

Conditions in the West

Crop Acreage Ten Per Cent Over 1914. Present Condition Considered Good. Export Produce Possibilities. Live Stock and Other Markets

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Winnipeg, May 26.

The Manitoba Free Press, during this week received its first crop report of the season. This was twelve days later than the first report of 1915. All things considered it was very satisfactory as 124 points were heard from in the three provinces, and when the data was compiled it showed that there would be a reduction in wheat acreage of about 20 per cent. This reduction seems very large, but it must be borne in mind that it is a 20 per cent reduction from the acreage of 1915, which was just 12,000,000 acres, or roughly a 30 per cent increase on the acreage of 1914, so that while there is a big reduction from 1915, there is an increase of about 10 per cent over the acreage of 1914.

With three exceptions the points heard from reported the soil in good condition to receive the seed, that is, from the standpoint of moisture. Of course, a very large area has been seeded on stubble without ploughing; the percentages running all the way from 2 to 90, but considered district by district it is evident that where the large areas have been seeded on unploughed stubble the bulk of this land had been summer-fallow in 1914. With a reasonable supply of moisture this should give very fair results, especially where they were able to get a good burn on the stubble.

With regard to the lateness of the season, the reports indicated that taking the West as a whole the season was rather more than three weeks later than the season of 1915, but as 1915 was fully two weeks earlier than 1914, the present season is not so abnormally late as it might appear.

Only Small Acreage Re-seeded.

The average height of the early seeded wheat is three inches. This is about the same height as the wheat was at the first report of 1915, which came out on the 11th of May, while the one for this season was issued on the 23rd. Owing to the very high winds during the latter part of April, and the beginning of May, a very great deal of apprehension was felt as to damage from drifting. On this point the reports were very reassuring. A very great number of points reported that no re-seeding had been necessary, and twenty-three points reported on considerable areas re-seeded only amounting in all to 21,950 acres.

The question had been asked as to the increased acreage of coarse grains, but it proved a little too early to secure very definite information. However, the reports indicated an increase of from 10 to 15 per cent in oats and 15 to 20 per cent in barley. This will be contingent on the weather for the last part of May, and as we have had general rains over the entire West during the last three days delaying farm work, the coarse grain areas may be somewhat reduced.

As was said at the beginning the report as a whole is very satisfactory, and given anything like normal conditions from now on there should be an excellent average crop. Growth above ground has certainly been slow, but the wheat has an excellent root, which as stated in a previous letter, will enable it to stand a good deal of adversity later in the season.

Labor Conditions.

Another question asked in connection with this report, was as to the supply of labor, and also the amount of wheat still in the farmers' hands for sale. The supply of labor seems to be on the whole quite sufficient, only twenty points report any shortage at all. Wages, however, are high, running from \$30 to \$60 per month for the seven month season, and the average being between \$40 to \$45.

Wheat and Oats on Hand.

Wheat on hand. Eighty-eight points out of 124 reported definitely the quantity of wheat in the farmer's hands, and these included 3,000,000 bushels tributary to Regina; 3,100,000 tributary to Swift Current, and 8,000,000 in an area of 100 miles around Calgary. The 88 points heard from gave a grand total of a little over 20,000,000. A very great many points reported no wheat at all for sale, or too little to be of any moment.

Rather significant was the report on oats in the

farmers' hands. 32 points reporting absolutely no oats for sale, and 55 points only reported 1,581,000 bushels available for sale. At the present time the oats in store at the head of the Lakes are under three million bushels, and in store in country elevators slightly over six million, and it is the opinion of the trade that sales have been made for June delivery that will much more than account for all these oats, and that we may see some fireworks in the oat market before June is out.

Cut Worms.

The cutworms were bad last year and reports are beginning to come in of very serious damage from them this year. They are, of course, especially bad on the summerfallows, but the recent rains should be helpful in destroying them. Active campaigns for the destruction of both cutworms and gophers are being waged, and the Provincial Governments are doing all they possibly can to assist.

The Wheat Market.

The market has been a narrow one for a week, largely professional, and with a very limited export-trade. On May 26th, however, there was a sharp reaction to higher values, apparently due to cumulative reports of damage to the winter wheat crop of the United States, and it is noticeable that within the past four days one or two of the big exporting houses that had been on the bear side of the market have experienced a change of heart and are now among the bulls.

Export Produce Trade.

During the week Winnipeg has had a visit from Mr. Horrocks, of Geo. Little, Ltd., of Manchester, England. Montreal has probably had a visit from Mr. Horrocks this week, as he left Winnipeg, via Chicago, for that point on Monday. His object in visiting Canada is to look into the possibility of supplies of butter, eggs and cheese for Britain. In 1903 Mr. Horrocks was in charge of a Government creamery in the then territory of Assiniboia, and remembering the dairy conditions of those days it was only after strenuous urging on the part of the produce men of Winnipeg that he consented to come West. He quickly acknowledged his surprise at finding the difference in conditions, and while he found that our egg prices were too high for him to do any business, there is every likelihood that some business in butter will result from his trip.

The recent decision as to uniform grading of butter for the three Western Provinces will help in this very materially. Mr. Horrocks also laid great emphasis on the opening that there was for good Canadian cheese in England. The West, unfortunately at the present time has only 15 cheese factories and does not make enough for her own requirements. Mr. Horrocks pointed out that at present prices there were more money in cheese than there was in butter.

The Winnipeg Produce Association has become identified with the Winnipeg Board of Trade with J. M. Carruthers as chairman of this section.

Livestock.

Livestock, especially anything like choice butchers, held very steady all through the week until Friday when prices weakened 25 per cent. There were a number of sales around 9 1/4 cents. The hog market has been experiencing some very hard pressure from the bears. Of course, packers are not saying so, but to the outsider it looks as if there was an organized determination to establish a 10 cent hog. Packers do not hope to keep the price at that, especially when the July short shipments begin, but evidently they figure that if they can get it down to 10 cents now it would not be likely to advance more than \$1.00 per hundredweight, even under the pressure of very light receipts in July; whereas, if the price remains at its present high level it would be quite as likely to shoot up another \$1.00 when the season of scarcity begins.

Wool Traders.

Word has been received from Ottawa that a sufficient number of wool graders has been secured and they will be on the job at the opening of the season.

SMART WOODS
LIMITED CANADA

Manufacturers of

Jute and Cotton
Bags, Tents,
Clothing, Etc.

FACTORIES IN

MONTREAL, TORONTO,
OTTAWA, WINNIPEG

GRAIN AT THE HEAD OF LAKES.

Statement of stocks in store in terminal elevators at Fort William and Port Arthur on May 26th, 1916, with receipts and shipments during the week.

Elevator.	Wheat.	Oats.	Barley	Flax
C. P. R.	1,325,057	414,316	97,113
Emp & Th.				
Bay	1,118,952	355,576	38,535	190,223
Consol.	782,587	153,102	35,658	120,600
Ogilvie.	1,088,010	107,633	34,998
Western	800,752	193,433	19,150	187,723
G. G. G. Co.	1,223,317	340,407	38,590
Fort William	709,495	288,529	53,312	20,938
Eastern	585,432	150,471	22,628
G. T. P.	1,520,934	380,270	47,519	127,024
Can. Nor.	2,124,960	612,325	126,357	129,191
Horns.	133,162	39,671	24,614	216,023
Can. Gov't.	1,183,246	437,750	48,680	69,086
Total	12,595,909	3,473,487	587,160	1,069,811

A year ago . . . 2,739,493 1,382,178 353,584 1,435,733

Receipts	6,053,975	2,028,763	156,899	171,077
Ship. Lake	4,935,587	2,037,972	306,478	292,397
Ship. Rail	124,143	17,057	4,483	2,630

Stocks by Grade.

Wheat.		Oats.	
One Hard.	75,202	1 C. W.	33,496
One Nor.	5,330,243	2 C. W.	1,708,415
Two Nor.	2,045,951	3 C. W.	799,109
Three Nor.	1,415,103	Ex. 1 Fd.	247,377
No. Four	1,468,772	Others.	685,088
Others.	2,260,636	Totals.	3,473,487
Total.	12,595,909		
Barley.		Flax.	
3 C. W.	256,977	1 N. W. C.	891,732
4 C. W.	199,068	2 C. W.	113,340
Rej'd.	57,381	3 C. W.	30,581
Reed.	32,203	Others.	34,148
Others.	41,469	Total.	1,069,811
Total	587,160		

NEW GOLD FIELD.

Some spectacular samples of ore showing free gold were received in Toronto recently, and, with odd exceptions, the exhibit excels anything yet brought into Toronto from Northern Ontario.

The find was made within eight miles of Dryden on the C. P. R., and the property bids fair to rival the famous Croesus Mine. The lucky prospector was Ernest G. Rognon, who spent some years in the Nome Gold Camp.

One assay shows the enormous figure of \$67,000 to the ton, but in order to get a fair estimate of the value of the containing quartz about 1 1/2 tons of ore free from visible gold were tested and the gold contents assayed \$99 to the ton.

MINING DIVIDENDS.

Tabulation made by the Engineering and Mining Journal shows that forty-seven United States mining companies paid dividends totaling \$9,632,083 in April, against \$4,248,185 paid by twenty-seven companies in April, 1915.