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The Cost and Value of Feeding Stuff

By L. C. SNOOK, Animal Nutrition Officer

DURING the summer months many stockowners will find it necessary to purchase feeding stuffs. The prices which have to be paid will vary over a wide range according to time and place. It is important, therefore, that the farmer should be able to determine which foodstuff will give the highest return for the money which is paid out.

The farmer who has fodder for sale must also consider comparative values when deciding, for example, whether to sell hay or grain, wheat or oats.

Freight is a major item. Handling charges can be expensive. These addi-

tional charges must be considered before decisions are made.

A table has been prepared as a guide to comparative food values. This gives the cost per unit of energy and per unit of protein. The prices used in arriving at

THE COST OF FEEDING STUFFS.

Comparative Costs Per Unit of Energy and Protein.

Foodstuff	Cost	Cost per 100 lb.	Energy Value per 100	Crude Protein Content	Cost per Unit of Energy	Cost per Unit of Protein
	£ s. d.	s. d.		%	pence	pence
Cereal Grain—	per bushel					
Wheat	16 0	26 8	72	10	4.4	32
Barley	11 6	28 0	71	8	3.9	34
Oats	10 0	25 0	60	8	5.0	38
Mill Offal—	per short ton					
Pollard	22 10 0	22 6	75	15	3.5	20
Bran	24 0 0	24 0	65	15	4.4	19
Protein-rich Concentrates—						
Linseed meal	55 0 0	55 0	72	30	9.2	32
Midland meatmeal	40 0 0	40 0	75	50	6.4	10
Whalemeal	60 0 0	60 0	80	60	9.0	12
Dried whale solubles	80 0 0	80 0	80	82	12.0	12
Hay—	per ton					
Cereal hay	12 0 0	10 9	40	6	3.2	22
Meadow hay	12 0 0	10 9	40	12	3.2	11
Lucerne hay	30 0 0	26 9	40	18	8.0	18
Molasses	8 0 0 per 44- gallon drum	36 4	50	8.7

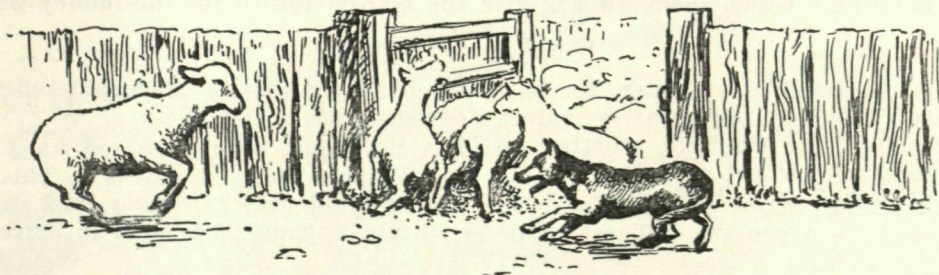
these values will not apply in all cases but it is a simple matter to make the necessary corrections.

From the table it can be seen that wheat grain at 16s. per bushel of 60 lb. is a cheaper food than oat grain at 10s. per bushel of 40 lb. Also that mill offal at £22 10s. per short ton is cheaper than cereal grains at the prices listed.

It should be remembered, however, that it is difficult to give due credit to all foodstuffs in a simple table. For example, linseed meal at £55 per short ton appears to be a much more expensive foodstuff than meatmeal or whalemeal at current prices. Linseed meal, however, is an excel-

lent supplement to use under hard conditions—it is highly palatable, it is rich in phosphorus, it increases zest in life. In contrast, sheep and cattle often refuse to eat feed mixtures containing meat or whalemeal, despite the high nutritive value of these supplements. Palatability, of course, is a vital factor. A foodstuff is useless if stock won't eat it.

Molasses is often used as an appetiser. This is not a cheap food, however, and in most cases cereal grains or bran could be used with equal effect. As far as is known, molasses is simply a source of sugary material and supplies nothing else of special value to animals.



RAILWAY LIVESTOCK SERVICES

The Railway Department is gaining extra livestock traffic as a result of its vigorous policy of providing every possible service.

In the last six months of 1957, nearly 80,000 sheep were brought from the Eastern States by rail. To expedite transits in this State, special trains were run to Parkeston where a siding has been constructed for interstate livestock. Many of the sheep were stud stock and were brought to Western Australia because of the drought conditions in other States.

Plans are now being made to bring 10,000 sheep from the Eastern States by rail to the new pastoral areas at Esperance.

A new livestock trade, the export of goats to Singapore, is being catered for by the provisions of CXB sheep vans for their rail journey from northern lines to Gosnells, where the goats are cleansed. To facilitate their handling at the wharf, they are transported from Gosnells to the ship's

side in bogie cattle wagons. The goats are exported for human consumption.

Where no permanent livestock loading facilities exist, the Railway Department can arrange to provide portable sheep race and hurdles. These can be set up to give easy loading between motor vehicles and rail wagons.

In order to provide faster and more direct livestock services the Department has arranged to run large consignments, loaded in bogie wagons at passenger speed. Recent consignments of cattle and sheep from Esperance to Midland Junction in less than 24 hours and of cattle from Meekatharra to Midland Junction in 26½ hours, illustrate the effectiveness of this facility.

Farmers, pastoralists and stock agents can benefit from this special service by combining their livestock consignments.

Nearly 1,100 modern livestock wagons are now in service on the State railways. These are of sturdy construction and have been specially designed to give safe transport to all forms of livestock.