

The Outlook for Ontario Crops.

The following information regarding agricultural conditions in this Province is contained in a bulletin prepared by the Ontario Department of Agriculture, based upon information furnished by a large staff of correspondents under date of April 12th:

Fall wheat so far gives excellent promise. The top is not so heavy as usual, as much of the crop was sown late owing to wet ground; but the fields were well protected by snow during the winter, and now have a healthy and vigorous appearance. There has been but little injury from spring "heaving," and there are very few complaints of injury from insects.

The clover crop, like fall wheat, has come through the winter in good condition, except on very low places, or on poorly-drained land. There has been but little injury from heaving, and at present the promise is for one of the best hay seasons for years. Alfalfa is also promising well.

The winter was not trying to fruit trees, the greatest damage to orchards resulting from the girdling of young trees by mice and rabbits, driven to hunger by the deep snow lying so long. In instances grape vines and raspberry canes have been frozen back more or less owing to tenderness from the late fall growth, but the injury will not likely affect the general yield. Strawberries and other small fruits are about normal. The San Jose scale is still complained of in the Lake Erie counties, where it has got a hold in many old orchards, but elsewhere this pest is being combated in its earlier stages, and is being kept more under check. The general outlook at present for all classes of fruit is favorable, apple buds giving better promise than for years.

The wintering of live stock was a comparatively easy matter, owing to there being a large quantity of grain on hand which had been more or less sprouted by the wet harvesting. Corn and straw were also in abundance, although not of such good quality as in more recent years, and there was a good average of roots, but hay was scarce and high in price.

The demand for horses, notwithstanding war conditions, has not been encouraging. The animals as a rule are in good working condition, although many have suffered from a mild form of distemper.

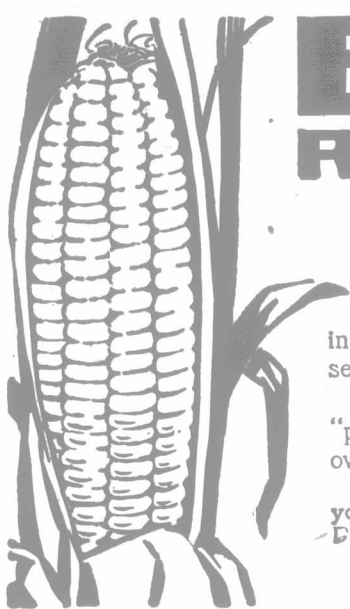
On the whole cattle have wintered well. No serious disease has been complained of, but there have been a few cases of abortion, and a more frequent complaint of a form of indigestion, said to be resulting from eating musty grain, straw, or other fodder. Dairy cattle are said to be rather thin in flesh owing to the heavy drain upon their milking powers during the rich pastures of the mid-summer and fall of last year. Beef cattle are not plentiful as usual, as prices of fat stock have been most enticing. Store cattle are also rather scarce, but are up to the average in quality, although there are complaints that some are rather of the dairy type. Calves are being better cared for than formerly.

Sheep have wintered well, and lambs are said to be coming on nicely. As with other live stock, much depends upon the handling.

A correspondent describes the hog as the farm "mortgage lifter" at present prices. The heavy demand for bacon hogs has made a shortage in the number on hand. There are even fewer complaints than usual of sickness among swine.

Owing to there being a good supply of fodder corn and of straw on hand, and also a considerable quantity of sprouted grain for feed, other fodders have held out well, although hay has been fed more sparingly than usual. Live stock will be carried over nicely to the grass.

The enlistment of so many men from the farms, and the enticing prices paid by factories making munitions and other military supplies, have caused a shortage of labor that is much felt in rural districts. Several correspondents state that in many cases there is only one man on each 100-acre farm; others say that on such farms there is only about one out of five that has a hired man left



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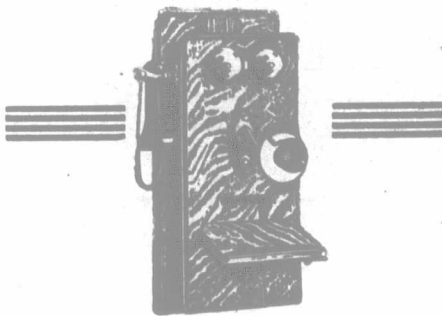
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