

Government of the Province of Saskatchewan

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

WINTER RYE

FIELD HUSBANDRY CIRCULAR No. 21.

Saskatchewan grown Rye won all the first prizes and the Championship for Winter Rye at the Dry Farming Congress, El Paso, Texas, in October, 1916.

Notwithstanding this, however, the cultivation of winter rye has as yet received but little attention in Saskatchewan. It is true that on the Experimental Farm at Indian Head rye has been grown with marked success since 1903, and of late years a few progressive farmers in the province have grown a small acreage each year. The great majority of farmers, however, have had no experience in growing this grain, and consequently do not realise that its introduction would result not only in a direct financial benefit, but would also aid materially in solving some of the problems of cultivation and management which now confront them.

The records of the Indian Head Experimental Farm show that the average yield of winter rye during seven years was 43 1-3 bushels, the highest yield recorded being 55 1-3 bushels in 1908 and the lowest 32 bushels in 1911. At Saskatoon the yields have not been so high and, in one season when the spring opened up early and spring frosts were unusually late the crop was caught by spring frosts when in the blossom stage, resulting in partial failure, locally.

Information obtained from farmers growing this crop shows that the average above mentioned is only slightly over the averages which they have obtained. The expense of growing and harvesting the crop is, approximately, the same as for growing wheat. Prior to the war when wheat was from 75c to 80c at shipping point, rye was about 60c per bushel. Of late years the price obtained at typical Saskatchewan points has ranged from 80 to 90 cents per bushel, while in October, 1916, Saskatchewan growers realised from \$1.10 to \$1.15 per bushel at point of shipment. In view of these facts the financial returns from the crop must have been highly satisfactory.

ORIGIN AND USES.

Rye has been cultivated and has had a place among both grain and pasture crops for upwards of two thousand years. Its original home is supposed to have been in South-eastern Europe, in the vicinity of the Caspian Sea. For centuries it was the principal bread food of Europe, and is still extensively used as human food in Germany, Austria, Russia, the Scandinavian peninsula and elsewhere. In