

### *Metric System*

seed oats might weigh 36 to 42 lbs. per bushel—if less we might be reluctant to buy. Of course we may all carry around a new litre pail and new metric scale (no matter what the cost) in our new brief case full of government metric propaganda (which we have already paid for, except for the interest) showing us how many kg/ha we should seed in our old drill which we should discard because we can't get bolts and nuts, chains, V belts and gears to fix.

Or we might measure our seed wheat in hectolitres—one hectolitre being 2.838 bushels—

This is like a good study in calculus back at school.

**Mr. Lang:** You can do it. It just takes a hecto-day.

**Mr. Paproski:** I continue:

—so should weigh approximately 170.28 lbs.

That is just about my weight.

● (1550)

We might have to import an Olympic weight lifter to fill our drill though as at \$77.81 per tonne for wheat we certainly can't afford to buy a new drill fill and our old one is waiting for a new hydraulic hose and fitting that won't fit anyway.

You didn't tell us how simple it will be, Mr. Editor, to spray our crops with so many litres, grams and milligrams per hectare with our old pails of 64 or 80 or 128 ounce acid equivalent per gallon in our old sprayer tank with our new sprayer pump (again no matter what the cost), that pumps so many litres per minute. Now if we figure the above without error, we can field test to be sure. We will travel to the old half-mile fence with our old 45-foot sprayer, get out our calculator and our brief case and find to our amazement that one foot equals 0.3048 metre times 45 equals 13.716 metres divided by 1,000 equals .013716 kilometres, and also one mile equals 1.609 kilometres times one half equals 0.8045 kilometres. We now bounce the decimal three places to the right ( $\times 1,000$ ) and end up with 804.5 metres. Now  $804.5 \times 13.716$  equals 11034.522 square metres which could be so many hectares on which we should use so many litres of fluid containing so many kilograms of concentrate.

I am sure this is old hat to the minister in charge of the Wheat Board. He has been educated in this program and knows what it is all about. I continue:

Please, Mr. Editor, would you help me out as I just lost my concentration? Oh! I forgot to tell you I still have my old pressure gauge on the sprayer—I was spraying at 45 pounds per square inch and travelling at 5 1/3 miles per hour with my old tractor. Anyway, I want to rush back and tell my wife, whose name I've changed to Zaza Zaza as she is now  $91.44 \times 66.04 \times 96.52$ , to bring out dinner to the back 40—I mean 16,187,778 ha's (40 plus 2,471).

Think, Mr. Editor, of the implications to the building industry. In a few years what will we replace 4-foot  $\times$  8-foot sheets of plywood, sheet metal for roofing on 2-foot centres and certain lengths of lumber to repair corrals or fences where we have installed pressure treated posts, maybe even in cement, that will last some 30 years.

A neighbour of mine recently made a trip to Denmark where they changed to metrics some 65 or so years ago. He says they have had and are still having many problems in the building industry.

I believe the government has done a great selling job on metrics, on down through the provincial governments, the grains industry and other organizations, with little or no input from the grass roots—the people who will pay the shot. The government tells us Canada will under metrification be more able to sell manufactured goods. I ask you, what will we export, shirts to Korea, or more reactors to Argentina? Like it or not, Canada does 60 per cent of our trade with the United States and until such time as they change—a change that is meeting ever increasing opposition from what I read and hear, I really can't see the staggering expense involved being justified. Is it so costly for our grains industry to continue converting large volumes of grain to metric tons at the terminals? I don't think so!

Is it, Mr. Editor, the right time to burden farmers with the added costs involved in the change—new scales, new tape measures, new tap and dye set, two separate supplies of bolts and nuts, hydraulic hose and fittings, fuel lines and brass fittings, V-belts, tool sets, drill sets, etc., etc? I really don't think so!

[Mr. Paproski.]

I would therefore like to advise all interested farmers to express their feelings on metrification now, by letter or phone, to their respective member of parliament.

Or the minister in charge of small business who is in charge of metric conversion. I continue:

I would also like at this time, Mr. Editor, to invite you to help me with my crop spraying this spring, as I must concede that I cannot learn the conversions in a few days, as you state in your editorial. The directions to my farm from Wainwright are 1.609 kilometres east, 12.872 north, 4.0225 east, 12.872 north, 4.0225 northwest, 2.4135 northeast, and 3.419125 kilometres north. Please disregard all the old crossroads but keep a close watch on your odometer in your new (no matter what the cost) 1977 car.

That letter says it all. For the benefit of the minister responsible for small business, I wish to include in the record certain remarks. Speaking to the conference on the impact of metric conversion in North America, Mr. John Bulloch, president of the Canadian of Independent Business, said:

While the results of the metric conversion process may benefit Canada in the long-run, if we are not careful, the changeover process could do real harm to the small business community. The theme of my remarks is, "a milligram of prevention is worth a kilogram of cure."

It will be the responsibility of the Canadian Federation of Independent Business to maximize the benefits and minimize the harmful effects of the metric changeover on small business. Most small businessmen do not yet fully understand the implications of the problem involved in metrification.

It will be very difficult for the metric commission to fully involve the 650,000 members of the independent business community in the changeover process. It is true that many trade associations and other organizations are now, or will be, represented on the various metric sector committees and subcommittees. Unfortunately, these associations and organizations simply do not, and cannot, adequately represent small business. Larger firms can afford the time and money needed to be involved in trade associations or sector committee meetings. The small businessman, by definition, has to mind the store.

The federation is a non-partisan, political action organization of small and medium-size, Canadian-owned businesses from every corner of the country. Our membership has grown in only three and one-half years to over 21,000. We enjoy a growth rate of over 1,000 new members per month and are projecting a membership of 50,000 for early 1977. We now own our own head office building in Don Mills, Ontario, with facilities in Ottawa, Montreal and Vancouver. Our staff of over sixty operates in all ten provinces and in both languages. We consult privately and confront politically, if necessary, forces in government, business and labour in order to protect the interests of Canada's small business community.

We are naturally concerned that our approach to metric conversion is a responsible one in the interests of our constituency and the nation as a whole. We have been in touch with the American small business community and congressmen in connection with the reported opposition to the U.S. bill by labour and small business. As you know, the opposition was not against the bill as such, but against the fact that no amendments could be made to it. A new bill will be brought down to set up a metric commission to draft the conversion programme. It is now clear that large firms in the U.S. are going full speed ahead with metric conversion. There is no doubt that large firms, particularly multi-nationals who sell in world markets, will benefit from metrification. Small firms rarely enjoy the benefits of international trade.

Our manufacturing complex is basically composed of branch plants. Domestic subsidiaries will, of necessity, convert to metric if the parent company converts. If metrification benefits foreign multi-nationals, Canadian branch plants will be in favour of it, regardless of the impact on Canadian-owned domestic businesses.

● (1600)

Because of the economic advantages enjoyed by large firms, metric conversion could hasten the current trend toward concentration of industry by a few large firms. It is difficult enough for Canadian-owned small business to avoid selling to foreign interests; we don't want to accelerate this process.

It could be that foreign firms which have had metric experience will have a head start on Canadian-owned small businesses which have not had metric