

# An Agricultural Revolution

## The Growing Importance of Livestock in North Dakota

By

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**C**OLD "BLACK AND WHITE" statistics accumulated by the painstaking Agricultural Statistician of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics of the United States Department of Agriculture, Mr. Ben U. Kienholz, and his associates, of Fargo, North Dakota reveal the fact that steadily but surely North Dakota is turning toward the greater security afforded by a livestock economy. Look at Table 1, "Cash income plus home consumption" for proof of that statement. In 7 out of 19 years livestock income has exceeded crop income, and in 5 more years livestock income was more than 75 percent as great as crop income.

Table 1. **North Dakota Cash Farm Income  
Plus Home Consumption**  
(Government Payments Excluded)

Year	From Crops	From Livestock and Livestock Products	Precipitation	
			Average Annual (Inches)	Departure from 1892-1942 Average (Inches)
1942	\$188,775,000	\$136,476,000	18.75	+1.72
1941	132,181,000	91,708,000	23.23	+6.20
1940	72,851,000	( 66,940,000 )	17.39	+0.36
1939	63,693,000	( 55,034,000 )	14.15	-2.88
1938	43,069,000	<b>59,209,000</b>	15.33	-1.70
1937	54,110,000	<b>66,848,000</b>	17.03	+0.00
1936	35,049,000	<b>75,814,000</b>	8.83	-8.20
1935	39,487,000	<b>50,967,000</b>	18.04	+1.01
1934	29,151,000	<b>57,489,000</b>	9.51	-7.52
1933	54,078,000	( 44,978,000 )	13.45	-3.58
1932	29,823,000	<b>41,236,000</b>	17.18	+0.15

**Livestock Income and the Farm Home**

Livestock provides a high degree of income insurance in the dry years unless there are catastrophic droughts such as in 1934 and 1936. Even in those years livestock was the major reliance. In a year such as 1935, when stem rust took a dis-

astrous toll, livestock income provided the major income. The total livestock income doesn't tell the whole story. It fails to reveal the fact that it is spread throughout the year and that it supplies a large part of the family living. Table 2 is calculated from data in "North Dakota Agricultural Statistics."

**Table 2.—Value of Livestock and Livestock Products consumed in North Dakota Farm Households**

1942—\$15,257,000	1932— 8,904,000
1941— 12,703,000	1931— 11,584,000
1940— 10,139,000	1930— 16,470,000
1939— 9,926,000	1929— 19,981,000
1938— 11,339,000	1928— 19,473,000
1937— 13,032,000	1927— 19,592,000
1936— 13,267,000	1926— 20,471,000
1935— 12,409,000	1925— 18,668,000
1934— 9,371,000	1924— 16,174,000
1933— 8,648,000	

**Table 3. Home Consumption of Crops in Farm Households of North Dakota**

	1930	1940	1942 .
Corn.....	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	\$ 2,000
Wheat.....	442,000	319,000	377,000
Oats.....	000	000	000
Barley.....	000	000	000
Rye.....	6,000	4,000	8,000
Buckwheat.....	2,000	000	000
Flaxseed.....	000	000	000
Potatoes.....	1,518,000	645,000	1,023,000
Truck Crops.....	867,000	1,367,000	1,675,000
Fruits.....		6,000	10,000
Hay.....	000	000	000
Alfalfa Seed.....	000	000	000
Sweet Clover Seed.....	000	000	000
Timothy Seed.....	000	000	000
Other.....	235,000	217,000	245,000
<b>Total.....</b>	<b>\$3,071,000</b>	<b>\$2,559,000</b>	<b>\$3,340,000</b>

**Cash Crop Income and the Farm Home**

Our farm household consumption of cash crops is relatively small. Take 1930 and 1940 as typical years and 1942 as a war year. "Agricultural Statistics" furnishes the following facts:

The total value of farm crops consumed in farm households of North Dakota is but a small percentage of the value of the livestock products consumed. For example, in 1942 the value of crops consumed was \$3,340,000, the highest in 19

years, yet it was 21.8 percent of the value of the livestock and livestock products consumed.

The rising importance of truck crops in the food consumed indicates a growing diversity in farm diets with probably more attention being given to protective foods of vegetable origin. The comparatively small consumption of wheat does not, of course, represent the total consumption of wheaten products, for a high proportion of flour and other wheaten products are purchased.