

# Nebraska the Leading State in Agriculture

It Possesses One-Twentieth of Entire Farm Wealth of United States According to Government Figures



NEBRASKA is potentially the greatest agricultural commonwealth in the world.

"Prove that, please."

Very good; a statement so manifestly extreme demands proof; here it is: According to the valuation of all farm property (including land) furnished by the United States census of 1910, Nebraska ranks fourth in total valuation of all farm property, being exceeded by Illinois, Iowa and Texas alone. Texas has 3.6 times the area of Nebraska, with only a fraction more of reported farm wealth, which excludes it from competition for place at this time. Nebraska possesses one-twentieth of the entire farm wealth of the United States, according to the government figures.

In the group of four mid-west states bordering on the Missouri river—Iowa, Missouri, Nebraska and Kansas—Nebraska ranks second in agricultural wealth now visible and taxable, while this group of four states contains a full one-fourth of the entire agricultural wealth of the nation. In the great Transmissouri territory Nebraska possesses a farm wealth now so great as to place it beyond competition for a generation to come. This is the heart of the agricultural empire of the greatest agricultural country on earth. Nebraska—but yesterday in the Great American Desert—is now seated beyond competition on the throne of empire.

### Nebraska Ranks Third

The wonderful wealth concentrated on the farms of this prairie commonwealth will bear closer analysis. The total farm wealth of Nebraska as returned by the last census is \$2,079,819,000; the returns of taxable property upon the farms and statistics of crop production for the last year as given by the State Bureau of Labor and Industrial Statistics give the total farm wealth of Nebraska as \$2,313,448,445, placing it third in rank among the states of the union.

The actual farm population of Nebraska in 1910, excluding all residents of towns, cities and villages, was 628,408; this is an average per capita wealth for the farm population of \$3,600, or \$18,000 per family of five now resident on the farms of Nebraska. The per capita wealth of the United States as a whole is reckoned at \$1,600; therefore, the average visible wealth of the Nebraska farm family of five persons is \$10,000 more than the average of families in the United States as a whole.

This enormous accretion of wealth—enormous beyond the power of mind to conceive—has come into existence within the memory of men yet young by the application of native industry to the wondrous fertility of the greatest body of perfect agricultural soil in the western hemisphere. It is a story more wonderful than the tales of Arabian Nights, surpassing in actual achievement the wildest flights of fancy.

### Riches Beyond the Dreams of Midas

A recent magazine article says: "It is the enormous increase of the output of the wonderful mines of the Rand, in South Africa, that is chiefly responsible for the gain in the world's total production of gold during the last few years. Those mines in one year have yielded no less than \$175,000,000 of the precious substance, and the stream of gold from that source is steadily gaining in volume. \* \* \* There is good reason to believe that ten years from now the yield of the Rand deposits will reach \$300,000,000."

But in Nebraska last year the production of wealth in corn, wheat and poultry exceeded the flow of gold from the Rand, while the golden flood that pours from its farms into the mar-



The Kind of Corn That Puts Nebraska at the Front in Production

kets of the world now exceeds \$400,000,000 annually.

And so silently has this come to pass, without noise of trumpet or blazon of printed page—through the agencies of rain, sunshine, patient labor and fertility unsurpassed—that one can scarce believe that the prairie schooner has been transformed into the Argosy which bears this treasure back to civilization, within one short generation.

When a bare half-million people accomplish results so wonderful in a state not yet half tilled, what of the future?

### Nebraska's Pre-eminent Increase in Wealth

There are thirteen states which show a total farm wealth of over a billion and one-quarter dollars, ranging from New York to California and from Minnesota to Texas; of these thirteen states Nebraska shows the greatest percentage of increase in farm property during the last ten years by the following figures: Nebraska has increased its farm wealth 142.4 per cent more than New York, 158.9 per cent more than Pennsylvania, 119.4 per cent more than Ohio, 93.2 per cent more than Indiana, 83.3 per cent more than Illinois, 104 per cent more than Wisconsin, 90.9 per cent more than Minnesota, 63.9 per cent more than Iowa, 79.4 per cent more than Missouri, 42.1 per cent more than Kansas, 47.6 per cent more than Texas and 75.4 per cent more than California.

As compared with its sister state of Kansas, Nebraska has 3,178,000 acres less land and \$40,429,000 more farm property. And Nebraska has the smallest population of any of the thirteen states named. This spells Achievement and Opportunity. Who can doubt Nebraska's pre-eminent place in the agriculture of America?

### Forces Which Have Worked This Progress

I sat the other day in the office of a great insurance company, itself a Nebraska institution,

which now writes more old-line life insurance in this state than any company in the world. It has grown from small beginnings to a commanding place among the financial interests of the state. I asked the president of this company to tell me about its investments; he said: "They are all in loans on farm lands in the Missouri valley, from Sioux City down into northern Kansas. This is beyond question the richest agricultural territory in the world. In the quarter-century that this company has been in business it has never foreclosed a loan nor lost a dollar in either principal or interest."

I said to him, "Sir, that is a remarkable record; to what do you attribute it?"

"To the undoubted value and prosperity of this region, richer than the valley of the Nile, which offers the best security possible," was his reply.

The phenomenal development of agriculture in the Missouri valley has been brought about by a combination of forces—the unparalleled fertility of the soil, the strategic position with reference to markets and transportation and the effective organization of the producers for profitable production and marketing. In all these particulars Nebraska is unusually well equipped.

At the head of this group of organized forces for the development of the state is its splendid educational system, with sixteen colleges and universities, reporting a total student body of 10,907 for the year 1912, with 1,175 graduates and 561 teachers' certificates. The percentage of college students and graduates is much higher than in other states of similar population. The total school population of the state is 376,477, with over 4,000 graduates from high schools and colleges, and opportunity is afforded for every child to receive a liberal education at the expense of the state, with a system of free text books in use everywhere.

In the essential particular of agricultural education elementary training in this branch is now compulsory in all the common schools and the agricultural departments of the State university and the four state normal schools offer special facilities for practical and professional training.

### The Business Organization of Agriculture

In the purely business organization of agriculture and allied interests Nebraska is more efficiently organized than any state in the union. Over 250 co-operative grain and live stock shipping associations of farmers are incorporated and doing successful business at as many local shipping stations. About 250 local farmers' institutes hold annual sessions, with frequent intermittent meetings under direction of the department of agricultural extension of the State university. About seventy farmers' mutual fire, tornado, hail and live stock insurance companies are doing a satisfactory business.

While the corporate stock of these individual associations is not large, their total business reaches an immense sum, and the profits returned directly to the producers are a large factor in the prosperity of the communities interested. The total volume of farm wealth which is behind these co-operative concerns is approximately a half-billion dollars.

The various lines of agricultural industry are further associated for educational and business advancement in a group of twenty-five or more state associations, among which are the following:

Nebraska State Board of Agriculture, Association of State, County and District Fairs; Nebraska Corn Improvers' association, State Horticultural society, State Florists' society, State Park and Forestry association, State Dairymen's