

**Agriculture in Nova Scotia\***

E. S. Archibald, B. S. A., Truro.

As a province we realize the need of agricultural advancement in every branch. Probably the greatest need is agricultural education, and I assure you that the work of the Canadian Seed Growers' Association is very materially aiding us in the solution of this problem. Not in the advancement of seed interests alone, but also in other matters, is this association demonstrating the advantages of modern farm practices, such as shorter rotation of crops, superior tillage, the handling of fertilizers and allied problems.

The question of drainage is extremely important with us, and the action of the N.S. Government along this line might come under the category of experiments. We have purchased a drainage machine and proposed for the coming year to survey and dig drains for farmers at nominal prices, in order to stimulate this much needed operation. There is also proposed a loan to farmers, who desire underdrainage, yet who cannot find ready cash for the same. This as yet has not materialized, but in general outline is similar to that of the Ontario Government, and promises well.

**CROP IMPROVEMENT.**

All these problems must be considered in order to form a solid foundation, and maximum returns from branches, such as seed improvement. The interest taken in crop improvement is growing rapidly. To illustrate: At the Short Course of 1906 the seed classes were poorly attended, while in the past two years they were the most popular of all classes, Live Stock included. This growing interest is due largely to the stimulus given by the C. S. G. A., together with aid received from the Ontario Agricultural College, Macdonald College and the Central Experimental Farm, Ottawa. I would like to call particular attention to our Maritime Seed Inspector, Mr. S. J. Moore, who in his routine of seed inspection, as well as seed fairs, farmers' meetings, etc., has had a marked influence on the rapid progress of improved seed in Nova Scotia.

As there was a strong demand from our farmers for greater attention to variety tests, registered seed, fertilizer tests and the like, our department deemed it advisable to carry on experiments on a larger scale. For the year 1909 I was given charge of the same. The results, even as one year's records, bring out many interesting and valuable facts. In the 15 varieties of oats tested in one-hundredth acre plots, the leading variety was the Early Blossom, which yielded over 64 bushels to the acre. The seed of this was registered by and obtained from Mr. Donald Innis, Tobique River, N. B., who is a very prominent worker in the C. S. G. A. The variety standing third in this list was the Black Tartarian, at 45½ bushels per acre. This also being from a member of the C. S. G. A. In fact, the seven leading varieties were all from seed which had been selected for several years. This is certainly a strong recommendation to the farmers of Nova Scotia in obtaining not only pure seed, but also varieties suitable to their conditions, and from hand selected stock. Other experiments made with oats were no rates of seeding and continuous selection.

**RATES OF SEEDING.**

Amongst the farmers of our province there is a wide variation in rates of seeding of oats, varying from two to six bushels per acre. Although the season of 1909 was not advantageous for the stooling of oats, yet banner oats seeded at the rate of two bushels per acre, gave the heaviest yields;

at the same time, maturing grain, which weighed heavier per bushel, and gave a lower percentage of hull. I would like to hear the experience of Profs. Zavitz, Klinek and others regarding the relationship between rates of seeding and date of maturity, weight per bushel and percentage of hull. The questions of weight per bushel, and hull content, are comparatively new to our farmers, but they are grasping the importance of the same, and already we can see good results. Mr. Harry Brown of Wallace Bay, who is a member of the C. S. G. A., has already done considerable valuable work in the selection from his breeding plot of Banner oats, plants which mature earlier, are thinner of hull and weigh heavy per measured bushel.

**SIX BUSHELS PER ACRE MORE.**

We also conducted an experiment regarding the comparative yield of heavy versus light seed, as it came from a first-class grain grader and fan. As a one year's test, this was very satisfactory. The yield from the heavy plump seed, averaging six bushels per acre over the others. I have also made a hand selection of Banner oats, sufficient for quarter acre plot, during the coming year. Our farmers are also very much interested in variety such as Regenerated Abundance, Regenerated Tartar King and other varieties put out by the Garton Seed Company. We propose testing some of these varieties, in quarter acre plots, during the coming season.

We also tested varieties of barley, with very good success. This is a crop which needs promotion in our province, there being only 10,600 acres during the season 1909, averaging 23 bushels per acre. The two-rowed varieties are by far the most commonly grown, but I think for the average districts a good six-rowed variety would give far greater yields. For the past year on plots the Oederbrucker led with 58 bushels per acre, while our best two-rowed variety, Duckbill, yielded only 42½ bushels.

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