

Grain Inspection in Canada

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other hand, are fixed by the Standards Board, and may vary from year to year.

Importance of the Grades

The grain is stored in the terminal elevators in accordance with the grades; grain of the same grade being binned together. Bulk storage by grades undoubtedly cheapens the cost of handling. The volume of grain produced in Western Canada is such that to keep separate every lot would be a practical impossibility. But the grain is not only stored by grade, it is also sold wholly by grade. In this respect Western Canada is unique. The Grain Act theoretically permits, but really prohibits, the buying and selling of grain except upon certificates of grade, for while a man may sell on sample, the Act refuses those storage facilities which sample trading requires. The grade, therefore, is not merely the basis of storing, it is also the basis of trading the grain. If, therefore, a mistake is made in the inspection it may mean a serious loss to somebody. And if there is any defect whatever in the grading system, any defect either in the definitions of the grades, or the method of applying them, there will be a grave injustice done to some and

distinct nor unambiguous. They have few mechanical aids. Their senses must always be keen, and their judgment always sound, for one error will be remembered against years of efficient service. Their work is of supreme importance, for their verdict fixes which rate per bushel, out of several quoted on the market, the seller will receive, and the grain is stored, transported, and sold both at home and abroad on their certificate.

While not under the Civil Service Commission the grain staff is administered on a Civil Service basis. No one can be appointed as inspector or deputy inspector without passing examinations conducted by a Board of Examiners with the aid of the Chief Inspector of the Dominion. The examiners are experienced grain men, men of integrity, ability and standing, and men who, tho wealthy, are willing to render their service in the interest of the grain industry.

Practical Examinations

The examinations are conducted annually, and they are thorough practical tests of ability to grade. Usually, tho not always, the candidates are men who have been working as samplers,

ested are still dissatisfied they can appeal to the Survey Board.

Inspection at Winnipeg

The grading of the grain cannot be easily done in the railway yards. Uniformity is essential to good grading, and if different inspection offices were placed in the different railway yards, uniformity could not be so well maintained. Further, such offices would be far from the place where the grain is bought and sold. Shippers and buyers of the grain require to be in close touch with the inspection office. The actual grading, therefore, and the issuing of the certificates are done in offices rented by the Government in the building of the Grain Exchange. Samples are taken from the car. The other details necessary for the issuing of the certificates are collected in the yards, and both the samples and the details are taken to the inspection office in the Grain Exchange.

As the grade is given by the inspector upon the samples presented to him, and as he does not see the car from which the sample has been taken, it is essential that a fair average sample be secured. Further, as the length of time between harvesting and the close of navigation on the Great Lakes is only about seventy days, no obstacle must be put in the way of the rapid transportation of the crop. The trains reach Winnipeg every day in the week, and every hour of the twenty-four. Sam-



This illustration shows the sampler with his "sticker" in a car of wheat in the Winnipeg Yards. The track foreman is leaning thru the door and examining the grain on the cloth from which the official sample is drawn

probably many, and a great gain handed to others. To have the grades right, and to have the inspecting well done, is important in any country where grain is graded; and it is imperative in that country in which alone the grain must be bought and sold on certificate.

The Grain Inspectors

The inspectors of the grain of Western Canada have no easy or unimportant task. They stand between two opposing interests, farmers and millers, the former complaining of undue severity and the latter of culpable leniency. Upon their flank is a third army of critics, the dealers, who consider the grading severe or lenient according as they themselves are sellers or buyers. They have to inspect an enormous volume of grain per car unit, and in certain seasons they must work rapidly and continuously during daylight. They must never be bewildered either by the variety or continuity in which nature reveals, or by the multiplicity of grades of which the terms are neither very

track foremen, weighmen, etc., and usually not more than fifty per cent. of the candidates succeed in passing. After passing the examination the candidate is appointed on the recommendation of the Chief Inspector. Neither in the examination, the recommendation, nor the appointment have political considerations any place, and this applies throughout the service. The Western Division runs from the Great Lakes to the Pacific, and the Eastern Division from the Great Lakes to the Atlantic, but the law and the practice are the same in both. As the varieties of grain grown in the west are different from those grown in the east, the inspectors of one division have nothing to do with the grain grown in the other division, the Chief Inspector alone has jurisdiction in both. In regard to reinspection: If the owner of the grain, or his representative, is dissatisfied with the grade given by the Winnipeg inspector he can call for a reinspection. The grain is then reinspected free of charge by the inspector or the Chief Inspector. If the parties inter-

pling is done, therefore, by night as well as day, and on Sundays as well as other days.

The samplers work together in gangs in shifts of eight hours. They work in gangs because team play is more efficient than solitary effort. Usually the gang consists of fourteen men, four of whom are track foremen, eight are samplers, one is a car opener and one a car sealer.

When Train Arrives

On the arrival of the train the conductor leaves the car bills in the railway company's yard office. The train clerk of the inspection department makes a list of these bills, showing the car numbers, the name of the shipper, the shipping station, the destination, and the name of the person or company to whom the car is billed. These details are necessary for the issuing of the certificates. He takes this list to the yard office of the inspection department, and hands it to the clerk there. This clerk is also a government em-

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