

AGRICULTURE - - Stock farm and Horse breeder

Nels Jensen,  
1344 Cambie Rd., Richmond, B.C.

Interviewed: February 14, 1973.

. . . born 1912 in Vancouver . . . moved to Richmond 1934 at No. 5 Road and Bridgeport, rented 5 acre farm, few horses and calves. . . . at that time No. 5 Road was not paved, just paved other neighbors: Jack Bath farm on No. 5 Road., Mitchells further up, Oldfield was on Mitchell Island, Japanese farmers lived behind Jensen's

. . . early 1940's left and bought 40 acres on No. 6 Road from Miss Christie (whose brother was Dr. Christie) . . . had a dairy farm for 10 years.

. . . sold and bought another dairy farm 1/4 mile north . . . milking Holsteins . . . running horses . . . there 14 years.

1933 bought first thoroughbred . . . in early times raced in Vancouver and on prairie circuit.

Had two retail stores in Vancouver, sold eggs there . . . Family Market at Broadway and Oak and Fairview Dairy, lunch counter next door.

Winning horses included 'Broad Oak' (named after stores) a mare raised out of first thoroughbred mare.

Last year raised 'Winning Red' won Alberta Derby and Canadian Derby, won 8 races in a row this year, sold to Edmonton lawyer . . . won over \$40,000 in 1972. Another mare 'Lucky Spot' now being bred in California . . . only B.C. bred mare to win stakes race at Santa Anita Race Track . . . won \$60,000.

. . . sold all young horses last year except one . . . 5 mares ready to foal now - bred to 'Top the Market' . . . had 2 weanlings . . . 2 two-year olds . . . have registered quarter horse as a teaser.

Built present house in 1957 and moved to present locale - 100 acres . . . left dairy cattle and went into beef cattle and horses (always had a few market cattle).

Quit dairy because hard to get milking help . . . had machines but thankless job . . . dairy herds observed improved 40% in production, care methods . . . recalled nearby farmer cold hands milking, cracks in barn.

Jensen a dealer for years . . . early years bought and sold dairy cows . . . supplied Jerseys, Holsteins, fresh cows (sold) to Richmond dairy people when cows went dry and had bottling, trucking to South Vancouver.

Recalls Sea Island dairies:

Bob Doherty  
MacGregors  
Huggard (now Ladner) Clarence, Carl & Cline feed lot  
Erskines  
Haywards  
Grauers

Sheep run at present location until last 3 years . . . 200 ewes . . . for 13 years problem was stray dogs . . . eliminated dogs in East Richmond . . . chase sheep . . . worry lambs and kill them . . . chase into ditches . . . recently one black fox in back yard . . . cranberry bog (No. 7 Road from River Road to No. 9 Road, cuts through to Westminster Hwy.) has lots of Black fox.

Einar Norman has peat plant, John Nygaard cranberry bog area North of Cambie on both sides of No. 7 Road.

Sold wool to Indians in Steveston . . . had store at race track in trailer, sold lots of sweaters . . . sold wool to Duncan, V.I.

. . . also sold wool to Indians on Blenheim Flats . . . shipped wool to Woolgrowers, Ontario.

Wool - got \$1.00 a pound for black wool, .50¢ a pound for white. . . . hard to get black sheep . . . Carcul was breed of sheep . . . bought from sales, up country, B.C. . . . no impetus for sheep raising earlier: if kept lamb for 6 months lucky to get \$20. for it. Foot rot was curable . . . too wet in winter here for sheep . . . have to confine to barns or sea of mud . . . can stand cold but not wet . . . close wool sheep stay wet - don't dry out.

Beef - . . . bought feeders . . . let them out on grass spring and summer . . . finish in fall . . . takes 110 days to fatten . . . fed young steers, yearlings from up country, Kamloops, Williams Lake, local sales. Steers with quality . . . Hereford - Angus cross . . . in later years Charolais (2 sons John and Bill have Carolais . . . 50 on farm . . . sons now handle beef) . . . few Holsteins.

Feed barley, buy it . . . pay for feed from prairies - high due to freight rate over mountains . . . fed potatoes and carrots plus grain for a few years . . . have own portable mill - grinds hay and grain mixes.

Market high now for beef . . . up to 56 cents a pound for feeder calves live weight . . . people eating more beef . . . getting a bargain in beef . . . everyone gets more money handling beef.

Jensen had deal pending with Dominion Construction to buy farm as subdivision for industry BUT farm freeze stopped sale . . . his farm now worth approximately one million dollars.

. . . cost high to set up milk dairy today . . . must buy quota, worth \$35.-40 a pound . . . \$600. for good dairy calf . . . modern stainless steel milk tanks and equipment . . . would cost \$200,000 to set up . . . can invest \$200,000 today and get 10% return in money investment.

. . . go where land isn't so expensive as Richmond . . . this area is 8 miles from Vancouver City Hall . . . nowhere in world is land that close to a city farmed . . . talk about green belts . . . cranberry farming on cleared peat land fine where land good for nothing else . . . high power lines run through middle of dairy farms . . . if to preserve farms let future generation contribute to it . . .

. . . anything over two acres you can't sell today, or even build on it without a permit . . . Jensen believes he should be allowed to break up his land into 5-acre plots . . . land across the road is bringing \$15,000 an acre . . . industrial property around his farm . . . dividing line is No. 6 Road . . . CKWX radio station has 50 acres adjoining property which can't be plowed because of miles of wires under surface . . . Provincial Government took piece of his land, moved canal East of road for new Knight St. bridge, no one offered compensation yet but pay farm price or industrial price

. . . Sanction of local planning board to sell his farm now stopped . . . Dominion Construction had started on new project which would give work to 300 - 400 men across highway, now stopped because Dominion was paying agricultural taxes on the land.

. . . new Belkins Warehouse built.

. . . B.C. Ice built one million dollar addition on No. 6 Road.  
. . . Mother Hubbard trucks and MacDonald's Bakery trucks (100 start up each morning) close by.

D. Cleland