

C
Ag 83a

LIBRARY OF THE
STATE AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE
FORT COLLINS, COLO.

18 11 08

AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS

OF THE

STATE OF COLORADO

1892

COMPILED BY
SECRETARY OF THE STATE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE
IN ACCORDANCE WITH AN ACT
OF THE
FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY.



DENVER, COLORADO:
THE SMITH-BROOKS PRINTING CO., STATE PRINTERS.
1894.

AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS

OF THE

STATE OF COLORADO

1892

COMPILED BY
SECRETARY OF THE STATE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE
IN ACCORDANCE WITH AN ACT
OF THE
FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY.



DENVER, COLORADO:
THE SMITH-BROOKS PRINTING CO., STATE PRINTERS.
1894.

c
In 82-ay
S

LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL.

HON. NELSON O. McCLEES,
Secretary of State:

Sir—I transmit herewith a compilation of the statistical reports furnished this office by the clerks of a portion of the counties of Colorado, the statistics being for the year 1892.

The act of 1883 which provides for this report requires the assessor of each county to collect and report to the clerk of his county the acreage and amount of crops of the various sorts cultivated, the number of head of live stock, and such other facts as shall serve to show the total agricultural product of the county for the preceding year. Under this law many of the assessors find it quite impossible to collect accurate information, and report that their compilations are not complete. Others patch up such reports as they can and send them to this office, doubtless glad of the saving clause—"to the best of my knowledge and belief"—in the certificate of correctness which must be attached to each report. Still others make no effort to collect statistics, justifying themselves, no doubt, with the reflection that those that are collected are worthless. The result of all this is that the compilations made in this office are of almost no real value. Knowing what I do of the character of these statistics, and something of the

extent of the products of many of the counties in the State, I would not dare to venture even an approximate estimate of the value of the agricultural output of the State. This is an unfortunate circumstance. If agricultural statistics are to be compiled at all, it ought to be by such methods and with such care as will insure substantial accuracy; and it ought to be possible for the secretary of the State Board of Agriculture to have at his command sources of information that would enable him to estimate with reasonable accuracy the value and amount of the agricultural products of the State. But, under present conditions, it is out of the question to make accurate and reliable estimates; and till he can do so with some confidence in their value as trustworthy information for the public the present secretary will make no estimates.

While the difficulties attending the collection of agricultural statistics are not all caused by the imperfections of the law, I am inclined to think that it will be necessary to amend the law in several particulars before really valuable statistical information can be obtained. It is possible that a change to the township system of assessing would be a step in the right direction. It is obvious to me that the same office that compiles the statistics should be entrusted with the task of furnishing blanks and instructions to the assessors. The present system doubles the chances of misunderstanding the intent of the blank forms and the reports made by the use of those forms.

You will observe that I report returns from only twenty-six of the fifty-six counties of the State. To get even this small number of reports it was necessary to wait more than a month after the time my report should have been filed in your office. It was necessary also to write to most of the county clerks, many of whom have not answered my inquiries. Appended to this report are extracts from the letters received from the various county clerks. In a few cases

the letters are from the assessors. They serve to emphasize the need of a change in method, if valuable information is to be gathered.

Respectfully submitted,

DANIEL W. WORKING,

Secretary of the State Board of Agriculture.

The State Agricultural College, Fort Collins, Colorado, January 4, 1894.

APPENDIX.

In answer to my request for statistics or for a statement of the reasons why the statistics have not been collected, letters have been received from fifteen counties. Extracts from these letters are given below. In some cases the entire letters are quoted:

Costilla County—

“It is next to impossible for our assessor to collect any statistics whatever. This county is largely settled by Mexicans, who have no idea how many acres they have under cultivation, and much less how many acres to each of the different cereals; and it is impossible for the assessor (who is generally a Mexican) to get an intelligent statement from any of them, or anything fit to be embodied into statistics; therefore this matter has long been given up as an impracticable job.”

Custer County—

“No statistics have been filed in my office. For further information would refer you to the assessor.”

Jefferson County—

“The county assessor having filed no report of the agricultural statistics in this office, consequently no report has been sent you.”

Kiowa County—

“Statistics have not been turned over to me.”

Lake County—

“There is no agricultural land in this county.”

Larimer County—

“No agricultural statistics have been collected by any assessor during the time I have served as county clerk, and I understand for some time previous to that. I believe the reason is that the returns from other portions of the State were so incomplete as to make the statistics of no practical value; and our county commissioners declined to incur the necessary expense, and so notified the assessor he need not compile same.”

Lincoln County—

“As our assessor did not collect any agricultural statistics, I am unable to make the report as requested.”

Montezuma County—

“I have not as yet received the necessary blanks from the secretary of State.”

Otero County—

“This office has not received a form from the secretary of State on which to make report referred to.”

Park County—

“The county assessor has made no report to this office.”

Pueblo County—

“The assessor informs me that he forwarded to your address two or three weeks ago the above-mentioned statistics.”

Sedgwick County—

“See assessor.”

San Juan County—

“As there are no agricultural products at all in San Juan county, fear you will have to excuse us.”

Summit County—

“Having been appointed by the commissioners to fill an unexpired term as assessor, and only having been instructed in my work as far as related to as-

sessments, the gathering of statistics as a portion of my duties has been entirely overlooked. If you will furnish me with the required blanks, I will attend to this matter at once."

Weld County—

"The assessor has not completed and turned over to the clerk any statement from which to tabulate the agricultural statistics."