

**HAVE BEEF TRUST AT HOME**

**TABLES PLAINLY SHOW WHERE THE PROFITS ARE.**

**Grower Forced to Sell at Combine's Figure, Retailer Makes a Fair Profit, and Wholesalers Big Ones.**

(Johnston McCullay in Sunday Oregonian.)

Portland need not take a backward step for any city in the East, even in the matter of a beef trust. While a Federal grand jury in the east is investigating the methods of the beef trust, Portland people are paying prices to retail butchers that reveal a trust in this city, a trust within a trust, a trust that combines the branch houses of the great trust and the independents who exist in Portland.

Figures do not lie, and figures show that packers and wholesalers in Portland make a princely profit, that the prices of beef to retailers is uniform among the several wholesalers, which means that there is an understanding. Retailers charge consumers accordingly, and when the consumer objects the retailer tells him that the packers are to blame; in turn the packers say the railroads, the stockyards management and the growers are the cause of the trouble. The figures simmered down, show that the grower makes little or no profit, the railroad transports stock reasonably, the stockyards merely exist, the retailer gets no more than an average profit and hardly enough to live. The figures also show that in the evolution of a beef from grower to consumer a large profit is made. Since this profit does not go to the grower, the railroad or the retailer, it follows that it must enrich the coffers of the packers.

Manager O'Shea, of the Union Meat Company, stated yesterday that there were about 25,000 beefs slaughtered and sold to retailers in Portland during the year 1904. The average weight of local beef is between 1000 and 1400 pounds. Mr. O'Shea states that a 1000 pound beef will dress on an average the year around about 53 per cent. This means 430 pounds of clear meat. Prime beef was selling yesterday, according to the statement of Mr. O'Shea, at \$6.75 per hundred. According to the statement of Thomas Duffy, one of the more prominent retailers, it was selling at \$7.25.

Taking \$7.25 as the base of statistics, and following out the statement of Mr. O'Shea that beef dresses an average of 53 per cent, the packer in Portland gets for his 1000-pound carcass \$38.425. This, of course is for the clear meat.

Added to this is the sum the packer gets for other portions of the beef, for not an atom of the beef is lost. The following table shows the value of the beef of 1000 pounds aside from clear meat:

Blood	1.0000	Tongue meat	1.0000
Headfoot oil	1.0000	Sweetbreads	1.0000
Stitches	1.0000	Tripe	1.0000
Head	1.0000	Tails	1.0000
Skulls	1.0000	Brains	1.0000
Jaws	1.0000	Tongue	1.0000
Sticks	1.0000	Wastage	1.0000
Bliss	1.0000	Total	12.0000
Slits	1.0000		
Bladder	1.0000	Hide	2.2500
Heart	1.0000	Pale	2.2500
Liver	1.0000	Offal	2.5000
Cheekmeat	1.2500		
Wessand	1.0000	Grand total	17.2850
Ox lips	1.0000		

The packer, then, gets for the clear meat at the rate of \$7.25 the sum of \$38.425, and to this he adds what he gets from other sources, shown in the total above, \$17.529, making a grand total for the carcass of \$55.954.

The packer is compelled to pay for the beef on the hoof an average price of 4 cents a pound, \$4 a hundred and \$40 for the beef. The average charge of railroad transportation and stockyard fees is \$3. It costs on an average 50 cents to kill the beef, making the beef actually cost \$43.50, and giving the packer a profit of \$12.454 on each beef. Allowing the sum of \$2.45 for plant expenses, which is a very liberal estimate by the head, it brings the packer's net profit to \$10. This gives the packer a clear profit of 25 per cent, the profit accrues every two weeks, the money is turned over a number of times yearly and the compound profits from each beef will aggregate in the neighborhood of \$43 in the year, giving the packer more than 100 per cent profit.

Now for the small dealer. He pays for the clear meat of a 1000-pound beef, which gives 530 pounds of clear meat, \$38.415. The following table shows what the retailer gets on an average for the different cuts, and what the 530 pounds of clear meat from the 1000-pound beef nets him:

Cut	Percentage	Price	Value
Whole beef <td>100</td> <td>\$55.95</td> <td>\$55.95</td>	100	\$55.95	\$55.95
Round <td>25</td> <td>1.25</td> <td>31.25</td>	25	1.25	31.25
Chuck <td>20</td> <td>1.25</td> <td>25.00</td>	20	1.25	25.00
Shank <td>10</td> <td>1.25</td> <td>12.50</td>	10	1.25	12.50
Plate <td>10</td> <td>1.25</td> <td>12.50</td>	10	1.25	12.50
Flank <td>10</td> <td>1.25</td> <td>12.50</td>	10	1.25	12.50
Total			\$124.65

The retailer, therefore, gets \$61.46 for the meat from a 1000-pound beef, for which he pays the packer \$38.43, giving him a profit of \$23.03 on the beef, or about 60 per cent. But, whereas the packer gets his profit of 25 per cent from the beef within a few days and allows it to multiply through use of the money so that it nets a profit of nearly 100 per cent at the end of the year, the retailer loses a large part of his profit in the wages of employes, the waste in cutting, running expenses of his establishment and other expenses. Whereas, the net profit on a beef is 25 percent to the packer, the profit of 60 per cent quoted as that of the dealer is not net profit, and when expenses are deducted, allowing for shrinkage in cold storage and waste in addition to expenses, the retailer's profit drops down to about 40 per cent and in some cases less than this. The retailers therefore are not getting rich, and they are compelled to ask from the consumer the prices they do in order to run their business without loss.

That there is an understanding among the packers is not denied. Retailers state that the same prices are asked by the several wholesale concerns, that the same conditions are imposed by all. The packers pay on an average 4 cents a pound on the hoof, giving the grower little room for profit. They refuse to pay more and the grower must either sell for that figure or not at all. The cost of transportation to Portland and the charges of the yards amounts to an average of \$3 a head. The retailer pays his \$7.25 a hundred and must ask of the consumer the prices he does in order to live.

The 1000-pound beef costs the packer, plus expenses, about \$45.95; he sells the meat for \$38.43 and the remainder of the beef for \$17.529. He gets for the beef, after expenses have been extracted, the sum of \$55.954. His profit, in the light of the fact that it is turned over every two weeks, is therefore enormous, and his contention that the small dealer gets 100 per cent profit and is responsible for the high prices to the consumer is without foundation.

Here is where the buyer gets off. He is compelled to pay the small profit of the grower, the grasping profit of the trust and the additional small profit of the retailer. The retailer, in an effort to make a little money, does not forget to weigh the bone and cut it out afterward, to weigh the mutton hoof and cut it off at a later time. He explains, however, that this he must do in order to meet the demands of the packer and wholesaler. The packer is holding him up. Not content with doing this, the packer is also holding up the grower. He holds up the railroads in most instances, and indirectly holds up the public. The sum of money he demands for profits must come from some quarter and it comes from the consumer.

The consumer pays on an average 13.8 cents a pound for his beef. The retailer gets an average profit of 4.14 cents a pound, and the packer makes a profit of 3.45 cents a pound. But it is a fact that the packer turns his profit over every two weeks and allows the money to compound that forces the consumer to pay. By doing this the packer makes nearly 100 per cent profit in the year. By selling the clear meat to the retailer so that he would make an average profit of 4 per cent on each beef, the packer could still multiply his profits and make his annual profits foot up to more than 25 per cent, giving a good percentage on the investment.

The following table shows what the 1000-pound beef costs each party to the transaction, what he receives for it before the deduction of operating expenses, what his gross profit is, and the amount of the net profit:

	Net profit
Grower	\$12.45
Retailer	\$10.00
Wholesaler	\$19.00
Consumer	\$12.45

Joseph Combs, the well known Grant county cattle buyer, is buying steers in this section. He is offering \$14 for yearlings, \$19 for two-year-olds and \$23 for three-year-olds. This is an advance of about \$3 per head over the prices paid last year.—Spray Courier.

**WASHINGTON SHEEPMEN OBJECT**

**Are Against the Tax Law Enacted by The Oregon Legislature.**

A meeting of the sheepmen of southeastern Washington was held in the offices of Attorney H. C. Bryson, in this city yesterday. The object of the meeting was to consider ways and means for contesting the validity of the law enacted by the Oregon legislature, making a grazing tax of 20 cents per head on sheep and goats, and fifty cents per head on cattle, horses and mules, effective. The law provides an additional charge of five cents per head for sheep and goats and ten cents per head for horses, cattle and mules for each additional county passed through, in addition to the first. The effect on the sheepmen of this section is a twenty-five cent per head tax, their sheep going into Union and Umatilla counties.

A committee composed of W. P. Reser, H. C. Bryson and S. V. Davin was empowered to pursue whatever course their good judgment directed, tending to contest the legality of the enactment.

Many of the sheepmen express the opinion that if the law is upheld they will have to retire from the business. An additional item of expense of 25 cents per head makes sheep grazing prohibitive. It is probable that the sheepmen who met today own 250,000 head of sheep, and the tax is enormous under the new law.

The committee appointed were vested with absolute authority to direct a defense to the collection and it is believed a federal case will result, if any jurisdiction facts can be had.

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