

AGRICULTURE IN SWEDEN

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FARMING in Sweden is of a very heterogeneous description on account of the great variations in both climatic conditions and the character of the soil. In the southern provinces the farming is of the most up-to-date kind, the principal products cultivated being wheat, barley and sugar beet. Both in regard to cultivation and yield of the soil the district in question compares favorably with the best agricultural sections in other parts of Europe. In the central part of Sweden the raising of grain and fodder is of about equal importance with forestry as an important side issue of the farming. In the northern districts, on the other hand, the chief source of income is forestry, while farming is mostly confined to the raising of fodder for the farm livestock and, where feasible, grain for domestic use.

In 1920 the area of cultivated soil was 3,794,711 hectares, fruit and vegetable gardens covered 50,175 hectares, natural meadow 928,539 hectares, forest 24,547,876 hectares, unproductive soil—mountains, moors, etc.—11,735,572 hectares.

The cultivated soil was in 1919 apportioned to the following crops, viz. wheat 140,903 ha., rye 372,169 ha., barley 166,847 ha., oats 712,902 ha., mixed grain 260,767 ha., vetches, peas, beans etc. 44,774 ha., potatoes 163,634 ha., sugar beet 36,639 ha., other roots 91,060 ha., green fodder 11,978 ha., clover 1,342,851 ha., other crops 14,729 ha., with 294,000 ha., lying fallow.

The number of livestock on farms was in 1919, horses 715,000, cattle 2,550,000, sheep and goats 1,696,000, pigs 716,000, poultry 4,871,000.

Swedish agriculture produces a sufficient quantity of all animal foodstuffs for the requirements of the population, and there is besides an excess of butter, meat, pork and eggs available for export. Enough cereals for domestic consumption are also raised, except wheat, of which about 40 per cent must be covered by importation.

The distribution of the soil as regards ownership is exceptionally favorable. Of 428,126 farms only 2,576 consist of estates with a greater area under cultivation than 100 ha. each, which is merely 0.5 per cent of the whole number; 5,430 farms have 50—100 ha., 91,247 10—50 ha., and 328,873 farms have less than 10 ha. tilled fields. Only 100,000 farms of the total number are held on leasehold terms; the remainder are owned by the users. Sweden is thus distinctively a land of small farmers and has been for many centuries.

IMPROVEMENT OF THE CROPS

An institution that has been of the greatest importance for the development of the cereal production and other branches of agriculture is the Seed Improvement Farm and Laboratories of Svalöv established in 1886. It has been conducted by Professors N. Hjalmar Nilsson and H. Nilsson-Ehle, to whose revolutionary work in the service of agri-

culture Swedish farmers are indebted for cereals of higher yield and greater resistibility.

The name Svalöv is known all over the world and the new Svalöv varieties of wheat, rye, oats, barley and peas have gained a good footing in many places outside of Sweden.

Another seed improvement association is that at Weibullsholm, where especially high-yield root varieties have been developed by prominent scientists. The Brand "Weibull" is likewise a well known one in many countries.

The new varieties introduced by the institutions in question are used in all parts of Sweden, and have done much to augment the crops. Thus, for example, the average yield in Malmöhus Län of Scania was in 1921 for wheat 3,320 kg., rye 2,500 kg., barley 2,070 kg., oats 2,070 kg., peas 1,470 kg., sugar beet 32,500 kg. and fodder beet 41,440 kg. per hectare.

CATTLE AND OTHER LIVESTOCK

Swedish breeding animals were well known abroad even before the war. They have been introduced especially into the Baltic countries, where they are highly appreciated for their strong constitution, high productive capacity and ability to transmit their good qualities to their offspring.

Breeding of domestic farm animals in Sweden has during the last forty years been stimulated and promoted by the granting of bonuses and keeping of official pedigree books, and the productive capacity has been augmented by Control Associations and competitions. The physical condition of the animals is very good and the great majority of the breeds are completely free from tuberculosis.

In south and central Sweden there are in the main only two breeds of cattle in evidence, viz. black-and-white and a red-and-white breed.

The black-and-white Dutch breed originated in Holland and East-Frisia, and is in Sweden mainly to be found in the sugar beet districts of Scania. The yearly milk production according to the books of the Control Associations is on an average 5,000 kg. with a fat content of 3.5 per cent for cows belonging to pure-breed herds. Thanks to rationally conducted work in this direction the fat content has gradually been increased, and many cows furnish milk with a fat content of up to 4 per cent. Annual milking results of up to 9,000 and 10,000 kg. are also on record. However, very little attention is paid to attaining record figures, the aim being instead to establish a good, uniform productivity extending over many years. The live weight of a full-grown cow is 600 kg. The color is black and white, with white legs. For the last thirty years no animals with black spots at the hoofs have been awarded prizes.

The red-and-white breed is to be found in all parts of central Sweden outside of the real plains. One distinguishes two

very similar varieties of this breed, viz. the Swedish Ayrshire breed and the Swedish red-and-white cattle. Both are bred on Swedish soil and are excellently adapted to the Northern climate and small farms, where not too great demands are made on the quality of the soil and up-to-date farming methods. The two breeds have in the main the same characteristics in regard to coloring size and type, and suggestions have been made recently to classify this cattle as one breed. The milking capacity is on an average per year and cow belonging to good, pure-breed herds 4,000 kg. of milk with a fat content of 4 per cent. Live weight of the cows 550 kg.

The breeding of pigs is highly developed in Sweden thanks to the incentive furnished by the export of pork to Great Britain. The breed most in evidence is the Yorkshire, of which many prominent establishments exist, a characteristic one being that at Svalöv. In addition may be mentioned several establishments of pigs of improved Swedish farm breed, used to good advantage for crossing with Yorkshires to increase the pork production.

Sheep rearing is confined to Oxford-down, Shropshire, Cheviot and other sheep kept for meat production. Sheep rearing has declined during the last decades but the remaining herds are of fine quality.

Horse breeding is very popular. Three breeds of horses have received the special attention of Swedish breeders, viz. a light-weight, warm-blooded breed chiefly intended for army remounts and carriage horses, Swedish Belgian horses, in Sweden called the Ardennes horse, used for the large farms and estates in south and central Sweden, and North-Swedish horses for the forest and mountain districts of the North of Sweden.

The Ardennes horse has been raised in Sweden for the last fifty years, and has been widely adopted, so that Sweden is the country outside Belgium itself that has the largest number of Belgian horses. The Swedish Ardennes is a mountain horse, middling heavy, hard, dry and lively, and is for these qualities very popular in several countries outside of Sweden, notably Germany and the Baltic countries.

The North-Swedish horse is a purely Swedish animal improved by selective breeding. It is splendidly suited for forest areas, because it works as well on the rough forest trails as in the field. It is persevering, quick, unpretentious in regard to fodder and stabling, and is consequently very popular with the small farmers in those parts.

Swedish warm-blooded horses are chiefly of Hanoverian extraction or descended from English full-blood stallions. They are high-bred and furnish all the remounts of the army. Other countries also obtain remounts in Sweden. Skåne is the center for the breeding of this type of horse.

A Family Affair—Willesden Husband (summoned for maintenance arrears): "If I'm sent to prison for this, the next war will be between me and my wife."