arrest the panic and convince farmers that they could grow profitable cotton crops in spite of the weevil Congress made an appropriation, and a portion was set aside for