

WHEAT GROWING IN CANADA

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CANADA is widely known as a "land of plenty," and is frequently referred to as one of the future granaries of the world. The opinion has also been often expressed that the productive capacity of the land in the Dominion will, when the country is fairly settled, be more than equal the task of supplying the Mother Country with all the wheat which her teeming millions require. Such statements are sometimes made in the absence of any definite ideas as to what the farming lands of Canada would probably be capable of producing annually if they were fairly well occupied by intelligent and industrious settlers.

The area of land suitable for the growing of agricultural crops in Canada is so vast that when presented in figures the mind needs a deal of training before their full significance can be grasped. The civilized world is gradually awakening to a somewhat hazy perception of the immense wealth laid up in the many millions of acres of fertile lands unoccupied here, and large numbers of immigrants are flocking to our shores. Commenters on these great possessions commonly pass over the large stretches of unoccupied territory in the Eastern Provinces, and direct attention mainly to the great Northwest country, as yet very imperfectly understood even among our own people. In this article, it is the possibilities of the latter which will be primarily considered.

THE WHEAT AREAS

The following figures as to the quantity of land fit for settlement in the Province of Manitoba and the three Provisional Territories, Assiniboia, Saskatchewan and Alberta, have been obtained from official sources and may be accepted as approximately correct

for the areas in question:

	Total area Exclusive of Water. Acres.	Estimated Proportion Suitable for Cultivation.	Acres.
Manitoba	41,000,000	two-thirds	equal to 27,000,000
Assiniboia	57,000,000	seven-eighths	50,000,000
Saskatchewan	70,000,000	three-fourths	52,000,000
Alberta	64,000,000	two-thirds	42,000,000
Total			171,000,000

It is thus estimated that there are within the limits referred to after making allowance for lands unfit for agriculture, about 171 million acres suitable for cultivation, by which is meant land of such a degree of fertility as to admit of profitable farming. It is proposed to confine our discussion on this occasion to the possibilities of agricultural progress within this area, where the quality of the soil and the conditions of climate are fairly well known. We should not, however, deal justly were we to pass over the great north country lying beyond the boundaries of Saskatchewan and Alberta without a few words of explanation.

The 155 million acres of land in Athabasca, and a large slice of the 340 million acres in Mackenzie, will no doubt prove important factors in the future development of Canada, but what proportion of these vast districts will be capable of the profitable growing of crops is as yet a matter of conjecture. There are, however, some proofs available showing that it is possible to grow cereals to some extent in portions of these remote districts of which our knowledge is so fragmentary.

NORTHERN EXPERIMENTS

The writer has received samples from Dunvegan, on the Peace River, in Athabasca, 414 miles by latitude north of Winnipeg, of Ladoga wheat plump and well matured, weighing 64 lbs. per bushel; oats weighing 40 to 42 lbs. per bushel; six-rowed barley, 52 lbs. per bushel; and spring rye weighing 56 lbs. per bushel.

At Fort Vermillion, further down the Peace River, also in Athabasca,