

Commission Man and Shipper

"The Relationship of the Commission Man and the Live Stock Exchanges to the Shipper," by Secretary A. F. Stryker

The following interesting and instructive paper on the above mentioned subject was read before the annual convention of the Nebraska Stock Growers Association, at Alliance, in June, by Mr. A. F. Stryker, secretary of the South Omaha Live Stock Exchange:

Were I to devote sufficient time to discuss this subject in all of its details, hours would be consumed. I shall, however, in the few minutes allotted to me, endeavor to touch upon a few of the most vital points of contact between the shipper and his agent at the public markets, the commission man, necessarily embracing the organization of the Exchange, the commission man's association.

From a somewhat intimate knowledge gained by twenty-six or seven years' experience on the Omaha market, it is my opinion that in no other line of business in this country does the producer come more closely in contact with his agent than does the live stock producer, or shipper, with the commission man. Very often the shipper and the commission man consult as to the time of purchase, the amount to be purchased, the kind of live stock to be purchased and the future market prospects. From one season of the year to another, the commission man makes it his business to keep his shippers posted as to market conditions and future prospects.

In visiting the homes of many shippers, it is a pleasure to learn of the high esteem and confidence reposed in our commission men. I am proud to say that in but very few instances has this confidence been betrayed. If you could know, as I have learned to know, the constant thought given by these commission men to your business, the studied attention to all of the details of the business given by these commission men, the earnest efforts made by them to secure for you the last possible dollar for your live stock, you would, I am sure, feel perfectly satisfied that your interests are in safe hands on the public markets of the country and that these gentlemen, whom you choose as your employes when you market your stock, are exerting every possible effort to be faithful to the trust reposed in them by you.

We want you to feel that your commission man is your employe, occupying, of course, a different position than do some of your employes, but at the same time working for you and your interests, labor for which you pay in the way of commissions. The fact that he works for other people at the same time does not mean that your work will be slighted. What it does signify is the fact that he is handling business for other people, meeting the buyers of the different classes of live stock, sharpening his wits and getting information concerning the condition of the market, makes him a better and more capable employe for you.

Again I want to reiterate, your commission man will be glad to consult with you, to work with you, and to represent you just as thoroly and as fully as you will allow him.

Now, passing to that other feature of my talk which relates to our organization. It will be needless for me to go into the details of the necessity for the organization of Live Stock Exchanges. Mr. A. C. Davenport, manager of the Journal-Stockman, covered this matter very fully in a paper which was read at the National Live Stock Exchange meeting at Cincinnati a few weeks since and was reproduced in The Alliance Herald of June 15. Suffice it to say that a public live stock market without an Exchange would be at the mercy of every crook and black-leg who saw fit to locate thereat.

Every transaction involving your live stock at the Omaha market is made under the jurisdiction of the South Omaha Live Stock Exchange and every man making these trades is answerable to the rules of the Exchange to the end that all transactions shall be made in fair and honorable manner and that the last cent of proceeds from your live stock shall be remitted to you at the first possible moment.

Most of you are conversant with the activities of our organization in the way of protecting your interests along transportation lines. Your president will recall our having asked him to attend a conference in Chicago some months since which had to do with the charges assessed against shippers of live stock on account of the cleaning and disinfecting of stock cars. While this matter is still in controversy, it will undoubtedly be settled with charges for this work, when necessary, much less than those originally decided upon by the carriers.

The matter of live stock contracts is now before our organization and we shall do the best we can to bring about a final adjustment of this matter which will protect the interests of the shipper. We were represented at the conference in Chicago on June 6, at which was organized the National Live Stock Shippers' Protective League, which has for its object the protection of the interests of live stock shippers throuth this country.

The National Live Stock Exchange has entered upon a twelve months' test of stock yards fills, to the end that shippers of live stock to Omaha and other markets may receive an adequate fill allowance on their stock. It is the desire of our Exchange, and other live organizations, that the shippers themselves shall indicate to us their desire that we cooperate with them in these matters. The Traffic Department of our organization is at all times at the service of the shippers to our market. The office of the Secretary-Traffic Manager is always open to any shipper, and those in charge of this office will be glad to meet and discuss with any shipper to our market the service accorded him by either the carriers, the Stock Yards Company, or the commission men. It is only as we get closer together and have more confidence in each other that the best results can be obtained for all concerned. Those who are in positions of authority in our organization realize that only as we work in harmony with, and for the shipper, who alone makes our public markets possible, can we hope to retain their confidence and co-operation.

BUMPER CROPS THIS YEAR

Corn: Booming, Farmers Happy, Stockmen Pleased, Prospects Bright

We have just about told this little story in the heading above. The prospects of a big crop of good, sound corn in eastern and central Nebraska, Iowa, northern Missouri and north-eastern Kansas are much better than they were at this time last year. This of course makes the farmers and feeders glad, and it also pleases the ranchmen in the cattle raising country, for it is generally believed that the better the corn crop in the "corn belt" the stronger will be the demand for ranch cattle to feed in the ensuing fall and winter.

Small grain in eastern and central Nebraska is much better than last year, at least on the flat land; in western Nebraska not quite as good. The excessive rains of last year that destroyed crops to a considerable extent in eastern Nebraska made an unusually heavy crop in the western part of the state.

Stocker and Feeder Shows

Designed to Boost Live Stock Markets in the Corn Belt, but Become a Benefit to the Cattle Country that Has Good Stuff to Sell.

RENDERED RANCHMEN GOOD SERVICE

The Nebraska Stockman and the stockmen's editions of The Alliance Herald have done Nebraska ranchmen a good service in calling attention to the superiority of their cattle as feeder stuff.

It isn't bunk or hot air but a fact, verified by feeders of eastern Nebraska and Iowa, that no better cattle can be found for feeding than come out of the sandhills and the adjacent tablelands. Giving publicity to this fact tends to improve the prices paid for Nebraska range cattle by increasing the demand for them for feeders. While some cattle go direct to the packing houses from the grass, it is a well known fact among live stock commission men that the demand for them by feeder buyers makes a much better market than could be expected if they were sold only for immediate slaughter.

Likewise the live stock markets accessible to western Nebraska that put on stocker and feeder shows are doing the ranchmen of this country a good turn. Prizes that are worth trying for are offered and special efforts made by the stock yards companies to have plenty of feeder buyers at the shows; but in our opinion the principal benefit does not come from the prizes or in securing a good market at that particular time, but in the publicity given the stuff exhibited and the herds from which they are taken, which applies also to a greater or less extent to the state and that part of the state in which they are raised.

Last September St. Joseph put on a stocker and feeder show. In the issue of the Nebraska Stockman for August we said:

Why Not Nebraska Cop the Prizes?

What reason is there why Nebraska ranchmen should not capture a large share of the liberal prizes offered at the St. Joseph stocker and feeder show? None, whatever.

If they exhibit, they are practically sure of getting in on the prizes. Better feeder cattle cannot be found than are raised in the west half of the state.

The Herald-Stockman earnestly desires to see Nebraska cattlemen compete for these prizes, and win some of them, as they will if they exhibit. Already Nebraska ranch cattle have a splendid reputation among feeders in the corn belt states, and that reputation is sure to be enhanced by proper representation at the first annual St. Joseph Stocker and Feeder Show.

In the next issue following the show we had the pleasure of announcing "Nebraska Cops Cattle Prizes" and gave the names of successful contestants, as readers of this paper will remember. There is no way of ascertaining the exact value to ranchmen of the publicity given to the good qualities of their cattle, but no one who understands marketing conditions will deny that it possessed a benefit worth while.

This Year's Shows

Some of the markets will put on stocker and feeder shows this year, the exact dates and particulars of which will be given in due time in the Nebraska Stockman and the monthly stockmen's editions of The Herald. Owing to the large number of feeders from the corn belt who will attend and buy stuff for their feed lots, it is probable that exhibitors, whether they get in on the prizes or not, will get a somewhat better price than will be paid at the same time under other circumstances, and there will be no extra charge for yardage and commissions.

If Nebraska ranchmen are well represented in the exhibits, without a doubt they will secure a large share of the prizes. The stocker and feeder show is one kind of live stock exhibition at which ranchmen who do not fatten their cattle can get in strong, in fact secure the lion's share of the prizes. It is a pleasure for us to give advance information regarding the shows; it will be a greater pleasure, after they are over, to tell our readers about the prizes won by Nebraska cattlemen.

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O m a h a

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