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REPORT ON LIVE-STOCK IN  
MEXICO**

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DIPLOMATIC AND CONSULAR REPORTS.

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# MEXICO.

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REPORT ON

## LIVE-STOCK IN MEXICO.

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*Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of His Majesty,  
JUNE, 1904.*

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*Report on Live-Stock in Mexico by Mr. Bjorklund, Clerk to His Majesty's Legation.*

(Mexico, April 26, 1904; received at Foreign Office, May 20, 1904.)

Mexico has always been looked upon as a silver producing country, and its silver mines in former years were one of the chief sources of revenue of the Kingdom of Old Spain; but the development of the country has shown that many other metals are to be found within the limits of the country; and as mining in its various branches has brought the country before the public, these industries have progressed very considerably owing to the introduction of foreign capital. Modern machinery has taken the place of the old methods of treating ores, which were in use even as late as the middle of the last century.

This remarkable increase in mining has caused the Government to take special notice of the industry, and new mining laws and regulations have been issued which facilitate the acquisition of mining properties, while at the same time the revenue of the Government also profits by the extension of the area of territory from which the underground wealth of the country is extracted and by the taxes imposed upon the mining industry.

While the Government has taken so many steps to increase this industry and is thus receiving a good return from its mineral wealth, the same cannot be said in regard to the development of agriculture and the various industries which are very closely allied to it, such as the raising of cattle, &c.

The "Statesman's Year Book" publishes the statement that "large numbers of cattle are raised in Mexico for the United States. In 1883 in Northern Mexico alone, on an area of 300,000 miles, there were 1,500,000 cattle, 2,500 goats, 1,000,000 horses and 1,000,000 sheep. In the whole of Mexico in 1883 there were 20,574 cattle ranches valued at 103,000,000."

This statement is sufficient to show that the breeding of stock is carried on in Mexico, or at any rate in the Northern States of the Republic; but, as already mentioned, agriculture has received very

little attention, until quite lately, either from the Government or from foreigners as a field for investment, and consequently no later statistics could be obtained.

Forestry laws exist but are not as yet sufficiently enforced, and in many parts of the country herds of cattle, which are practically wild, cause a considerable amount of damage to the younger growth in the forests where they are sent to graze during the greater part of the year, as there is not enough fodder on what are supposed to be grazing lands belonging to the various haciendas or large farms in those districts, due to the want of proper means of irrigation.

The late Mr. Matias Romero, in his work "Geographical and Statistical Notes on Mexico," published in New York in 1898, dedicates about two pages to this subject and goes into a great deal of detail, but he there mentions the fact that "cattle breeders in Mexico, on the whole, have not advanced much in developing good breeds of cattle. They do not appreciate their value. . . ." And further he states, "a great need of Mexico is a reliable supply of good healthy water through artificial means, well distributed over the stock ranges to prevent the great loss by death through lack of water as well as the heavy shrinkage of meat and tallow by so much unnecessary travelling of stock to water."

These two extracts serve to show what the condition of the industry was in this country at that time, and the want of any statistics has been due to the same reason that it was not considered of any great importance.

Conditions have, however, now begun to assume a different character, and the Department of Fomento is taking steps to encourage cattle breeding, while the Statistical Bureau of that department is endeavouring to procure reliable statistics in regard to it, and though its efforts may at present not be quite as successful as could be desired, at any rate the figures as set down in the return just published, corresponding to the fiscal year ending June 30, 1902, serve as a basis for the following report. The figures are in many cases incomplete, but nevertheless they serve the purpose of giving an idea of the extent of the industry throughout the country.

With reference to the extracts from Mr. Romero's work, it can safely be said that the conditions are also slightly altered, and the company which has been formed for the purpose of holding live-stock shows periodically in Mexico City will, with the valuable assistance of the Department of Fomento, do a very great deal towards improving and increasing the industry by awakening competition in the different branches. The last show was opened to the public on October 25 last for about 10 days. The exhibitors were few, but the number of animals was greater than in any former show; and not only cattle were exhibited, as on former occasions, but it also included horses (imported thoroughbreds and their offspring born in the country), cattle, sheep, dogs, swine, rabbits and hares, cats and poultry.



Although these exhibits have improved very much since they were first started, the exhibitors have, up to the present, been the same every year, and they being the only ones, the prizes have been divided among them, a circumstance which has to a certain extent created a feeling of discontent among the general public, who, without taking into consideration that no other competitors are in the field, think that a great deal of favouritism is shown by the judges at the time of awarding the prizes. This will undoubtedly wear away as soon as the object of the shows is more generally recognised and a greater number of hacendados or large farm owners from other States send their animals to compete with those of the Federal district and neighbouring haciendas or estates in the State of Mexico, who have so far been the only exhibitors. This year, however, there were animals sent from an hacienda in the State of Jalisco, belonging to some young Mexicans who have taken a great deal of interest not only in the breeding of animals but also in agriculture generally, and who are always ready to try experiments with new machinery or new methods of cultivation of crops, &c.

Notwithstanding the trouble taken by the Director of the Statistical Department, the returns as given are still very incomplete, owing in a great measure to the unwillingness of many of the owners of cattle ranches or estates to furnish the information required, as they are in many cases afraid of an increase of existing taxes, or of new ones being imposed. It is to be hoped that this feeling of distrust will soon be overcome, and then statistics in this branch will become more reliable.

According to the official statistics from which the figures in this report are taken, the following statement for the whole of the Republic of Mexico on June 30, 1902, is obtained, and only a few words will be added in explanation of each of the different divisions:—

	Head.	Value.
		Dollars.*
Horned cattle .. ..	5,142,475	81,487,619
Goats .. ..	4,206,011	7,250,430
Sheep .. ..	3,424,430	6,037,306
Horses .. ..	859,247	10,822,203
Swine .. ..	616,139	2,068,090
Mules .. ..	334,435	10,576,958
Donkeys .. ..	287,991	2,360,552
Total .. ..	..	120,523,158

\* 1 dol. = 2s. approximately.

It must, however, be remembered that both the quantities and values as given above are only approximate and must not, for the reasons already expressed, be considered as being absolutely correct.

The raising of cattle is very general throughout the whole **Cattle** of the Republic of Mexico, but there are certain States in which

it is much more extensively carried on, namely, Jalisco, Michoacan, Chihuahua, Vera Cruz, Guanajuato, Sonora and Durango. The number of head reported to exist in these seven States amounts to 2,518,028, while the remaining 23 States and Territories can only account for 2,624,447, or a little more than half of the whole total.

State of  
Jalisco.

The State of Jalisco, in which the greatest number of cattle are reported, covers an area of 33,486 square miles, is situated on the Pacific Coast and is considered to be one of the most fertile States of the Republic. The State lies on the western or Pacific side of the great Cordillera of the Sierra Madre, which runs through the whole of the country, but owing to the configuration of the slopes and ridges, immense plains are found throughout the State, which are rendered more fertile by the rivers rising in these mountains and emptying themselves either into the larger rivers or into the Pacific Ocean. Besides the streams and rivers there are numerous springs (many of them of a thermal character) and also various lakes which also assist towards the fertility of the State.

Jalisco is divided into 12 sections or cantons; those in which the greatest number of cattle are said to exist are Ciudad Guzman (93,909), Guadalajara (88,544), La Barca (86,740), Autlan (68,111), Sayula (52,158), Mascota (49,074) and Lagos (49,031).

In the district of Ciudad Guzman, the only municipality of any great importance is Pihuamo, situated in the south of the State, and bordering upon the State of Michoacan, at an elevation of 1,800 feet, with a hot temperature. The value of the 29,790 head said to be in Pihuamo is 281,160 dol.; while the value of the cattle in the other 61 municipalities varies very considerably, and in none of them does the quantity exceed 10,000 head. The total number in the whole of the district is 93,909 head, with an estimated value of 1,448,860 dol.

In the canton or district of Guadalajara there are said to be 88,544 head, valued at 1,265,763 dol., of which 28,434 head, valued at 284,340 dol., are found in the municipality of Zapotlanejo, and 25,200 head, valued at 378,000 dol., in that of Tala. Both of these districts have a temperate climate and are at an elevation respectively of 5,234 and 4,412 feet, nearing the north-eastern portion of the State, where it borders with that of Zacatecas and also Guanajuato, in which are found some of the highest ridges of the Sierra Madre.

There are said to be 86,740 head, valued at 1,701,842 dol., in the canton of La Barca, which is divided into 10 different municipalities, the principal being La Barca, with 21,605 head of cattle, valued at 543,625 dol.; Tepatitlan, 17,197 head, valued at 213,122 dol.; and Ocotlan, 14,000 head, valued at 280,000 dol. The greater part of the canton is traversed by the Rio Grande de Santiago, known in parts as the La Barca and Ocolan River. The whole of this district, with the single exception of the municipality of Jesus Maria (which is at an altitude of 6,921 feet and cold), is of a temperate climate, the altitude of La Barca being only 5,793 feet. The municipalities of La Barca and Ocotlan are situated along the northern shore of Lake

Chapala, and the whole of the country consists of undulating slopes with sufficient water to make it fertile, while the swamps and marshes along the shores of the lake and rivers afford splendid pasture lands.

The canton of Autlan embraces the greater part of the sea coast belonging to this State, and the temperature is hot along the coast, but is temperate in the remainder of the district. It comprises seven municipalities and is reported as containing 68,111 head of cattle, valued at 947,946 dol.; the principal municipality being Autlan, situated at an altitude of 3,230 feet, with 25,542 head, valued at 266,460 dol.

The other three cantons or districts, Sayula, Mascota and Lagos, are all so divided into small municipalities that with the single exception of Lagos, in the canton of the same name, which is said to possess 21,150 head, valued at 415,000 dol., the number of cattle in each is too insignificant to merit any special detail.

The value returned varies from 5 to 25 dol. per head throughout this State.

The next State of importance is Michoacan, which lies to the south of Jalisco, and enjoys many of the same topographical and climatic characteristics, as it lies on the same side of the Cordillera. It covers an area of 22,617 square miles, but it is broken more and the forest vegetation is more abundant. There are also several lakes in this State, while streams are more general in the mountains than in the State of Jalisco, which in nearly all cases flow into the large river of Las Balsas, on the boundary of the State with those of Mexico and Guerrero.

This State is divided into 15 districts, the most important being Apatzingan (101,718), Ario (81,539), Huetamo (49,180), Coalcoman (45,880) and Zamora (38,221).

The district of Apatzingan is divided into four municipalities, namely, Apatzingan, Paracuaro, Aguililla and Tepalcatepec, of which the first two are those in which the greater number of cattle are found. Apatzingan has 24,587 head, valued at 245,870 dol., and Paracuaro, 54,700 head, valued at 547,000 dol. The value set down in this district is almost uniform at 10 dol. per head. The temperature is hot throughout the district, which lies at an altitude of about 3,000 feet, and it is watered by the Tancitaro River, which, with other smaller branches, flows into the Las Balsas River.

The district of Ario de Rosales is also divided into four municipalities, Huacana being the only one of any importance, the quantity reported being 60,940 head, valued at 609,400 dol., and the price per head varying according to the district. The temperature in this district varies very considerably, at Huacana, which is low, it is hot, while at Ario, which is 8,724 feet above sea level, it is cold.

There are said to be 49,180 head of cattle, valued at 536,330 dol., in the district of Huetamo, which is sub-divided into three municipalities, Zirandaro being the principal with 28,320 head, valued at 339,840 dol. The value of the cattle in this district varies from