

# Wheat Acreage Decreased

**Weather has held up seeding in the West — Feed situation is better — Lack of houses forcing people to camp out at Winnipeg.**

By E. CORA HIND.

Winnipeg, May 4.—Conditions as to seeding are showing some slight signs of improvement and Provincial Governments are issuing rather optimistic reports on what is being done. As a matter of fact small areas of seeding have been started in the southern sections of all the provinces with possibly the larger number located in southern Manitoba, but throughout the week there have been general frosts night after night, some nights as severe as 20 degrees and while these frosts prevail spring work must be retarded. On the 25th there was a heavy snow storm at Regina and some other points in Saskatchewan, on the 27th and 28th there were heavy snow storms at Calgary and Edmonton, while lately cold rain and sleet has fallen all over Southern Alberta. It must be understood that these snows do not last, but in the melting they render the ground unfit to work, and followed as they are by night frosts, help to delay seeding.

The one outstanding optimistic fact this season is the general and abundant supply of moisture throughout the entire west.

Wheat seeding cannot profitably be indulged in after the 15th of May and indeed so successful and practical a farmer as the Hon. W. R. Motherwell, former minister of Agriculture for Saskatchewan, is the author of the statement, "the man who seeds wheat after May ten in the prairie provinces deserves all he gets and is very apt to get all he deserves"; in other words wheat seeded after May ten is more or less of a gamble. As under the most favorable conditions from now on, wheat seeding cannot be general especially in the northern parts of the provinces, before May five it stands to reason that either the acreage will be much reduced or there are many men who are going to gamble on the season. Personally, in view of the high price and scarcity of feed, the poor condition of many of the horses and the exorbitant demands of labor, my opinion remains as heretofore, that there will be a very marked decrease in acreage.

## The Feed Situation.

A reliable correspondent in Alberta writes that at the present time the hay situation is easier. The weather is milder, though in the north there is still considerable snow, and in practically every place in the province there is enough feed. The department of agriculture has imported in all, about 3,000 cars of hay, of which some are still to be delivered and there is reasonable hope that there is now enough to carry through spring seeding. The highest price which the Alberta Government has been obliged to charge for hay, has been \$45. The same correspondent reports that the loss of calves, owing to the thin condition of the cows, will be very heavy.

Manitoba, after starting the season with abundance of hay, is now obliged to bring it in from the east and south, the government, today announcing the further purchase of 400 tons in North Dakota.

## Mill Feed Legislation.

The west is very deeply interested in the proposed legislation to have the control of mill feeds, etc., placed under the department of agriculture, indeed the request for this to be done originated in the west and at the annual meeting of the Western Canada Livestock Union in Victoria last November a very strong resolution along this line was formulated. This resolution later received

the endorsement of practically all livestock organizations in the west, many in the east, and finally of the Eastern Canada Livestock Union and was presented in person to the Minister of Agriculture by representatives of both Eastern and Western Livestock Unions.

The adulteration of mill feeds by the grinding up of wet seeds and other trash has been the cause of the loss of large numbers of livestock, more especially young pigs, and livestock men not only ask that the administration of the law in regard to these feeds be transferred to the Department of Agriculture but that an act be passed setting standards for all commonly sold classes of feeds which are made from grain or its by-products, and that such act shall provide for a microscopic analysis of these feeds in addition to the chemical analysis.

## Amending Grain Act and Decontrol.

There will be a delegation of grain men in Ottawa next week, in connection with the proposed changes in the Canada Grain act and new regulations in regard to lake shipments of grain, to wit, the bringing of lake shipping under the control of the railway commission. It is understood the question of the decontrol of wheat may also be up for discussion.

A good deal of space has been given in western papers to the list of questions which Col. Peck

announced he was going to ask in connection with the control of lake shipping during the war. Long before there was a board of Grain Supervisors or a Canada Wheat Board the owners of various Canadian shipping companies got together and established a chartering committee to handle lake tonnage, indeed this chartering committee came into being almost directly after the Allied buying commission commenced purchasing through the Wheat Board Company and practically the only control the Board of Grain supervisors or the Canada Wheat Board had over this chartering committee was established in 1918 when the Board of Grain Supervisors was given the power to allocate tonnage and this power was continued in the order-in-council establishing the Canada Wheat Board. Neither of these boards ever had any control over rates to be charged. The chartering committee ceased to exist at the close of navigation last fall and this season the various vessel agents are back on their own, and competition for cargoes will no doubt be keen when a new crop begins to move.

## Employment Conditions.

Manitoba's provincial superintendent of employment reports that during the past week employment has been found for 1,410 men and 173 women.

## Great Housing Difficulties.

May day moving this year presents great difficulties as houses and suites are almost impossible to obtain. The Mayor of Winnipeg has announced a relaxing of the regulations of the city in regard to camping and many hundreds of people will pass the summer intents on the river banks and in the suburbs of the city. Not only because of houses and suites being scarce but in a good many instances to avoid the exorbitant rents being asked by landlords.

Practically the same conditions apply in all western cities.

# Availability of Russian Wheat

Before the war, Russia was one of the principal wheat exporting countries, sending out annually, approximately one hundred and forty million bushels of wheat, compared to average exports, in the years 1905-14, of one hundred and ten million bushels of wheat and flour from the United States, and seventy millions from Canada. Western and Central Europe drew from her a good portion of their imported cereals, and had to offset the loss of these supplies partly by reduced consumption, partly by buying larger amounts from North America, where the bumper crops of recent years have made increased exports possible. The Western Hemisphere has had, in fact, practically a corner on wheat. Unless Russian supplies are forthcoming or the western crops are unusually large, wheat is likely to be scarce in the 1920-1921 season. The quantity of Russia's annual contribution has a strong influence on wheat prices, and has, therefore, always been of great interest to this country.

The average reports on conditions in Russia have not been of a nature to encourage belief in the existence of a large wheat supply there. These reports, however, have apparently not given an accurate view of the actual situation.

A special British mission was recently sent to South Russia to investigate cereal production and supplies, for the information of the Supreme Economic Council. Their official report, which is published by the International Institute of Agriculture at Rome, sums up the situation as follows:—

Taking into account the wheat yield of 1919 and stocks from previous harvests, and allowing for the quantities required for consumption in South Russia, there remains a surplus available

for export abroad; this surplus is estimated as certainly not less than 15,000,000 quintals (55,000,000 bushels).

These supplies are located mainly in the Ukraine, where the 1919 crop is estimated at 331,000,000 bushels, 60 million bushels over the 1909-1913 average.

Central and Northern Russia are short of supplies, but the breakdown of internal transportation facilities makes it impossible to ship to them the surplus crops of the south. Though the rail ways are no longer effective, the rivers still provide a means of transportation. The Don, Dniester and Dnieper all run through the main areas of the wheat belt to the Black Sea or the Sea of Azov. If the exportable surplus can be moved via these to the port of Odessa on the Black Sea or to Rostiv on the Sea of Azov, transport from there to western European markets would present no great difficulty.

## Research in Corrosion

At the recent congress of the British Institution of Metals a valuable report was read on the corrosion of condenser tubes—a subject in which so many engineers are keenly interested. This report was the fifth of a series, recording researches undertaken by a special committee of the Institute. Experiments have been made with alloys of copper and zinc, and many suggestions made for avoiding or reducing corrosion. In the British Navy, trials are being made with exidised tubes, and a British company has been formed to exploit an electrolytic process which deposits and maintains a protective layer of lime on the surface of the tube.