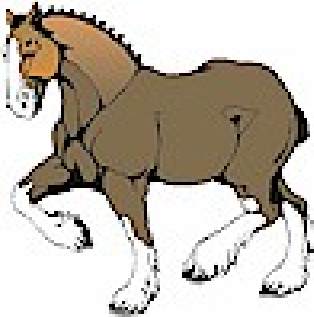


Teacher Resource Information: **Animals at the Farm**

In the early part of the twentieth century, animals were an essential part of farming in Cache Valley. Farmers chose specific breeds of animals based on their ability to withstand the Cache Valley weather and their diversity of use.

Horses

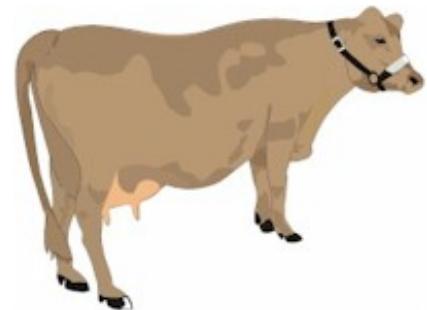


In 1917, tractors were being used on some farms, but horses were still the primary power source on many farms, including the Jensen Historical Farm. According to the USDA at this time, the ideal horse was 16 hands high and weighed 1,600 pounds. This size gave the most pulling power for the amount of feed it required. The typical horse in Cache Valley in 1917 was smaller, weighing around 1,300 pounds. Farmers would often breed a large saddle horse to a Percheron stud (a breed of draft horse), resulting in a horse that was small for a draft horse, but very strong

and tough. The draft horses provided power to do the fieldwork such as plowing, haying, binding, and pulling the sleigh.

Cows

Today most farmers have either a beef herd or a dairy herd, but in 1917 the average farmer wanted cows that would produce both milk and beef. Short horn (Durham) cows were popular with farmers because they had large calves to sell for beef and gave a reasonable amount of milk. The condensed milk factories that bought the farmers' milk wanted the farmers to keep Holsteins in their herds because they produced large quantities of milk. Sometimes farmers purchased a Holstein bull together and introduced the breed into their herds. The result was a cow that gave more milk, but still had a large, if not quite so beefy, calf. These cows were black and white like Holsteins. Farmers also kept some Jersey cows in their herds to help improve the amount of cream in the milk because the price paid for milk was determined partly by the amount of butterfat or cream it contained. Holsteins give a large quantity of low fat milk and Jerseys give a smaller quantity of high fat milk. By mixing the two breeds, farmers were able to produce a good quantity of quality milk. The farm family in 1917 used the cream from the cows to make butter and use for cooking.



Oxen

Oxen are any breed of cow that has been trained to obey voice commands. They also must be at least three years old and have horns large enough to keep the yoke from falling off while going downhill or backing up. Oxen continue to grow until they are eleven years old, and are expected to weight 3,000 lbs.

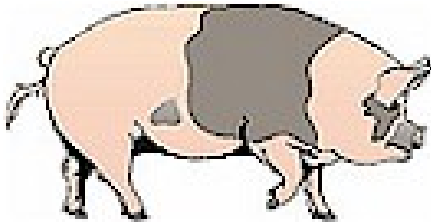


Poultry

Chickens were important on a 1917 farm because they provided eggs to cook and bake with, and they provided meat for consumption in the summer. The chicken coop is located near the house so the mother and children could feed and gather the eggs. At the Jensen Historical Farm, we have a variety of chickens. Rhode Island Reds are red and they lay brown eggs and provide high quality meat. Other breeds you may see on the farm site: Silver laced Wyandottes, Austra Lorps and Barred Plymouth Rocks.



Pigs



The breeds of pigs that were common in 1917 included: Durocs, Chester Whites, Hampshire, Yorkshire, Spotted Poland or Landrace. While some of these breeds are common today, they look different than they did at the turn of the century. Today we prefer leaner meat, so farmers have selected animals with a high proportion of lean muscle fat.

In 1917 lard was an important commodity, so farmers raised fatter pigs. Pigs provided food that could be preserved such as: bacon, ham, sausage, and lard. The market for pork was high, and pigs were a valuable source of income.

Sheep

The sheep on the farm are Rambouillet (ram-boo-ley). They look similar to Rambouillet sheep in 1917, with closed faces (lots of wool on the face), wrinkly skin, and greasy wool. These characteristics make it harder to shear Rambouillet sheep then it is to shear many breeds of sheep today. Rambouillets are raised because they produce long, stable and strong wool, which is very marketable, and they produce good meat. Sheep were raised primarily for food, because weaving and wool were industrialized businesses in 1917 and personal wool production was not necessary. However, by the winter of 1917 wool was the need because of WWI. Everyone began knitting for the Red Cross, but since wool was hard to come by, the Red Cross asked women to spin their own wool if they were able. After the war, most people went back to buying wool from the store.



Cats

Just like today, cats were a valuable resource to the farmer of 1917. Cats are natural predators. They are great at keeping mice out of the barn, granary, summer kitchen, farmhouse and even the fields. Some cats will even kill moles, rabbits and spiders. Cats keep a farm naturally pest free. Farm cats do not belong inside! They are strictly outside animals. Because of this, some of our cats are not as friendly as the house cats you may be used to. Some love to be petted and played with, remember that they all have sharp claws and teeth, and they will use them!

