

THE PENNSYLVANIA RAILROAD SYSTEM



INFORMATION



FOR EMPLOYEES AND THE PUBLIC

Broad Street Station
PHILADELPHIA, PA.

January 24, 1914

Pennsylvania Station
PITTSBURGH, PA.

II—3

How this Railroad Helps the Farmer

By the stimulation of example, as well as by helpful suggestions, the Railroad Company has undertaken to show how to

**CHEAPEN THE COST OF PRODUCTION,
RAISE THE STANDARD OF THE PRODUCT,
INCREASE THE YIELD PER ACRE.**

Speaking before one of the sessions of the Farmers' Week at the New Jersey Experiment Station, New Brunswick, Mr. George D. Ogden, General Freight Agent of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company, produced the following figures designed to show the average freight charge which is paid on the portions of food sufficient for one meal for an average family of five persons.

He estimated the freight charges on the following articles of food which are common to the average table:

Commodity	Cost	Freight
Apples (5)	7.50c	½c
Beef (2 lbs.)	35.00c	1 c
Berries, fresh (2 qts.)	10.00c	1½c
Cabbage (1 head, 5 lbs.)	5.00c	¼c
Chicken (5 lbs.)	90.00c	1¼c
Milk (1 qt.)	9.00c	½c

Commodity	Cost	Freight
Onions (10)	2.70c	¾c
Oysters (1 qt.)	22.00c	½c
Peaches, fresh (2 qts.)	10.00c	1 c
Potatoes (6)	3.75c	½c
Tomatoes, canned (1 can)	5.80c	½c
Tomatoes, fresh (2 qts.)	4.00c	½c
Turnips (6)	3.00c	¾c

* * * *

Mr. Ogden also stated that one cent would pay the freight respectively upon enough apples for eight meals for a family of five, enough beef for one meal, enough cabbage for four meals, milk for two meals, onions for one and one-third meals, oysters for three, potatoes for two meals, canned tomatoes for three meals, fresh tomatoes for two meals and turnips for one and one-half meals.

* * * *

CO-OPERATING WITH FARMERS

Mr. Ogden pointed out the various plans the Pennsylvania Railroad has adopted to co-operate with farmers, and made a number of suggestions, which he said would minimize the importance of obstacles, as follows:

"A shipper calls upon the agent at shipping point and orders a car to load for a market many miles distant.

"The vehicle of transportation is furnished; and here it might be well to remark that the cost of the car as compared with the cost of a farm wagon is in the ratio of SEVEN to ONE, or, to put it another way, seven wagons could be furnished for what it costs to supply a single freight car. The car aforementioned is loaded, shipping instructions furnished, and within a reasonable time the arranged service of the railroad company provides an engine and crew to move the car from the loading point to the first division or junction point, there to connect with another train, and so on by operating divisions or connecting railroads, until its final destination is reached.

"Several hundred employes are engaged in the work of so manipulating the trains, running on the freight tracks over a portion of the road, and again on the passenger tracks and back again to the freight tracks, in order to meet the requirements of an expedited service with the primary object in view of reaching destination at a fixed hour.

"Assuming the car reaches destination with reasonable promptness, in the case of perishable, the agent immediately calls the consignee on 'phone and notifies him of arrival, which is confirmed in writing, and if the contents of the car is of satisfactory grade, and the market in a receptive mood, the lading will be unloaded without delay. This seems reasonably easy of accomplishment, and it would be, if upon arrival at destination the consignee would promptly accept the shipment.

* * * *

PERISHABLE FREIGHT DIFFICULTIES

"It pays to grade at shipping point. This would seem to rob the carrier of tonnage, but, frankly, it would be very much better for all concerned if the rule were strictly observed, and, indeed, insisted upon at the shipping point. Perishable is rushed over the road at high rate of speed, and upon arrival at market found to have been loaded in

an unsatisfactory condition, off grade, and carelessly packed, resulting in refusal by the consignee, compelling the delivering line to sell the property account of whom it may concern.

"It is most surprising that so little sensitiveness is shown to a factor which plays such an important part in appealing to buyers and affecting prices. I speak of careful selection in picking, the choice of containers, intelligent packing and proper stowing in cars. These four elements, if unobserved, counteract the naturally expected addition to prices and profits to be derived from the patient toil that is spent upon increasing the yield, improving the nature of the commodity, and the selection of markets, with many other details that go into the guardianship of the grower's interest. You must be surprised to learn the amount of freight charges alone that is involved in fruits and vegetables rejected by consignees. With the Southern railroads and the carriers touching the Eastern seaports, this amount approximates \$75,000.

* * * *

CAUSE OF CONGESTION AT TERMINALS

"In large cities foodstuffs are generally received and delivered at a designated terminal. Deterioration and decay of perishable, rendering it unmarketable, very largely contributes to congestion, which has the effect at certain seasons of so crowding the railroad facilities that shipments which might be in prime condition and arrive when the yards are blocked with other perishable, are delayed in reaching the consignee, and in this respect the carrier is helpless in protecting its patrons against loss.

"Permit me here to refer to a burden upon railroads which the shipper cannot remedy in any marked degree, and we do not propose to ask or suggest the impossible. The height of the season for certain perishable commodities, such as strawberries, watermelons, cantaloupes, and potatoes in the larger producing territories, is for a

comparatively brief period, thus compelling the railroads to undertake to provide maximum facilities and equipment to take care of the rush.

"No other branch of commercial activity would consider it prudent so to do. Of course, an overcrowded market is objectionable, with its consequent low values, but, as aforesaid, it is uncontrollable, at least under the present system of distribution. Does this not emphasize the importance of grading and proper packing at shipping points?"

* * * *

HELPING THE FARMER

"The U. S. office of markets was established last May. The promulgation of market grades and standards, it is understood, will be one of the first matters taken up by that office.

"It is also proposed to look after transportation matters, particularly to see that suitable equipment is furnished, especially in the matter of refrigerator equipment.

"On November 30, 1913, a grand total of 4780 refrigerator cars were available and owned by the Pennsylvania Railroad. It is now contemplated to add to this equipment not less than 1000 refrigerator cars next year, unless some unforeseen situation should arise that would render impracticable providing the necessary money to pay for them.

EDUCATIONAL TRAINS AND EXHIBIT CARS

"The first educational train was run in 1908, with an itinerary covering three days and a total of 22 stops.

"Lectures were delivered at each point of about forty-five minutes' duration, by representatives of the Agricultural Colleges or Experimental Stations.

"These Educational Trains have been run over almost every line in our System, comprising 5311 miles east of Pittsburgh, and covering practically every aspect of the farm problem. The States traversed by these traveling Colleges were New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia and Pennsylvania.

* * * *

EXPERIMENTAL FARM

"In 1905 the Long Island Railroad Company, which, while operated independently, is a Pennsylvania Railroad line, purchased seventeen acres of land at Wading River, on Long Island, and an Experimental Farm was started.

"This farm was so successful that in 1906 a second one was purchased at Medford, on Long Island, consisting of seventy acres.

"In connection with this Experimental Farm work on the Long Island Railroad, a monthly paper is published by those in charge of the farm, entitled the 'LONG ISLAND AGRONOMIST.'

"It has been developed that quite a large number of settlers have been attracted to the line of the Long Island Railroad through the demonstration on the part of this Company as to the possibilities of truck raising on small plots of a few acres each.

* * * *

"Another effort in this direction was the purchase of an Experimental or Demonstration Farm at Bacon, Del., on a portion of our road devoted almost entirely to agricultural pursuit.

"This is a fifty-acre tract and was intended to demonstrate what can be produced under what might be termed unfavorable farming conditions, and for the purpose a piece of land known to be rather unattractive from a farming viewpoint, having lain idle for a

Secretary Houston, of the Department of Agriculture, in a recent address at Manchester, N. H., said that the best figures he could procure indicated that less than 40% of the cultivated land in the United States is reasonably well cultivated and less than 12% is yielding maximum returns.

number of years without fertilization or cultivation, yet from this farm we have been able to produce almost every known variety of fruit and vegetable product, and, notwithstanding the farm was practically undeveloped in May, 1910, in the New York Land Show of 1912 an exhibit of agricultural products grown along lines of the Pennsylvania Railroad, a large number of which were from our own farm, took the first prize for the best Railroad exhibit in the United States and Canada.

* * * *

"The exhibit in the New York Land Show referred to, with many additions of worthy specimens received since that time, is now en route over the lines of the Pennsylvania Railroad East of Pittsburgh, Erie and Buffalo, in what is known as our Agricultural Exhibit Car. This car contains the most magnificent collection of fruits, grains and vegetables yet displayed by any Railroad.

"Accompanying the agricultural car is another car known as the Dairy Exhibit, devoted to the improvement in dairy methods, with resultant increase in the production of milk both as to quantity and quality.

"The aim of these cars, which are systematically covering the entire Pennsylvania System by making two-day stops, is to encourage the farming community to the development of the greatest possible activity in the production of food products.

"This effort of the Pennsylvania Railroad in agricultural development, extending and broadening its point of view from the farmers' train with its limited effort both as to the time at each stop, as well as the shorter period on the road, up to the exhibit cars which traverse the line thoroughly and give the farmer ample time for discussion and thought, is the latest word in co-operative effort on the part of the railroad and the farming community."

Low Freight Rates for Farm Products

A Commission from thirty-six States was sent abroad last summer, under the auspices of the Government, to study conditions of agricultural finance, production and distribution of farm products. Mr. Frederick H. Allen says they found in Europe a far better business organization of agriculture, the farmers, unlike those in this country, having learned to play team work.

"In this country," added Mr. Allen, "the railroad cost of transporting agricultural products is comparatively small."