

CROP ACREAGE IS REDUCED IN 1920

Yield is Substantially Increased, However—Record Harvest of Oats—Quality of Cereals Much Better—Condition of Root and Fodder Crops Improved

A DEFINITIVE statement of the areas sown to the principal field crops in Canada for the year 1920, as compared with 1919, together with a second or provisional estimate of total yields, has been prepared by the Dominion Bureau of Statistics. The statement shows that the acreage was reduced, but notwithstanding the yield was greatly increased. The quality of cereals and roots was also substantially improved.

The areas are estimated on the basis of returns collected last June from individual farmers throughout Canada under arrangements made between the Dominion and provincial governments for the joint collection of the annual agricultural statistics of Canada. These have been in force since 1917 for four provinces and since 1918 for all the provinces. The provisional estimate of total yields is based upon the areas so established and upon returns of the average yields per acre as reported by crop correspondents at the end of September.

Areas of Field Crops

The total areas estimated to be sown to the principal field crops for 1920 are in acres as follows, the comparative figures for 1919 being given within brackets: Wheat, 18,232,374 (19,125,968); oats, 15,849,928 (14,952,114); barley, 2,551,919 (2,645,509); rye, 649,654 (753,081); peas, 186,348 (230,351); beans, 72,163 (83,577); buckwheat, 378,476 (444,732); flax, 1,428,164 (1,093,115); mixed grains, 811,634 (901,612); corn for husking, 290,316 (264,607); potatoes, 784,544 (818,767); turnips, etc., 290,286 (317,296); hay and clover, 10,379,292 (10,595,383); alfalfa, 238,556 (226,869); fodder corn, 588,977 (511,769). For oats the area returned for 1920 is the highest on record.

Yield of Principal Cereals

According to the reports of crop correspondents at the end of September, the average yields in bushels per acre of the principal cereals, as compared with the averages for 1919 in brackets, are as follows: Wheat, 16 (10); oats, 34¼ (26¼); barley, 25¼ (21¼); rye, 18¾ (13½); peas, 19¾ (14¾); beans, 20 (16½); buckwheat, 26¼ (23½); flax, 7½ (5); mixed grains, 38¾ (31); corn for husking, 47¼ (64). The provisional estimate of the total yields of these crops, in bushels, is as follows: Wheat, 293,361,000 (193,260,400); oats, 543,058,000 (394,387,000); barley, 65,559,000 (56,389,400); rye, 12,190,000 (10,207,400); peas, 3,702,800 (3,406,300); beans, 1,435,800 (1,388,600); buckwheat, 9,966,500 (10,550,800); flax, 10,756,000 (5,472,800); mixed grains, 31,427,000 (27,851,700); corn for husking, 13,696,000 (16,940,500). The yield of oats for 1920 is the highest on record.

Prairie Yield

The following is the second or provisional estimate, in bushels, of the grain yields in the three prairie provinces, the corresponding totals for 1920 being given within brackets: Wheat, 263,915,000 (165,544,300); oats, 323,270,000 (235,580,000); barley, 42,789,000 (36,682,400); rye, 9,040,000 (7,262,400); and flaxseed, 10,307,000 (5,232,300). By provinces, the estimated yields are: Manitoba—Wheat, 37,879,000 (40,975,300); oats, 56,219,000 (57,698,000); barley, 18,040,000 (17,149,400); rye, 2,415,000 (4,089,400); flaxseed, 1,465,000 (520,300). Saskatchewan—Wheat, 138,340,000 (89,994,000); oats, 148,098,000 (112,157,000); barley, 11,289,000 (8,971,000); rye, 2,802,000 (2,000,000); flaxseed, 7,986,000 (4,490,000). Alberta—Wheat, 87,696,000 (34,575,000); oats, 118,953,000 (65,725,000); barley, 13,460,000 (10,562,000); rye, 3,823,000 (1,173,000); flaxseed, 856,000 (222,000).

The quality of the cereal crops at harvest time, as compared with a standard of 100, which represents the average weight per measured bushel for the ten years, 1910-19 is

reported as follows, the corresponding percentages for 1919 being given within brackets: Fall wheat, 102 (96); spring wheat, 96 (91); all wheat, 98 (92); oats, 101 (90); barley, 99 (89); rye, 98 (92); peas, 100 (91); beans, 99 (95); buckwheat, 97 (96); mixed grains, 102 (94); flaxseed, 97 (93); corn for husking, 101 (94).

The condition of root and fodder crops at the end of September, expressed in percentage of the decennial average, was as follows: Potatoes, 101 (95); turnips, etc., 98 (91); sugar beets, 100 (85); fodder corn, 102 (95); alfalfa, 99 (91). The figures within brackets are those of September 30th, 1919.

MERITS OF PUBLIC UTILITIES

A small booklet issued by Nesbitt, Thomson and Co., Montreal, entitled, "The Indispensable Servants of Our Community Life," presents the case of public utilities securities for the consideration of Canadian investors. While admitting the serious position to which these companies had fallen a year ago by reason of limited earnings and mounting costs, the booklet claims several advantages for the companies to-day as follows:—

"1. Operating costs following the general price decline have begun to recede.

"2. Rates for service rendered have in most cases been increased by popular vote, or by the decision of public utility commissions.

"3. During the past few months the net earnings of most companies have shown an increase.

"4. A great many Canadian companies generate their power from water and are not seriously affected by coal costs."

TWO INDUSTRIES ARE DULL

In its November letter the Royal Bank of Canada summarizes business conditions as follows:—

"A period of readjustment such as that which most industries are now facing is always one of peculiar difficulty. A fortunate characteristic of the Canadian market is its tendency to move more deliberately than that of the United States, thereby giving Canadian industries more time and opportunity to prepare themselves for altered conditions. Basically, Canada's commercial position is a sound one and general business is far from being bad. Wholesale and retail trade conditions are less favorable than they were at this date last year, but the money actually realized or expected from large crops is having a beneficial effect. A marked disposition has been noted on the part of purchasers in both the wholesale and retail trades to hold back in expectation of lower prices. Future orders are affected more than purchases for immediate delivery. The latter are good, especially in the west. This is a logical development of the general uncertainty as to next year's price level. Taking Canada as a whole, the industries in which special dullness is reported are clothing and boots and shoes. Hardware is the only trade in which increased prices are reported.

"The labor situation throughout the Dominion appears, for the most part, to be very much improved. Reports show that labor is more efficient and that the men are more anxious to hold their positions than they have been at any time since armistice. Some unemployment is anticipated on the Pacific Coast when the laborers return from the prairie provinces after the harvesting.

"It is reported from all over Canada that the building operations that have been undertaken are absolutely inadequate. The housing situation is poor; there is the greatest scarcity and rents are high. Shipping on the lake and river boats has been quiet during the summer, but considerable improvement has taken place recently on account of the movement of grain and consequent demand for cargo space. Several eastern Canadian shipbuilding plants, called into existence by the needs of the war, are now idle."