

United States Crops

According to the official crop report for June of the United States Department of Agriculture, the spring wheat acreage in that country shows a decrease of 2.4 per cent. The average condition of spring wheat on June 1st was 95.9 as compared with 95.1 at the corresponding date last year, and a ten-year average of 92.9. The average condition of winter wheat was 83.2 as compared with 92.6 on May 1, 1903; 76.1 on June 1, 1902, and a ten-year average of 79.1.

The oat acreage is reduced 3.2 per cent. from the area sown last year. The average condition on June 1 was 85.5, against 90.6 on June 1, 1901, and a ten-year average of 90.2. The acreage of barley is increased 7.1 per cent, and the average condition on June 1 was 91.5 against 93.6 last year and a ten-year average of 88.7. The clover crop, though reports are not definite, shows a less acreage and a condition below the ten-year average.

Of the 14 States having 5,000,000 apple trees or over, but two, Virginia and Tennessee, report conditions above their ten-year averages. The conditions in the other important apple growing States range from 2 to 23 points below the ten-year average. The present prospects for peaches are decidedly unfavorable, only one State, Oklahoma, showing conditions above the average.

European Crops

The foreign agent of the United States Department of Agriculture, writing from London on May 30, states that there had been a marked change for the better in the weather all over Europe. Southern Russia is likely to have, if nothing untoward happens, a large wheat crop. The winter wheat crop of Germany had considerably improved by the middle of May from what it was on April 15. In Austria the winter grain showed a good development on May 15, and good medium yields are expected. In Hungary up to May 20 the development of the crop had proceeded satisfactorily and, with few exceptions, were favorable. In other European countries the crop outlook about the middle of May was hopeful, though in some sections bad weather had injured it very much.

Honest Butter and Honest Seeds

The Hon. Mr. Fisher, Dominion Minister of Agriculture, is, during the present session at Ottawa, introducing some important legislation affecting the interests of the farmer. He is asking the House to consider the advisability of prohibiting the manufacture or sale of renovated, adulterated or process butter, or of oleomargarine, butterine, or other substitute for but-

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ter, manufactured wholly or in part from any fat other than that of milk or cream. The improper marking of butter will be dealt with in the same resolution, and provision made for the examination of stock or packages. Should an act be passed, one-half of the pecuniary penalties for contravention of the act will be payable to the informant.

Another piece of legislation being introduced by Mr. Fisher is perhaps of greater importance from the farmer's standpoint. This is an act providing that seeds of cereals, grasses, clovers, forage plants or vegetables sold for the purpose of seeding, shall be free from the seeds of certain weeds. He also proposes to establish grades of seeds, of timothy, red clover or alsike, to provide that such seeds offered for sale shall be marked with the seller's name and address, and the name of the kind of seed and the grade, and to provide for the examination of such seeds and their analysis by an official seed analyst.

After so long a period of honesty and upright dealing in connection with the manufacture of Canadian dairy products one may think legislation is not needed at this stage. But there have been cases of late where attempts have been made to introduce the manufacture of these spurious butters into Canada under other names and new and more stringent legislation on the subject may not come amiss. Even if the threatened danger does not come to anything such legislation can do no harm, while it will still further emphasize the fact that Canada and Canadians will stand up for honest and genuine dairy products.

The legislation regulating the seed trade is much more far reaching, touching as it does every one who buys and sells seeds of any kind. For several years back the Seed Division at Ottawa has been making a thorough study of the seed trade of this country and has found that large quantities of impure and inferior seeds are being sold every year to farmers in all parts of the Dominion. To some extent this has been due to the demand of the farmer for cheap seeds, but largely to unscrupulous dealers, who, owing to the extreme difficulty there is in detecting impurities in seeds, have palmed off upon the purchaser, impure and inferior seeds whenever possible. To such an extent has this been carried on, that in several districts turnip and similar seeds have been found to contain over 50 per cent. of foreign seeds. It is time then that something were done to regulate this trade. Reasonable legislation looking to the betterment of the trade, should prove of great advantage to the reputable seed merchant, who is endeavoring to provide his customers with pure and high class seeds, while the farming community will be greatly benefited if the unscrupulous fellow is put out of business.