

Utah State University

DigitalCommons@USU

---

UAES Circulars

Agricultural Experiment Station

---

2-1916

## Circular No. 18 - Better Horses for Utah

W. E. Carroll

Follow this and additional works at: [https://digitalcommons.usu.edu/uaes\\_circulars](https://digitalcommons.usu.edu/uaes_circulars)



Part of the [Agricultural Science Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

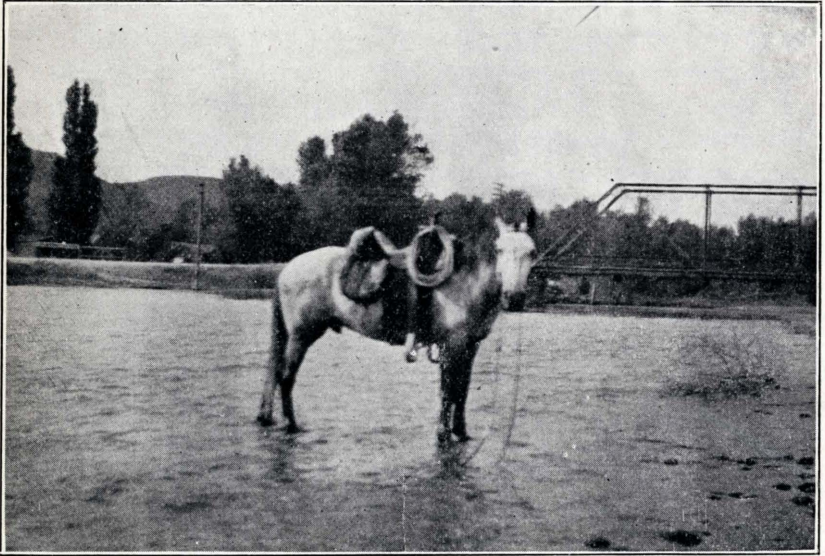
Carroll, W. E., "Circular No. 18 - Better Horses for Utah" (1916). *UAES Circulars*. Paper 14.  
[https://digitalcommons.usu.edu/uaes\\_circulars/14](https://digitalcommons.usu.edu/uaes_circulars/14)

This Full Issue is brought to you for free and open access by the Agricultural Experiment Station at DigitalCommons@USU. It has been accepted for inclusion in UAES Circulars by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@USU. For more information, please contact [digitalcommons@usu.edu](mailto:digitalcommons@usu.edu).



Utah Agricultural College  
EXPERIMENT STATION

Circular No. 18



## Better Horses for Utah

PREPARED FOR THE  
STATE BOARD OF HORSE COMMISSIONERS  
BY

W. E. CARROLL, Secretary.

---

Logan, Utah, February, 1916

---

Lehi Sun Print  
Lehi, Utah.

**STATE BOARD OF HORSE COMMISSIONERS.**

---

DR. E. D. BALL

Director of Utah Experiment Station

DR. H. J. FREDERICK

Veterinarian Utah Experiment Station

DR. W. E. CARROLL, SECRETARY

Animal Husbandman Utah Experiment Station

---

**LIST OF DEPUTY INSPECTORS, WHO HAVE  
INSPECTED STALLIONS FOR THE BOARD.**

Dr. E. P. Coburn, Brigham.

Dr. A. J. Webb, Ogden.

Dr. L. K. Knighton, Murray.

Dr. R. K. Knighton, American Fork.

Dr. J. M. Allen, Spanish Fork.

Dr. J. G. Irons, Nephi.

Dr. R. W. Hoggan, Richfield.

## **BETTER HORSES FOR UTAH.**

BY W. E. CARROLL.

The two chief factors which determine the profits realized from the horse breeding business are the cost of production and the quality of the product put on the market. As land values increase, taxes automatically become higher, and this together with the increasing cost of labor, makes the feed and care given the horse more expensive. These factors are so completely independent of the horse breeder that he has little control over the cost of production. This statement is not intended to convey the idea that no account should be taken of costs, or that costs do not vary. Quite the contrary. In fact, there may be sufficient difference in systems of feeding and management to mean loss to one man and profit to another. The fact remains, however that with even the greatest effort the producer cannot lower the cost below a certain point, and that this minimum has been increasing during the past several years.

Since the cost of production cannot be controlled, there remains only one of two things for the horse breeder to do: go out of the business because his profits have failed, or raise the quality of his product to such a point that its selling price will justify his efforts.

The quickest and most economical way of accomplishing this latter end is by using the best sire obtainable. Every colt should be given the privilege to be well born, but this cannot be done as long as the haphazard methods practiced in the State in the past continue. Don't place a lifelong handicap on a colt before he is born by breeding his mother to an inferior horse.

Another warning to be read from the signs of the times is that only the best mares should be permitted to raise foals. This is just as important as the use of a good stallion, for sire and dam each have an equal influence on the offspring.

### **Number and Price of Horses.**

Prices of inferior horses are never very far above the cost of production, and frequently they are considerably below. The curves in Figure 1 show the farm price of horses and the number of horses on the farms of the United States from 1867 to January

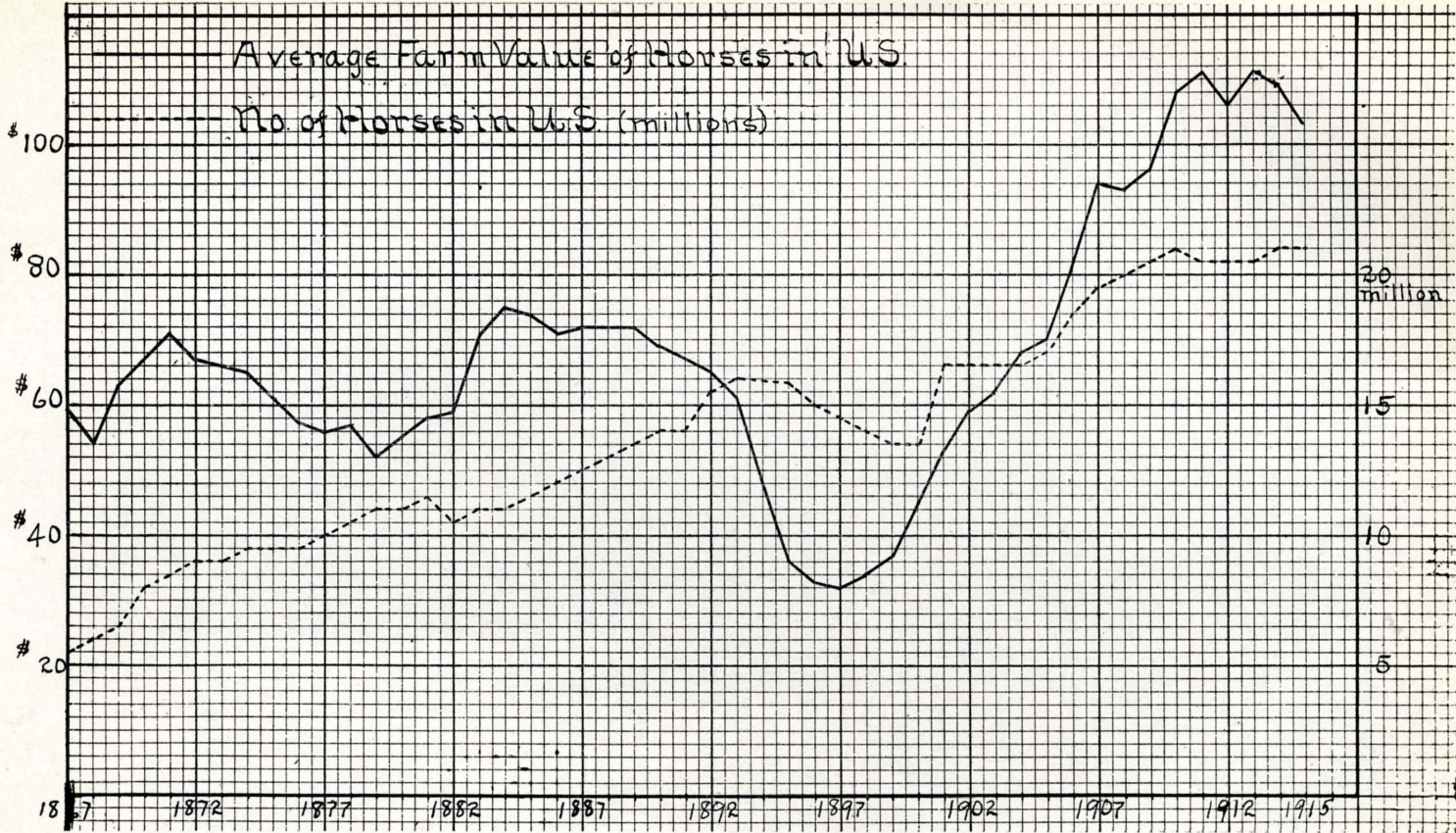


Fig. 1—Showing the number and farm value of horses in the U. S. from 1867 to 1915.

1, 1915. This gives the "ups and downs" of the horse business more eloquently than words. The dotted line gives the number of horses and the continuous line, the average farm price.

The curves show in general an increase in both price and number of horses during this period. It is interesting to note that the number of horses is less subject to variation than is the price.

A comparison of these two curves, however, shows that the number of horses is not entirely independent of the market price. For example, 1879 marks a low point in the price of horses, which resulted in a falling off of one million in numbers in 1882. Again, in 1897 horses were worth a little less than \$32 per head. This decline began about 1890. The decrease in numbers began about 1893 and continued to a low point in 1899.

It is natural that the falling off in numbers should be a year or two later than low prices, because men cannot go out of the horse business all at once, much as they might desire to do so.

It would appear that another decline in price was beginning this year. In fact, those most familiar with the horse market, say that nothing but the artificial demand created by the war in Europe prevented a sharp falling off in horse values.

### **Profit and Loss in the Horse Business.**

The history of the horse business has been that at each low point in prices most everyone breeding horses become anxious to get out of the business. They say there is no money in it (which is true) and that they will have nothing more to do with it—which is equally untrue. This dissatisfaction results in as many as can selling or ceasing to breed their mares. In a few years the supply gets down to normal again. the demand brings up the market, and many men buy in at the advanced prices.

Probably the safest rule to follow when dealing with a market so fluctuating is to produce a rather steady supply of a product of the very highest grade. Those who jump in and out of the business are usually in, or getting out, when prices are low, and out, or getting in, when they are high. Men who study carefully and intelligently the type of horses demanded by the market and then work seriously to produce this, seldom go wrong or lose money.

### The Type of Horses Most in Demand.

At regular horse markets, weight is one of the chief requirements. Of course, soundness in horses is always in demand, yet among sound horses the market will pay a large premium for weight. Other things being equal, weight is often considered worth 25 cents per pound. The following quotations from a recent Chicago paper will illustrate the point:

	Poor to good.	Choice. to extra.
Drafters, 5 to 8 years 1550 to 1750 lbs.....	\$185—200	\$240—285
Loggers .....	165—185	200—225
Drivers .....	100—135	180—200
Saddlers .....	75—150	175—300
Western, branded .....	25— 50	65—100
Farm chunks .....	60—140	165—200
Express (full aged, sound) 1350 to 1450 lbs.....	75—175	200—210
Wagon (good, sound) 1250 to 1350 lbs.....	75—150	165—200

Loggers are usually the somewhat coarser, rougher drafters. Farm chunks are short, thick, low set horses weighing most anywhere from 1250 to 1550. Expressers stand up well and show more possibility of faster driving than chunks. Wagon horses, in conformation, stand about midway between these two classes and weigh around 1250 to 1350 pounds.

From these explanations it will be seen that wagon horses and farm chunks are much the same type as drafters, differing from them only in weight. The top price for wagon horses and chunks was \$200, while top drafters, 200 pounds or more larger, brought \$285,—a difference well worth considering. A difference, too, which may under certain conditions be made by the particular stallion to which the mare is bred.

Choice to extra drivers at the top brought \$200, while the same grade of saddlers sold for \$300. These are special horses and have probably been trained to the harness or saddle for fancy purposes. They are classes in which the average farmer cannot compete.

Another lesson to be learned from these quotations is the value of quality. Comparing top prices in each class, it is seen

that choice to extra drafters sold for \$85 per head more than the poor to good ones did. For loggers this difference was \$40; drivers, \$65; saddlers, \$150 (or just double); farm chunks, \$60; and so on.

The drivers and saddlers of the poorer grade are more nearly what the average farmer would raise, and in this grade they are worth less money than drafters. Another point to be considered in connection with marketing heavy against light horses is that there is usually an almost unlimited demand for good, drafty horses, while the light classes sell in comparatively small numbers. The outlet, therefore, is always surer for the heavier horses. There is an occasional local farm demand for so-called "all around horse" which usually contains some blood of the lighter breeds. In fact, good ones of this type, standing up well and weighing in the neighborhood of 1250 pounds usually sell well locally. For general market purposes, however, the average farm mare had much better to bred to good draft stallions.

### Further Need of Improvement.

Table 1 shows the number of purebred and grade licenses in force in the State at the date of previous reports and for the season of 1915. From this it will be seen that there has been a steady increase in the proportion of purebred stallions in service in the State. In 1909 only 73.7 per cent of the total were purebred, while in 1915 this proportion had increased to 79.6 per cent.

This percentage increase of purebred stallions shown in table 1 is very gratifying. It is hoped that it points to a time not too far distant when none but purebred stallions will be standing for service in the State.

Compared with other States, however, our total number of purebred stallions is much too low. Table 2 gives for the States named the total and purebred licenses in force in 1914 and the proportion of the total that the purebred licenses make up. From this it will be seen that in Utah a larger **proportion** of licensed stallions are purebred than in any other state listed. The last column of the table, however, tells a very different story. These figures show the number of horses and mules on the farms



of the states for each purebred stallion and jack licensed. For example, Iowa has one purebred for each 251 horses and mules on the farms. As will be seen, Utah has one for each 643. It was not possible to determine in all cases whether the licensing was compulsory, so the figures cannot be taken as absolute. From a comparative standpoint, it is seen that Iowa has 2.6 times as many purebreds as Utah, and we hear no reports that Iowa is overstocked.

### **The Stallion License Law as a Factor in the Improvement of Horses.**

A factor which is bound to be a potent one in the improvement of the quality of our horses in the enactment by the State Legislature in 1906-07 of a license law for stallions and jacks standing for public service in the State. The first law of the kind in the United States was put in operation by men who had the interests of the horse breeding business of Wisconsin at heart. The Wisconsin law became effective January 1, 1906. During the next year similar bills were introduced into the Legislatures of three other states. Utah was one of the three to see the great value of such a law. Iowa and Minnesota were the other two. The Iowa law became effective March 30, 1907, the Minnesota law April 25, 1907, and the Utah law, May 13, 1907. All of these laws were passed during the same session of the respective legislatures, and were all based upon the provisions of the Wisconsin act.

Our Legislature of 1911 made some modifications in the first act and gave us the Utah law as it now stands. During the operation of the act of 1907 a total of 323 licenses were issued. Since the law in its present form has been in force a total of 608 licenses have been issued. Four hundred sixty-one of these are for purebred stallions, 147 for grades, and 4 for non-standards. The season of 1916 there were in force 230 purebred licenses, 59 grade licenses, and 5 non-standard licenses, making a total of 289 licensed stallions in the State during that season.

### **Advantage to Mare Owners.**

A stallion (or jack) license is a guarantee to the mare owner that (at least at the time the examination was made) the stallion (or jack) has no transmissible unsoundnesses. The stallion or

jack owner is required by law to "post and keep affixed, during the entire breeding season, copies of the license certificate of said stallion or jack in a conspicuous place where said stallion or jack stands for public service."

All mare owners before breeding to a horse should make sure that the stallion is properly licensed for that breeding season. By doing this he has the word of a competent veterinarian, that from the sire, the colt will inherit no weaknesses which will impair its usefulness.

Why some farmers continue to breed to scrub stallions is a mystery. It must be that such men want scrub colts, that they prefer them to higher class animals. True, there is usually some difference in the service fee. This is seldom more than a few dollars, however, while the difference in the value of the colts from the two classes of horses is seldom less than \$25 the day they are dropped and often increases to \$75 or more as the colts grow out.

### **Advantage to Stallion Owners.**

The stallion law puts the work of running a horse on a very much more business-like basis, as it is a guarantee against loss of out standing bills to owners of purebred animals.

It eliminates unsound and unworthy individuals from competition with good horses. That in itself, it is plain to see, will in a short time improve the general type of horses throughout the State. This should be sufficient incentive to stallion owners, because a stallion has so much better opportunity to prove his worth when the grade of mares he is mated with more nearly approaches his own class.

### **Amendments.**

Experience with the law has shown the desirability of certain amendments. These changes would make the law more just to all concerned and easier to carry out, both for the stallion owners and for the officials administering the law.

Those interested should lend their support at the next session of our Legislature and see that the proposed amendments are incorporated in the law.

TABLE 1—PUREBRED AND GRADE LICENSES IN FORCE.

Date of Report.	No. of Licenses:		Percent of purebred licenses.
	Purebred	Grade	
1909	204	76	73.7
1913	347	92	79.0
1915	230	59	79.6

TABLE 2.—LICENSED STALLIONS AND JACKS IN 1914.

State.	No. of Licenses		Percent Purebred	Horses on farms for each purebred.
	Total.	Purebred.		
Utah*	289	230	80	643
Iowa	9875	6600	67	251
Ill.	9182	5679	62	284
Neb.**	5065	2853	56	364
Wis.	3197	1774	55	399
So. Da.	2446	1357	55	570
Ind.	5901	3157	53	298
N. Da.	2779	1445	52	549
Ore.	1276	636	50	494
Calif.	1663	815	49	708
Minn.	3860	1878	49	468
Penn.	2356	1029	44	623

\*For season of 1915.

\*\*Exclusive of jacks.