

Meat Imports

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This estimate is
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quarters is 250,400,000 bushels. The world needs that quantity of wheat to carry its wheat-consuming population until the crop of 1909 can be drawn upon. That will not be before August.

The question as to where this volume of wheat is to come from between now and the end of the present cereal year, is becoming quite a problem. If the Argentine had been able to deliver her estimated exportable surplus of 160,000,000 bushels, the question would have been simple. But the Argentine, from the crop harvested in December, will ship no more than 80,000,000 bushels before the end of July, assuming that 8,000,000 bushels more than domestic requirements are kept in the country as reserve, and remembering that 10,000,000 bushels of the present Argentine crop are in Europe. Australia, the other wheat growing state of the southern hemisphere, is expected to contribute 40,000,000 bushels to the European supply. It has already forwarded 8,000,000 bushels, and between now and next July cannot be expected to export more than 25,000,000 bushels. Australia will keep eight or ten million as reserve till the crop of the autumn of 1909 is assured. North America is expected to ship between now and July 31st, 68,000,000 bushels of wheat, an average of 2,600,000 bushels per week. Last week, America shipped 2,112,000, the week before 2,478,000 bushels. She will have to ship wheat at a livelier pace than has been set in any week for some time, if an average of 2,600,000 bushels is to be started towards Europe in each one of the 26 weeks between February 1st and July 31st. As a matter of fact, it is hardly possible to believe America capable of forwarding anything near this estimated total. Unless there is an unusual quantity of wheat still in the producers' hands and not rated as visible, America will have to be tempted strongly before she can come within ten millions of doing what is required of her.

For the remainder of its next half year's supply the world is looking to Europe, rather Europe is looking to herself and to India to some extent, to Russia and the Danubian country. Russia and the Danube are rated capable of exporting 30,000,000 bushels. India, whose wheat crop is said now to be assured, may export, possibly, ten or fifteen million bushels between harvest and the end of July. Other small shippers may contribute four or five millions. Adding these to the foregoing, and making rather optimistic estimates all through, we find that in the half year period from February 1st to July 31st, 1909, the wheat producing countries will supply the world with approximately 222,400,000 bushels of wheat. The estimated requirements, based on the record of previous consumption is 250,400,000 bushels. Where are the 28,000,000 bushels to come from to tide consumers along to the point indicated? That point reached, where will these supplies come from until the harvest of 1909 is in full flood?

There is always a certain quantity of wheat in farmer's hands. North America could scrape up more of the cereal, if it were required of her than she will if it is not. But there is every indication in the situation as viewed at present to warrant the expectation that, a few months hence, the world's position regarding the supply of her first food material will be more critical than it has been any time in recent years. We are emerging from a short crop year with our reserves down to the limit, and the year has five months still to run. We are wanting more wheat than the producers seem capable of getting together for us. On this continent we are approaching a new cereal year with prospects none too bright for its being a bumper crop one. As a matter of fact, it is difficult at present to see how North America, that is, Canada and the United States, will be able to ship as much wheat next year as they did this. Two-thirds of the United States wheat crop is fall sown. Last year, it is a well known fact, the acreage sown in the fall wheat country was seriously reduced. Some of this land will grow spring wheat, but not all of it by any means. This continent has the making of wheat prices for the present, and, apparently, for some little time in the future. Europe is entirely dependent upon foreign aid, and while it may be reasonably supposed that more wheat will be sown next year in Europe than has been the case for some years, we are likely to see some violence in the wheat markets between now and the time when the crop of 1909 will be offered for consumption. There will be slumps, of course, but the general trend must be upward.

Comments on the Grass Seeding Articles

EDITOR FARMER'S ADVOCATE:

Will you be good enough to grant space for a short criticism of the 1st and 2nd prize articles on "To seed 10 acres stubble land to grass in Sask.," published in your issue of the 3rd inst?

In case the enquirer from S. E. Saskatchewan might be tempted by the prospect of a double crop to follow the method which Mr. Ray found so successful, we will refer to the 2nd prize article first.

The method by which Mr. Ray obtained such excellent results would be all right were the prospect of an oat crop the only consideration, but where a catch and stand of grass is desired, I have no hesitation in saying that in eight out of ten years in nine out of ten districts in Saskatchewan, the seeding of a nurse crop with rye grass would result in almost absolute failure of the latter. In the first place, land in three years after fallow is in the worst possible shape to conserve moisture, and even if the June rains are abundant and a good start is secured, if rains in July and August, the critical time with the young grass plants, are not frequent and more than ordinarily heavy, the grass stands a mighty poor chance of holding its own with an oat crop. Anyone who is familiar with Saskatchewan conditions will at once see that only an exceptional year would produce the results secured by Mr. Ray from land in the shape mentioned, as 45 bushels of oats would be a bumper "third" crop without any catch crop.

Then, I would hesitate to sow rye grass seed as deep as it is usual to sow oats or to sow oats as shallow as rye grass seed should be sown on spring plowing of stubble. In exceptional years, both might do well at any depth, but as it is rather difficult to say what this year will be like, I believe the best plan is to adopt a method that has proven successful in an average of ten or twelve years.

Mr. Blake's methods are probably quite suitable for the heavy clay soil of the Pense-Regina districts and for some sections of the Soo and Arcola lines as far east as Weyburn and Francis, but in the lighter lands of S. E. Saskatchewan, and, in fact, in 90% of the province, four discings of stubble early in the spring would result in a dust-bed which would be transferred to some other part of the neighborhood by the first high wind. Mr. Blake does not say when the seed should be sown, but from his letter, one would infer that it should be about 10 days after the early spring cultivation. With this I cannot agree, as on stubble land worked in the way he suggests, the seed that was not blown away—if any—would be dormant throughout the greater part of May, waiting for the June rains, for, as the average Saskatchewan farmer knows, there would not usually be sufficient moisture during May in stubble-land disced four times to start even weed seeds.

Mr. Blake does not recommend a nurse crop for rye grass, but says that if a permanent pasture is desired, for either hay or grazing, a mixture of orchard grass, hard fescue, Kentucky blue grass, rye grass, Timothy, alsike and white clover should be sown with ½ bushel grain per acre. I am not prepared to say that the mixture is not all right, although I doubt it, as I have never yet seen a permanent pasture in Saskatchewan that would produce a decent hay crop; but I do say that the same argument that was used against a nurse crop with rye grass holds good with this or any other mixture or single grass, under similar conditions of soil and cultivation.

I would very much like to hear the experience of farmers in other parts of Saskatchewan who have tried sowing with a nurse crop on similar cultivation, if the FARMER'S ADVOCATE is not already tired of the subject.

FARMER.

(We always have room for the publication of experiences that help to understand better our conditions.—Ed.)

The Use of the Soil Packer

EDITOR FARMER'S ADVOCATE:

"I would like to have some advice as to what kind of packer would be the most satisfactory; and also when would be the best time to use it, before seeding or after?"

E. S.

Fleming, Sask.
The only soil packer I feel like recommending is the sub-surface packer. Rollers and clod crushers only partially fill the requirements. For the best conditions for plant growth, the soil should be made fine for several inches and then firmly packed. for say four or five inches. No

roller or sod crusher will do this, but it is necessary that a series of bevelled rings be run on the ground so as to reach the above depth and thus pack it solidly. The bevel on the wheels acts like a wedge, and does the work much better than a roller would. I understand that a number of firms, both in Canada and the United States, make this class of machine.

The sub-surface packer should be used directly after the plow, for the soil packs much better when moist than when dried out; a light harrowing is sometimes beneficial after packing, but it is not a good plan to harrow too fine or the soil may drift in high winds.

S. A. BEDFORD.

(There is room for discussion on this subject.—Ed.)

Grass for Hay and Pasture

EDITOR FARMER'S ADVOCATE:

I have a pasture composed of low and high land, which I wish to bring under cultivation to grow hay and provide pasture in the fall. Would breaking directly after spring work and then back-setting in about three weeks, working it down fine and sowing to grass and oats, give a satisfactory catch? What variety of grass would you advise to sow for hay in this district?

Stoughton, Sask.

J. S. D.

I would advise our correspondent to plow his pasture field in early spring with a breaking plow, quite thinly, then backset as soon as the sod has rotted, but not sooner. If the breaking is rolled as soon as finished, it will greatly hasten the rotting of the sod, and enable him to backset it earlier. When backsetting, an inch or two of additional soil should be thrown up to give a better seed bed. Grass seed should then be sown at once and harrowed in without a nurse crop. The variety of grass most suitable will depend upon the nature of the soil. If the land is naturally moist and the soil a rich black loam, timothy will probably prove satisfactory; or a mixture of five lbs. of timothy and ten pounds of western rye can be tried. For permanent pasture nothing equals Brome grass, it is very vigorous, quickly recovers when eaten off and starts early in spring and continues green late in fall. It is, however, very difficult to eradicate in strong or springy soil. On light sandy soils there is not this objection to brome and a large area of this grass is now being sown on such soils. Should brome in time become too thick, it should be plowed thinly with a breaker and not backset. This will kill enough of the grass to make it the right thickness, and it will be some years before it becomes too thick again.

S. A. BEDFORD.

(See also other suggestions on grass seeding in this issue. Ed.)

Treating Oats for Smut

Would you advise me as to the best and most practical method to treat, with formaldehyde, six hundred bushels of oats that are free from weed seed or wild oats.

Are the picklers that are on the market a success?

How can I be assured that the formaldehyde is of the required strength?

Alta.

P. L. C.

To prepare formaldehyde liquid for treating all kinds of grain, mix one pound of 40 per cent. formaldehyde in a barrel of water, a common coal oil barrel will do, stir well, then either spray, sprinkle with a watering pot, having a fine rose, or use a grain pickler. In the hands of a careful person nearly all the sprinklers are a success. For economy of labor, the picklers are the most satisfactory, but a spray pump having a fine nozzle is the most economical of liquid. The amount of liquor required for a hundred bushels of grain depends largely on the manner of application and the care taken by the operator. In every case, great care should be taken that the grain is turned frequently so as to moisten every kernel.

A number of samples of formaldehyde was purchased at several of the drug stores in the province a few years ago and forwarded to the chemist of the Experimental Farm, Ottawa, and in every case they were up to the standard, and I do not think that much weak formalin is offered for sale here, and if one buys from a dealer who keeps a fresh stock, it should be all right.

After the grain has been treated, it should be shoveled into a pile and allowed to stand for a few hours well covered with bags to keep in the fumes. Treated grain should be sown within a day or two of treating, otherwise the germination may be injured.

As all grain swells more or less when treated, allowance must be made for this increase in bulk when setting the grain drill, otherwise the stand in the field will be thin. Formaldehyde is a perfect remedy for smut in oats and if treated properly with it there should not be a smutty head in an acre.

S. A. BEDFORD.