



**Chicago Stockyards in 1880**

## **Chicago Union Stockyards 1865-1900**

In the 1860's, railroad tracks were built in states west of the Mississippi River. The new tracks made some farmers want to live west of the Mississippi. The farmers could use the railroad to ship their crops and animals to markets in eastern cities.

Most trains from the west stopped in Chicago before they went to other cities. Sheep, pigs and cows from west of the Mississippi River were penned in the Chicago stockyard before they went to cities in the east. To hold all the animals, nine railroad companies together bought 320 acres of land. Chicago's Union Stock Yard and Transit Company officially opened on Christmas Day 1865. Waste from the Stockyard drained into a fork of the Chicago River that came to be called "Bubbly Creek" because of the pollution. By 1900, the stockyard grew to 475 acres. Fifty miles of dirt road ran through the middle and 130 miles of railroad track lay around the edges.