

1916 Wheat Crop --- 236 Million Bushels

Government Report for End of June Forecasts Bumper Crop in Average Yield. Condition Above Normal

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We are able now, from reports received at the end of June, to form a fairly clear idea as to the general nature of the present season, and effect that it is likely to have upon agriculture production. An old farming adage is that "a dripping June keeps all things in tune." If this ancient saw holds good in Eastern Canada, there should be no discord this year, for the rainfall throughout Quebec and Ontario during June has been one of the heaviest on record. The critical period will really be the month through which we are now passing; and so far the weather of July has made divine amends for the excesses of Jupiter Pluvius in June.

The Wheat Crop.

The Census and Statistics Office publishes annually two estimates of the areas sown to field crops: one a preliminary estimate after the end of May, the other a month later after the end of June. This year the May estimate was issued when much of the seeding had not been completed because of the late spring, and therefore the second and final estimate at the end of June should have the greater value. As a matter of fact both estimates are not greatly divergent, but the June estimates are uniformly somewhat higher than those of May. The following statement shows the estimated acreage under wheat for the coming harvest, with the comparative figures for the two preceding seasons:

Provinces	1914		1915		1916	
	Acres	Acres	Acres	Acres	Acres	Acres
Maritime Provinces	56,600	61,700	61,900	200a	0.3a	5,300
Quebec	55,000	71,000	70,000	1,000	1.4	15,000
Ontario	834,400	1,093,000	875,800	217,200	20.0	41,400
North West Provinces	9,335,400	11,744,700	10,493,200	1,251,500	10.6	1,157,800
British Columbia	12,500	16,000	16,700	700a	4.0a	4,200
Total	10,293,900	12,986,400	11,517,600	1,468,800	11.3	1,223,700

a—Increase.

Thus the wheat area for the current year's harvest is placed at 11,517,600 acres, an estimate however which is liable to revision when the results of the present Northwest Census shall have been ascertained later in the year. It will be noted from the table that while the area is 11.3 per cent less than last year it is yet 11.9 per cent above the area of 1914. Definite knowledge of the area sown goes a long way towards forming an idea of the total yield. The only other factor that can at this stage help us is the condition of the growing crop. At the end of June telegraphic crop reports were collected by the Census Office from all parts of Canada, and those which came in from the Northwest Provinces concurred in the statement that the wheat crop was showing high promise. The numerical condition assigned by the Census Office on the compilation of the reports from all its correspondents was, for the west, quite as high as last year; but as this year's crops were from ten days to a fortnight late the risk of damage from early frosts before ripening is greater; and therefore much will depend upon this uncertain factor. With plenty of moisture in the ground, what is now required is a good ripening season and freedom from frost. In the eastern parts of Canada, especially Ontario and Quebec, the excessive rains during June have not been favorable to the wheat crop, low-lying lands especially suffering. The grain crops in Ontario and Quebec are in many cases looking yellow and patchy, and favorable weather is needed this month for their recovery. For all Canada, the numerical condition assigned to the wheat crop at the end of June was just over 100, this figure representing the average yield per acre for the past eight years. Consequently as the average yield per acre for this period was 20 1-2 bushels, we may anticipate from the area estimated to be sown a total production of upwards of 236 million bushels, a larger total than in any previous year excepting only last year's record of 376 million bushels. In this calculation it is assumed that conditions between June 30 and the time of harvest will be equal to the aver-

age; that is that the seasonal phenomena after the end of June will not be abnormal. Experience however has shown that the harvest may turn out greatly different from any forecasts that may be made from the condition of the growing crop at the end of June. For instance, on June 30, 1913, an average crop was anticipated, but the actual yield per acre was 10 per cent above average; in 1914 the anticipation at June 30 was for 3 per cent above average; in the result the yield was 20 per cent below it; and on June 30th, 1915 the condition pointed to a yield per acre of about 8 per cent above average, but it turned out actually to be at least 53 per cent above average. Apparently the month of July is such a critical time for the wheat crop that forecasts made a month previously cannot be depended upon with any great degree of confidence.

Other Grain Crops.

Next to wheat, oats is the most important of the Canadian field crops, and for the current year the estimated acreage is 10,644,000 as compared with 11,365,000 last year. The following statement shows for Canada the acres under grain crops other than wheat for the three years 1914, 1915 and 1916.

Crop	1914		1915		1916	
	Acres	Acres	Acres	Acres	Acres	Acres
Oats	10,061,500	11,365,000	10,644,000			
Barley	1,495,600	1,509,350	1,397,900			

Crop	Decrease compared with 1915		Increase compared with 1914	
	Acres	p.c.	Acres	p.c.
Oats	700a	0.3a	5,300	9.3
Barley	1,000	1.4	15,000	27.3
Other Grains	217,200	20.0	41,400	4.9
Wheat	1,251,500	10.6	1,157,800	12.4
Total	2,177,700	4.0a	4,200	33.6

Root and Fodder Crops.

As is apparent from the following statement root and fodder crops show some falling off in the areas sown, as compared with the last two years.

Crops	1914			1915			1916		
	Acres	Acres	Acres	Acres	Acres	Acres	Acres	Acres	
Potatoes	475,900	478,600	448,800						
Turnips, etc.	175,000	172,700	156,200						
Corn for husking	256,000	253,300	183,700						
Corn for fodder	317,000	343,400	297,000						
Sugar Beets	12,100	18,000	15,000						
Hay and Clover	7,997,000	7,875,000	7,974,000						
Alfalfa	90,315	92,630	89,900						

In some cases this is doubtless due to the greater attention given to wheat; but for the present year it is also due to the difficulties of seeding caused by the excessively wet weather of June in Quebec and Ontario. Farmers in Ontario have partly saved matters by sowing more land to buckwheat, which is one of the latest crops to be put in; but both in Ontario and in Quebec, they will find their best compensation in the abundant hay crops, which at the time of writing there is every prospect of harvesting in prime condition. With the continuance of the demand for hay for export at good prices, the gain should be a real one, and there should also be a further good effect in an abundance of dry fodder for live stock next winter. On this account the smaller production of corn will not be greatly felt.

Aggregating the acres estimated to be sown to all field crops, we find, for 1916, a total acreage of 34,509,900. This is less than last year by about 2 1-2 million acres; but is more than in 1914 by over one million acres. Owing to the conditions of seeding this year, it is certain that in many sections more

land will be in summer fallow than last year and should therefore take effect in better crops next year.

Altogether the present outlook for the harvest of 1916, though not so rosy as was that of last year under the circumstances of an exceptional season, is yet one of great promise.

Numbers of Farm Live Stock.

The following statement shows the estimated numbers of horses, cattle, sheep and swine in Canada at the end of June, 1916, compared with the two preceding years:

Description	1914	1915	1916
Horses	2,947,738	2,996,099	2,990,635
Milch Cows	2,673,286	2,666,846	2,603,345
Other Cattle	3,863,531	3,399,155	3,826,519
Sheep	2,058,045	2,038,662	1,965,101
Swine	3,434,261	3,111,900	2,814,672

The chief feature noticeable in these figures is the continued decline in the numbers of sheep and swine. Horses and milch cows are somewhat fewer in number, but there is a satisfactory increase in the number of cattle, as compared with 1915. The decreases apply principally to Eastern Canada. In the West all descriptions show increases over last year, except for swine in all three provinces and "other cattle" in Manitoba.

Additional Shell Orders

Production Speeded Up and Women Workers to be Recruited.

The announcement to-day that the Imperial Munitions Board has received from the British Government further orders for thirty-five million dollars' worth of heavy shells for delivery early in 1917 brings the total of British orders in Canada for shells and high explosives up to over half a billion dollars. The new order includes mainly six-inch and nine-point two-inch shells.

So far Canada has delivered a little over two hundred million dollars' worth of shells according to the "Globe". At the present time deliveries are averaging nearly one million dollars' worth per day. By the end of the year Chairman Flavelle of the Imperial Munitions Board says the output will be at least thirty-five million dollars' worth per month. About three hundred million dollars' worth of orders are now in process of being filled by some four hundred Canadian firms. The new fuse manufacturing plant established near Montreal is now in satisfactory operation, and Canada can now produce for Great Britain over a score of thousand*of shells every day all ready for the artillery at the front to fire.

Women Workers.

The chief difficulty now being experienced in speeding up the Canadian output of shells is the lack of skilled workmen for the munitions factories. There is a general scarcity of labor. Thousands of men who might have been available for munition work have been recruited and sent to the front. New workers are being trained but shell contractors report great difficulty in procuring them. As one means of meeting the situation the Munitions Board is now urging the recruiting of women to work in munitions factories. In Great Britain there are now tens of thousands of girls and women thus employed and their work has been of inestimable value to the cause of the allies. They are easily trained to handle machines and have proved competent and reliable workers. Chairman Flavelle believes there are thousands of women in Canada who would be glad to do essential war work. An illustrated book of instruction on the employment and training of women munition workers, issued by the Ministry of Munitions, has been sent to every manufacturer in Canada engaged on munitions contracts. There are already hundreds of girls and women employed in the shell factories of Canada. They are reported to be giving good satisfaction. More are needed.

LETTERS FROM THE FRONT.

The Canadian Bank of Commerce has issued No. 5 of the pamphlets devoted to a record of the part played by officers of the bank in the great war. The present pamphlet contains, in addition to the Honor Roll of those members of the bank's staff killed in action or who have died during the past six months, a list of casualties, and wherever possible news of the casualty. There is also a list of members of the staff who have taken up military duty.

A number of most interesting letters from officers and men at the front are also included, all of which make up a valuable record of the great part being played by members of the staff in the Great War.

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