

# THE RELATION OF FARMING TO THE LIVESTOCK INDUSTRY IN ARIZONA

By KENNETH P. PICKRELL, '22

Extension Animal Husbandman, University of Arizona

## No Farming Section Has Yet Been Prosperous Throughout a Number of Years That Did Not Have a Place for Livestock in the Farming System

In the Middle West and in many other sections of the United States a farmer is generally a stock man and in most cases the stockman must be a farmer. During recent years the movement of "More Live Stock on Farms" has been carried more into New England and into the cotton growing South, and now even the strictly horticultural sections of the Pacific Coast have come to realize the value of keeping more livestock on the farm. In the range area of the United States, and more especially in the south west, we find the live stock industry developed more independently of farming, and in many cases up to the present, men have been successful in the range livestock industry without having any knowledge whatever of crop production.

Most range stockmen of the Western range do not accept the term farmer. Farmer to them is just as foreign as the term merchant, although some of them may have a small alfalfa patch or be nursing a dry farm along on the side. If climatic conditions permitted in Arizona we would probably find the range stockman more extensively engaged in crop production.

The first farming that was carried on in Arizona by the white man was for the purpose of producing human food. Shortly after as our industries began to develop, some of the surplus production was used as forage for the many horses and mules then in use. Arizona history of the early 70's and 80's mentions a number of times the production of pork on the farms of our irrigated valleys. Later, about 1890, larger areas were brought into production by irrigation, more railroads were built, the population of our mining towns increased, and as a result there was an increasing demand for meat supplies which the range could not always furnish. To meet this condition fattening range cattle on the farms of irrigated valleys was undertaken. Nothing younger than two year old steers were used, and in most cases, steers were three years old or older. Hay was valued



A LIKELY LOOKING BUNCH OF CALVES ON A VALLEY FARM

as low as \$4.00 per ton in the stack. It was not even considered profitable to haul this hay out and distribute it to the cattle. It was fed with an enormous waste by cutting the fence around the stack and allowing the cattle to eat what they wanted and trample the rest under foot. While feeding on this hay, cattle were generally given access to a field of green alfalfa and barley. During later years, the European war brought a considerable increase in the price of cattle; silos and feed pens were brought into use and while many still continue this method, many have returned to the pasture method of feeding. However, the present price of hay demands a more conservative use of this feed.

About thirty or thirty-five years ago, sheep from the ranges of northern Arizona began to drift farther south into the lower desert hills of Yavapai, Maricopa and Gila Counties for the winter. As a result the system of breeding for early lambs came more into practice. At the present time we find many flocks depending entirely on this area for a winter range, and when the rain fails these flocks become greatly dependent upon the farm lands for forage. Some flocks are brought into the pastures where they are maintained until range conditions become favorable. Other flocks remain on the desert where they are given supplemental feed such as

alfalfa, grain, or cotton seed products that have been produced on irrigated land.

Many of the old ewes of our range flocks are now placed on pastures on our irrigated farms in the fall, where they lamb shortly after. These lambs are then placed on the market as early spring lambs and the ewes marketed soon after. The practice of selling old ewes for this purpose is fast becoming an attractive business for a number of the farmers in our irrigated sections.

A few years ago cotton claimed a large part of our farming area and for a time it looked as if cotton would take complete possession of the entire section, but never the less cattle feeding is still on a good sound basis, and taking it throughout a number of years, shows beyond a doubt that it has an important place in our farming system. While grain is too expensive to use to any great extent for this purpose, some feeders do use it during the last part of the feeding period in order to sell the gain they have made on other feeds at a premium. However, most gains in weight from grain feeding sell at a loss. The production per acre of grain in our irrigated valleys is as great or greater than some of the so-called grain producing states, but the demands for our land for other crops places grain at too high a price for stock feed. In

fact an animal can only pay for one-half as much grain here as it can in the corn belt. While for a time it seemed as if cotton would ruin our country, it has proved to be a most valuable crop for the live stock industry. Cotton seed by-products fit in well with our other feeds to make an excellent feeding ration for sheep and cattle. Experiments conducted by our College of Agriculture show that the best results are obtained through the feeding of some silage and alfalfa hay. The price of these feeds and cotton seed products such as meal, cold pressed cake and hulls determine just how much alfalfa hay and silage should be used. Frequently the farms of Arizona furnish drought stricken cattle with pasture feed or concentrates that are fed on the range. Much rolled barley and some oats, as well as alfalfa and oat hay are also produced for feed for saddle horses in range work.

Hogs do well in Arizona, but can be profitably produced in small numbers only on each farm. This condition is due to the high price of grain. Early settlers in our irrigated valleys at one time thought hogs could be successfully and very profitably produced on alfalfa pasture, but it was soon learned that few people cared for pork that had been fed in this way.

During the past few years, it has not been unusual to hear a farmer remark that there was no money in feeding cattle or sheep, or growing pasture for the same, as much more could be made by growing cotton or some other cash crop, but now many have learned the hazard of devoting their entire area to crops that require such an enormous outlay of cash. The value in soil fertility from pasturing and pen feeding is now coming to the notice of many. The farms that have been pastured continuously are producing the profitable yields of cotton today. The crops that make cattle and sheep feeds, fit in well with a balanced system of crop rotation and assist materially in solving the labor problem at our busiest season.

Some few attempts have been made to produce pure bred sires, both sheep and cattle, for range use in our irrigated valleys, but land is too valuable to compete with the grass pastures of Kansas, Texas, and Colorado and some other places where little else can be grown.

The constantly increasing population on the Pacific Coast has had con-



RANGE YEARLINGS BEING CONDITIONED FOR MARKET BY A VALLEY FARMER.

siderable to do with the marketing of our fat cattle. Until recent years only a part of our fat cattle could be marketed in Los Angeles and San Francisco. The surplus had to be shipped to Denver or Kansas City. Now California can take all of our fat cattle, in addition to her own, as well as the fat cattle of Nevada, Utah, Southern Oregon and some adjacent areas. This places us in a producing area that is geographically favored to a considerable extent. Just last year Arizona steers that left here as yearlings were taken to Colorado where they were grown on the pastures there, then fattened and sent back to Los Angeles for slaughter. One can readily see what an advantage this condition is to the man who fattens cattle on the irrigated land of our southern valleys. The man who is not temperamentally fitted for fattening livestock can always find a ready market for his feed or pasture with some man who is permanently established in the business of fattening livestock. Farmers are already beginning to take notice of the increase in the yield of their crops where cattle have been on pasture or where ewes have been held for lambing. Let

us not forget in this day of specialized agriculture that no farming section has yet been prosperous throughout a number of years that did not have a place for live stock in their farming system.

The final estimate places the 1924 corn crop at 2437 million bushels which is 617 million bushels short of the 1923 production.

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