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Heavy Horses at Saskatchewan's Fairs During the 1920s

**Prepared for
Saskatchewan Western Development Museum's
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Heavy Horses at Saskatchewan's Fairs During the 1920s

1. Introduction

Large numbers of purebred Clydesdale and Percheron stallions made regular appearances at fairs and exhibitions throughout Saskatchewan during the 1920s. These heavy draft horses were not just "show horses," however. They were the primary source of farm power in the province well into the 1920s. Eventually, the obsession with purity of breeding in horses intended to work the land led to the production of national and international champions. By the end of the 1920s, Saskatchewan was recognized as the leading horse-breeding province in Canada.

2. Background

In the first decades of settlement, farmers needed power and they needed it urgently to ensure the productivity of their grain farms. Settlers in Western Canada reluctantly utilized oxen as their first source of farm power. Oxen were able to live off the land, eating grass. Horses, on the other hand, needed grain in their diet as well. Horses were also not easy to acquire in the early 1900s. They were more costly than oxen and supply fell far short of demand in that period.¹

2.1 Role of the Heavy Horse in Grain Growing

The emergence of grain growing as the prairie mainstay resulted in the preference of the draft horse over other, more "all-purpose" horses. "Since the bulk of farmwork necessitated the use of an animal that could propel seeders, ploughs and harrows from dawn until dusk, husbandmen required a horse especially suited to the task," a Parks Canada study of prairie agriculture states. "Only the draft horse and preferably the Clydesdale would fulfill these functions."² High prices, however, stood in the settlers' way of acquiring reliable work stock.

3. Horse Breeding: A Leading Industry in Saskatchewan

"The trade in all its fancy forms was basically an expression of homestead and farm needs."
- Grant MacEwan

As the need for horses grew, a solution to the shortage and the high prices was found in the expansion and upgrading of the regional horse breeding industry. A new specialist appeared on

¹Grant MacEwan, *Hoofprints and Hitchingposts* (Saskatoon: Modern Press, 1964), 71-2.

²David Spector, *Agriculture on the Prairies, 1870-1940*, History and Archaeology Series, No. 65 (Ottawa: Environment Canada, Parks Canada, National Historic Parks and Sites Branch, 1983), 60.

the prairie scene: the importer and dealer of purebred draft stallions. Horse breeding became a leading enterprise in Saskatchewan, with homesteads providing a ready market. As Grant MacEwan explains, the first two decades of the twentieth century were the “Golden Years of horse husbandry.”

Every farmer was a horseman and every farm boy aspired to be a horseman. ... When Canada’s horse population reached 3,610,000 in 1921, the average western farm had about ten head. Horses on farms were as essential as oars in a rowboat. A farm without them was unthinkable.³

By 1907 the Saskatchewan Department of Agriculture reported that large numbers of Clydesdale and Percheron stallions with “the very best blood obtainable” were making regular appearances at local fairs and exhibitions.⁴

The University of Saskatchewan played an important role in the development of the province’s horse breeding industry. Dean Rutherford of the College of Agriculture was a devotee of the Clydesdale horse, and pushed the university to invest heavily in good breeding stock from Scotland, the United States and Eastern Canada. “The cost became substantial,” Michael Hayden reports, “as new horses kept being imported from Scotland to replace the victims of swamp fever.”⁵ Rutherford also served as a highly respected judge of livestock, particularly of horses, at all the important exhibitions and livestock shows in the province.⁶

The strong constitution and hardiness of Saskatchewan draft horses eventually found Saskatchewan its place in the sun. “Producing 1,600-pound draft horses for local grain growers, Saskatchewan horse breeders had transformed their industry into the largest operation in the Dominion,” Spector states. “Even with their annual output of 100,000 animals, stock growers strained their resources to meet the provincial demand.”⁷

3.1 Legislation

Efforts to establish high quality breeding stock started in 1903 when the government of the North-West Territories passed *The Horse Breeders’s Act*. This legislation required the registration of all breeding horses and demanded a five dollar fee for all purebred and a ten dollar fee for grade and scrub stallions. Shortly after the formation of the Province of Saskatchewan in

³MacEwan, *Hoofprints and Hitchingposts*, 77.

⁴Saskatchewan. Department of Agriculture, *Annual Report*, 1907, 290.

⁵Michael Hayden, *Seeking a Balance; The University of Saskatchewan, 1907-1982* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1983), 67.

⁶Lawrence E. Kirk, “Early Years in the College of Agriculture,” in *Saskatchewan History* (Vol. XII, No. 1, Winter 1959), 24.

⁷Spector, 59.

1905, the government amended the *Territorial Act*, making it compulsory for all stockmen to register grade stallions and providing penalties for those who failed to comply.

On August 1, 1912 the Government of Saskatchewan passed a new *The Horse Breeders' Act*. The 1903 registration procedures were retained, but existing provisions were stiffened. It became unlawful to mate scrub, grade or cross-bred stallions to mares for the purpose of profit in specially designated regions. Moreover, any purebred stallion could be barred from breeding if inspectors discovered disease or physical deformity. Every person or company "standing or travelling" a stallion had to have a certificate of purebred enrolment, which had to be renewed annually. This certificate had to be posted in a conspicuous place both inside and outside the main door of the stallion's stable. Horse breeders also required a license.⁸

The goals of this legislation were as follows:

- 1) The prevention of misrepresentation in regard to the breeding of any stallions standing or travelling for public service in Saskatchewan.
- 2) The elimination from the breeding ranks of all horses the get [sic] of which are especially liable to be rendered unfit for useful service on account of undesirable conformation, hereditary unsoundness or disease.
- 3) The means of determining those stallions from which, on account of their superior type, conformation and breeding, may be expected progeny that will measure up to a uniformly satisfactory standard.
- 4) The proper registration in an official stud book controlled by the Canadian National Live Stock Records at Ottawa of many stallions whose eligibility may be satisfactorily proven, but who at the present time are not registered on account of lack of appreciation of such procedure on the part of the owner, or who, through ignorance, still remain recorded in an unauthorized stud book.
- 5) A more general stimulating of interest in the raising of suitable horses for the farm and others required for army remounts; and a wider dissemination of reliable information concerning the horse breeding industry of Saskatchewan.
- 6) The recording of all transfers of ownership without loss of time. In connection with the registration of colts, it should be borne in mind that no animal can be recorded unless the sire is registered at Ottawa *in the name of the present owner*.⁹

Some owners of purebred stallions objected to the enrolment of grade and scrub stallions under the new Act. Government officials pointed out that it would practically impossible to retire from service at this stage of the province's growth all but pure bred stallions. In time, however, it was hoped that at least three quarters of Saskatchewan would become what was known as the

⁸W.F. Windeatt, "Enrolment and Registration of Stallions in Saskatchewan," Bulletin No. 39, Department of Agriculture, Government of Saskatchewan (Regina: J.W. Reid, Government Printer, 1914), 20.

⁹Windeatt, 22.

Approved Stallion District, an area in which no grade stallions would be allowed to travel.¹⁰

3.2 Breeders' Clubs

The shortage of draft horses on prairie farms during the First World War led the federal government to announce, in 1916, a program designed to assist in the efforts to improve breeding stock. With federal assistance, the Saskatchewan Live Stock Branch encouraged farmers to form horse breeders' clubs for the purpose of hiring purebred stallions and guaranteeing the stallion owners a number of mares. By the end of 1927, almost one hundred clubs had been organized in the province.¹¹

The breeding clubs collected service fees from their members and paid one-third of the amount to the stallion owners at the end of the service season. As each mare foaled, the club disbursed the remaining two-thirds to the sire's proprietor. The Livestock Branch was presented with a certified account book by the stallion owners at the end of breeding season. In 1920 the federal Department of Agriculture reported that the breeders' club program was a success. "This policy is slowly but surely bringing about the results for which it was inaugurated," the department stated, "namely to make the keeping of a good stallion a paying proposition to the owner and at the same time to enable clubs to obtain the services of such a stallion at a reasonable service fee."¹²

3.3 Spring Stallion Shows

The Government of Saskatchewan also undertook projects to encourage horse breeding. Provincial sponsorship of spring stallion shows, starting prior to the First World War, was one of the most important. Farmers customarily purchased horses during the spring months. Attending a competition of a district's leading stallions gave the farmer an opportunity to closely examine an entire field of horses and determine which stallion would be best to mate with his mares. The spring stallion shows led to increased knowledge, as the farmers listened to judges explain desirable stallion attributes. The prospect of collecting stud service fees induced breeders to enter the competitions.¹³

3.4 Better Livestock Trains

The College of Agriculture and Department of Extension of the University of Saskatchewan and the Saskatchewan Department of Agriculture, with assistance from the Canadian Pacific Railway, ran the Better Farming Train free of charge over CPR lines throughout the province from 1914 until well into the 1920s.

¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹"Annual Report of Live Stock Branch," in *Public Service Monthly*, Nov. 1927, 5.

¹²Canada. Department of Agriculture, *Annual Report*, 1921, 30

¹³Spector, 69.

The Better Farming Train was designed to help with every aspect of farm life, from livestock and field crop problems to the work of home and school. Each train usually carried fourteen cars and coaches, including livestock demonstration cars; exhibition cars with displays of farm products, farm machinery and home equipment; lecture cars; a nursery car for small children; and sleeping and dining cars for the extension workers (mainly from the College of Agriculture). "The trains traveled to most of the farming communities of the province," Carlyle King explains, "stopping long enough at each place to give a program of lecture-demonstrations, to permit visitors to examine the exhibits, and to answer questions and discuss problems of individual farmers."¹⁴

One important function of the Better Farming Train was to impart horse-rearing knowledge to Saskatchewan farmers. In 1920 the train touring the province contained displays of choice draft horses. In 1925, the program evolved into the Better Livestock Train, a traveling exhibition featuring an entire boxcar filled with all types of choice draft sires and mares which proved to be very popular. The Saskatchewan government used the Better Livestock Train as an opportunity to inform farmers about ideal horse types and educating them about breeding and rearing methods.¹⁵ The Canadian Pacific Railway furnished the crew, equipment and operation of the Better Livestock train free of charge, "in the belief that it would help the live stock industry, thus increase traffic and so get back at a later date the money it was spending now."¹⁶

3.5 Number of Horses in the Province Grows

As a direct result of the horse-breeding initiatives outlined above, Saskatchewan's horse population grew to staggering proportions. In 1920, Hon. C.M. Hamilton, Minister of Agriculture, reported that Saskatchewan led the Dominion in the number of horses, with over one million. Hamilton wrote:

The favourable effect of the operations of the Stallion Licensing Board in improving the quality of Saskatchewan horses is very evident. This board has for several years directed its efforts towards the elimination of the scrub stallion, with the result that Saskatchewan now takes first place among the provinces of Canada for the number of stallions enrolled as well as the number of horses. There are now 2,519 pure bred stallions registered, and 503 grades, a total of 3,022 which includes 1,378 Clydesdale, 872 Percheron, 176 Belgian and 38 Shire horses. Saskatchewan now possesses more Clydesdale, more Belgian and Percheron stallions than any other Canadian province.¹⁷

Saskatchewan's Live Stock Commissioner, J.G. Robertson, noted that the number of horses in

¹⁴Carlyle King, *The First Fifty : Teaching, Research, and Public Service at the University of Saskatchewan, 1909-1959* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Ltd., 1959), 125.

¹⁵Spector, 69.

¹⁶"Better Live Stock Train Very Successful," in *Public Service Monthly*, July 1925, 1.

¹⁷Hon. C.M.. Hamilton, as quoted in "Fifteen Years of Saskatchewan Agriculture," in *Public Service Monthly* (Sept. 1920), 7.

the province had increased by 25,776 in 1922, to total of 1,143,502 horses “surpassing by over a quarter of a million its nearest competitor, which is the province of Alberta.”¹⁸ By 1923, Robertson stated that the steady increase in the number of stallions over the past few years had resulted in “more horses on our farms than are really required,” resulting in a reduction of breeding operations.¹⁹

In an address to the Horse Association of America in 1925, Robertson commented that Saskatchewan’s horse population had increased faster than its human population, “but owing to the decrease in the number of our stallions, this balance between population and horse power will likely be re-established.” In order to dispose of the surplus horses, the Saskatchewan government embarked on a plan to secure wider markets in Russia, Greece, Poland and other European nations.²⁰ This exporting program was unsuccessful, however, due primarily to the low value of these countries’ currency. The Russian Horse Buying Commission, for example, was shown 4,000 horses in 1928 but only purchased 213. According to a Live Stock Branch report, “The average price paid by the Russians — \$27.50 — did not interest many of the ranchers.”²¹

In the meantime, a considerable number of Saskatchewan horses were exported to other Canadian provinces. Many railway carloads containing good agricultural horses were shipped to Eastern Canada in 1925 from areas around Moose Jaw, Saskatoon and Regina.²² By 1930, however, Saskatchewan still had over one million horses.

4. Competition: Clydesdales vs Percherons

“In the hey-day of draught horses, every farmer was expected to declare allegiance to one breed or another... Either he was a ‘Clyde man’ or ‘Percheron man.’ Nobody could be neutral.”

- Grant MacEwan

In the competition between the Clydesdale, the Percheron and other breeds such as the Belgian, Clydes had the biggest advantage: they were the first horse breed to arrive on the Western Canadian scene around 1840. Scottish settlers were especially loyal to the Clydesdale, and they had strong support from the University of Saskatchewan in the person of Dean Rutherford.

Percherons, a breed that originated in France, were introduced to the Canadian prairies in the 1870s. According to Grant MacEwan, “Two prime purposes inspired the Canadian breeders, one

¹⁸“Live Stock Associations’ Annual Reports,” in *Public Service Monthly* (Feb. 1923), 4.

¹⁹“Live Stock Industry in the Year 1923,” in *Public Service Monthly* (Oct. 1924), 6.

²⁰“The Horse Industry of Saskatchewan Discussed,” in *Public Service Monthly*, (Jan. 1925), 14.

²¹“Live Stock Increase Noted in Report of Branch,” in *Public Service Monthly* (Dec. 1928), 11.

²²“Live Stock Branch Annual Report Issued,” in *Public Service Monthly* (Aug. 1925), 7.

to furnish useful draught animals for farms...and, second, to 'beat the Clydes'.'²³ Percheron supporters eventually saw their breed surpass the Clydesdales in numbers of Canadian registrations. The contest was on, however, to see which breed could vanquish the other in team competitions.

4.1 Local Town Fair Competitions

Horse judges at local town fairs and exhibitions looked for the best combination of quality, conformation and soundness in the heavy horse competitions. Quality involved evidence of good breeding, personality, bearing and temperament, with the heaviest emphasis on purity of breeding. Conformation entailed the suitability of the horse to do the work it was to perform.

Clydesdales, for example, required thick, muscular thighs, strong legs set squarely under the body, and clearly defined knees to enable the animal to withstand long days hauling heavy farm implements.²⁴ Soundness meant no signs of disease or disorder, an important consideration given the multiplicity of horse ailments (such as glanders, mange and equine influenza) on the prairies from 1880 to 1920. Most judges assessed these characteristics by viewing the "action" of the horse; as the animal trotted, qualities or problems could easily be seen.

It was imperative that the fairs and exhibitions employed informed and expert judges. Unfortunately, prior to the 1920s there were many controversies over judging -- many judges were accused of incompetence or bias. There was, for example, a widespread feeling in mixed heavy horse competitions that a judge was either a Clydesdale man or a Percheron man. As a result, Jones tells us, "many judges adamantly refused to adjudicate classes designated 'Draught Stallions of Any Age or Breed'.'²⁵ Eventually, the larger exhibitions abandoned mixed classes altogether.

By the mid-twenties Saskatchewan made a concerted effort to produce professional judges by inaugurating judges' conferences. John Rayner of the Extension Department and Dean Rutherford of the College of Agriculture determined that no one would be employed as a livestock judge in the province unless he had received formal training at a judges' conference. In addition, realizing that a seasoned judge required many years of experience, the annual Farm Boys' Camps for 14- and 15-year-olds administered by the university's Extension Department included a livestock-judging component, often with young purebred animals as prizes.²⁶

²³MacEwan, 96.

²⁴Spector, 60-1.

²⁵Jones, 22-3.

²⁶"Youth Clubs — A Chronology", in *Country Guide* (September 1955), 25.

4.2 Pulling Competitions at Exhibitions

Heavy horse pulling competitions became major public attractions at Saskatchewan's larger exhibitions in 1924. It was in the summer of that year that the Saskatchewan-made dynamometer travelled the fair circuit, taking the guess-work out of which horses were the strongest pullers.

The dynamometer was invented by the Iowa State Experimental Station. It was a heavy machine on wheels which accurately measured a team's pulling power. Professor E.A. Hardy from the University of Saskatchewan travelled to Iowa to study it, and returned to Saskatoon to make a duplicate.²⁷

Pulling contests were an exciting new innovation for farm people who knew all about horse breeding, and who often had a stake in the rivalry between the teams of heavy horses. The excitement reached fever pitch during the pulling competition in Regina at the end of the 1924 exhibition season with a "spectacular rivalry between a team of Percherons which seemed to belong to Saskatoon and a team of Belgians adopted enthusiastically by Regina."²⁸ The Saskatoon team -- Percheron geldings, Dan and Tag, owned by R.B. McLeod pulled 3,100 pounds, beating the Regina team, Jumbo and Barney, owned by the Gibbs Brothers of Lumsden. The following year, however, the Regina team won, pulling 3,300 pounds.

5. International Reputation: Saskatchewan Champions

During the ten-year period beginning in 1920, Saskatchewan-owned horses, in the face of keen competition, captured most of the coveted prizes at national and international shows. All of the winners of the Clydesdale stallion championship at the Chicago International Livestock Exposition throughout the 1920s (with the exception of 1922 and 1923), for example, were from Saskatchewan.²⁹

1928 was a particularly successful year for the Saskatchewan Live Stock Exhibit at the Toronto Royal Winter Fair, gaining much valuable publicity for the province. Saskatchewan horses won more high prizes (106) that year than ever before in the history of its annual showing at the Royal. All of the Grand Champion stallions in all of the heavy draft breeds -- Clydesdale, Percheron and Belgian -- were from Saskatchewan. "It very seldom occurs that all of these Grand Champion stallions are owned in one province," a provincial government publication

²⁷MacEwan, 110.

²⁸Ibid, 109.

²⁹MacEwan, 93. "Wee Donald, owned by C.A. Weaver of Lloydminster won in 1920, 1921 and 1924; Green Meadow Footstep for University of Saskatchewan, won in 1925; Forest Favorite, owned by Haggerty and Black, Belle Plaine, won in 1926; Sansovina, owned by John Sinclair, Congress, in 1927; Lochinvar, for John Falkoner, Govan, in 1928; and Sonny Boy for A. Johnstone, Yellowgrass, in 1929."

noted.³⁰

Saskatchewan also made an impressive showing at the Chicago International in 1928. J.E. Falconer of Govan won all kinds of prizes, including Grand Champion for Lochinvar, his Clydesdale stallion, and Grand Champion for Queen of the Roses, his Clydesdale mare. "It very rarely occurs," *The Public Service Monthly* observed, "that both Grand Championships are won by one exhibitor, so the Saskatchewan stockman from Govan was showered with congratulations by his delighted fellow countrymen as well as by many Americans."³¹ Commenting on Saskatchewan's great prize-winning record in 1928, the magazine concluded:

Too much emphasis cannot be laid upon the fact that Saskatchewan has made quite a reputation with its heavy draft horses at the eastern shows during the past eight years, and this reputation has been won through the efforts of Saskatchewan horsemen with certain assistance received from the governments, both Dominion and Provincial, the two governments paying the freight charges from Saskatchewan points to the Royal Winter Fair, Toronto, and the provincial making certain allowances to cover feed and giving honoraria for the winning of championships and first prizes. In spite of this assistance, however, it should be kept in mind that these exhibitors incur heavy outlay in the fitting and showing of their live stock and much credit is due Saskatchewan exhibitors for the way in which the reputation of the province has been maintained from time to time.³²

Canada's only woman exhibitor at the Chicago International in the 1920s was Mrs. W.H. (Isabella) Bryce of Arcola, Saskatchewan. Mrs. Bryce was the widow of "Scotty" Bryce, a leading Clydesdale horse breeder. After her husband passed away in 1915, she took over and personally managed Doune Lodge Farm, winning many prizes, including the Reserve Grand Championship at Chicago in 1924 with her Clydesdale mare, Doune Lodge White Heather. This was the first time in history that the prize was won by a woman.³³

6. Conclusion

Saskatchewan's heavy horses were among the best in the world as a result of concerted efforts to ensure purity of breeding. As the finest animals were shown in fair competitions, the province's farmers learned to recognize quality, conformation and soundness, thereby furthering the goals of the horse breeding industry.

While the original purpose of the Clydesdales, the Percherons and the Belgians was to work the

³⁰"Saskatchewan Live Stock Establishes Great Prize-Winning Record at 1928 Winter Shows," in *Public Service Monthly* (Dec. 1928), 1.

³¹*Ibid*, 8.

³²*Ibid*, 8.

³³*Imperial Colonist* (Vol XXIII, January 1925), 23.

province's grain farms, the high breeding standards set by the producers resulted in these horses setting prize-winning records nationally and internationally.

Unfortunately, the days of the heavy horse as a source of farm power were numbered. The tractor, always a threat during the 1920s, eventually superceded its flesh-and-blood rival in the prairie West. In 1921, Saskatchewan had over a million horses, or ten horses per farm. By 1941, the total number of horses in the province had dropped to just over 800,000 with seven horses per farm. By 1951, the number had dropped to fewer than 400,000.

After the Second World War, heavy farm horses became unemployed and of little market value. Horse breeding almost ceased to exist, and, as MacEwan informs us, hundreds of thousands of Saskatchewan horses were systematically destroyed with little regard to their high quality breeding. "With thousands of unsalable animals eating western grass," he writes,

the Co-operative Horse Marketing Association was formed in Saskatchewan in 1944 for the specific purpose of liquidating part or all of the surplus. Abattoirs were operated at Swift Current and Edmonton and nearly a quarter of a million western horses — many possessing the best of breeding and quality — were slaughtered, processed and sold as pickled or canned meat to Belgium and the United Nations Relief Organization. Nineteen million dollars worth of products went from those plants and the meat helped to relieve post-war hunger in Europe.³⁴

³⁴MacEwan. 89.

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Appendix B: Chronology of Horses in Saskatchewan

- 1903 North-West Territories passed the *Horse Breeders' Act* requiring the registration of all breeding horses and demanding a \$5 fee for all purebred and \$10 for grade and scrub stallions.
- 1907 Province of Saskatchewan amended the *Territorial Act* by making it compulsory for all stockmen to register grade stallions and providing penalties for failure to comply.
- 1912 *Horse Breeders' Act* re-asserted the 1903 registration procedures but stiffened existing provisions. It became unlawful to mate scrub, grade or cross-bred stallions to mares for the purpose of profit in specially designated regions. Moreover, any purebred stallion could be barred from breeding if inspectors discovered disease or physical deformity.
- 1920
- Saskatchewan led the Dominion in the number of horses with over one million.
 - Saskatchewan was first in the number of registered purebred stallions, with 2,519.
 - Clydesdale stallion Wee Donald, owned by C.A. Weaver of Lloydminster won the Grand Championship at the Chicago International.
- 1921 Twenty Saskatchewan horses won thirty-one prizes at the Chicago International, including Grand Championship Clydesdale stallion C.A. Weaver's stallion, Wee Donald.
- 1922
- Total of 1,152,409 horses in Saskatchewan, surpassing Alberta, its nearest competitor, by over a quarter of a million.
 - 1,627 purebred stallions registered.
- 1923
- Saskatchewan won a large share of the prizes at the Chicago International, including one Grand Championship, one Junior Championship, one Reserve Senior Championship, one Special Medal, one Canadian Bred Championship and 35 other prizes.
 - At the Royal Winter Fair at Toronto, Saskatchewan's Belgian horses won both Grand Championships, both Reserve Championships, and all the First Prizes for which they competed. Saskatchewan's Clydesdale mares were even more successful, standing first in every class in which they competed, afterwards winning the Grand and Reserve Championships.

- 1924
- Horse pulling competitions became public attractions at exhibitions. The Saskatchewan-made dynamometer, developed by Professor E.A. Hardy of the University of Saskatchewan, was used to measure the pulling power of the heavy horses.
 - Mrs. W.H. (Isabel) Bryce of Arcola, SK, became the first woman to exhibit at the Chicago International. She won a Reserve Grand Championship with her Clydesdale mare, Doune Lodge White Heather, in 1924. This was the first time in the history of the show that a prize had gone to a woman
 - Lloydminster stallion Wee Donald won the Grand Championship at the Chicago International for the third time.
- 1925
- Saskatchewan had 1,080,300 horses. Growing awareness of a surplus of horses in the province lead to considerable number of Saskatchewan horses exported to other provinces.
 - Better Live Stock Train featured an exhibit of draft horses for the first time.
 - Saskatchewan had 1,274 stallions enrolled for public service.
 - Saskatchewan horses won 216 prizes at both the Toronto Royal and the Chicago International. Stallion named Green Meadow Footstep won the Clydesdale Championship at the Chicago International for University of Saskatchewan.
- 1926
- Saskatchewan had 1,177,500 head of horses.
 - Stallion named Forest Favorite, owned by Haggerty and Black of Belle Plaine won the Clydesdale Championship at the Chicago International.
- 1927
- Livestock Branch reported 1,203,247 horses in the province.
 - Carloads of horses shipped from small towns in Saskatchewan to points in Manitoba and Eastern Canada.
 - A record number of prizes -- 273 -- were won by Saskatchewan horses at Toronto, Chicago, Guelph and Ottawa. Sansovina, a stallion owned by John Sinclair of Congress, won the Clydesdale Championship at the Chicago International.
- 1928
- Saskatchewan maintained its position as the leading horse-breeding province in Canada, with 1,311 stallions enroled.
 - John Falconer of Govan won both Grand Championships at the Chicago International for his Clydesdale stallion, Lochinvar, and his Clydesdale mare, Queen of the Roses — a highly rare occurrence.
 - Saskatchewan won 106 prizes at the Toronto Royal Winter Fair, more high prizes than it had ever won before.

- 1929 - Sonny Boy won the Clydesdale Stallion Championship at the Chicago International for A. Johnstone of Yellowgrass.
- Percheron mare, Blanche Kesako, owned by Charlie Rear of the Meyronne district was Reserve Senior Champion at the Toronto Royal.
- 1930 - Saskatchewan had 1,023,900 horses.
- Charlie Rear's Percheron mare, Blanche Kesako, won Grand Champion at Toronto Royal.
- 1931 - Saskatchewan's horse population dropped below one million for the first time in over a decade, with 997,400 horses.
- Toronto Royal awarded title of Grand Champion to Percheron mare, Blanche Kesako, owned by Charlie Rear of the Meyronne district.
- 1935 Outbreaks of Western Equine Encephalomyelitis — "Sleeping Sickness" in horses — affected over 50,000 horses in Saskatchewan by 1938. At least 15,000 died of the infection or had to be destroyed. Some human cases reported in 1937 and 1938.
- 1938 Saskatchewan had 790,800 horses.
- 1943 Saskatchewan had 824,400 horses.
- 1944 Co-operative Horse Marketing Association was formed in Saskatchewan for the specific purpose of liquidating nearly a quarter of a million surplus horses. Abattoirs were operated at Swift Current and Edmonton. The horses were slaughtered, processed and sold as pickled or canned meat to Belgium and the United Nations Relief Organization to relieve post-war hunger in Europe.
- 1951 Number of Saskatchewan horses had decreased to 303,900, an overall reduction of over 800,000 from 1941. A total of 8,401,879 acres were released as a result of the decline in horse numbers over the past twenty-five years. Horses still on farms were generally not worked as hard as in the past and their feed requirements are correspondingly lower.
- 1957 Only 114 stallions enrolled for public service in the province.