

FARM COMMENT

There are said to be 63,000 fewer farmers in Ontario today than there were nine years ago. As there were only 224,000 farmers in 1901, this would mean a decrease of 25 per cent. The decrease must be exaggerated.

The Grange in the United States takes the place of the Farmers' Institute meetings and Agricultural Society meetings in Canada. A list of subjects has been prepared for discussion at Grange meetings, and these subjects might well be dealt with at our farmers' meetings in Canada. Among the subjects are: Why and how to observe Arbor day. Wild flowers we meet and their distinguishing features. A and B live on adjoining farms; A prospers and B fails. Why? Farm water supplies and how they can best be arranged.

The family garden; preparation and care. If farmers are not adequately represented in the legislature, whose fault is it? What is the greatest question before the Canadian people today? Arbitration and universal peace. Taxation as it applies to farmers as compared with other interests. Should the 10 hour system be applied to farm work? How shall we conduct the meetings of the I. S. as to interest alike the young and old, and both sexes? Farm sanitation. How to light the farm home. Is it feasible for two or more neighbors to own certain implements cooperatively? Consolidation of rural schools. What public question should demand special attention by the institute?

Farm accounts, and the best method of keeping same. A review of what the Institute has accomplished in the past year.

"Chopped Feed." From Farm, Stock and Home: Doing one's duty is better than getting one's rights.

The man looking for trouble has none in finding it. Do not let expected September profits unduly increase the machinery bills.

Marrying a man to reform him assures a woman a life job and no slack season.

One's credit is always good when he starts out to borrow trouble. Education should teach people to do and to mind their own business. High meat prices will not worry the farmer who has home-cured hams and an occasional car of fresh meat.

The egg basket and the cream can will pay many a note bill this summer, hretore postponed until the wheat came to market.

CONTROL OF ELEVATORS. Oliver Giving Careful Consideration of This Problem.

Ottawa, April 29.—In the House of Commons this morning, Hon. Frank Oliver gave a reply to Mr. Meighen's questions in reference to the grain trade of the west. Mr. Meighen late last night quoted a telegram from a western grain man in which it was pointed out that the government had dealt with only one of the four matters laid before it by the deputations which waited upon it in February, and asked the reason for delay in dealing with the other three matters. These were outlined in last night's dispatches. Mr. Oliver this morning replied as follows:

"I was in the office of the minister of trade and commerce when Messrs. Mackenzie and Henders, representing the Western Grain Growers' Association, who were there for the purpose of presenting their views regarding possible improvements in grain trade conditions. If I remember correctly the securing of amending legislation was not the chief purpose of their representations. As I understood it, it was not much to advise as to legislation as to suggest to the government the propriety of lake front elevators being operated by persons or companies who were traders in grain; preferably to secure their operation by the government. The government has had the suggestion under careful consideration, out it was felt that the matter was one of such importance as to require more full and careful consideration than could be given it in order to reach a satisfactory decision before the close of the present session. The government has been keeping a careful scrutiny of the work of the elevators with the result that action has recently been taken that may be expected to have a material effect in improving conditions."

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PREPARE FOR COMMISSION

Grain Growers' Executive Meet to Prepare for Commission—Will Submit Evidence—The Hudson's Bay Railway.

Moose Jaw, Sask., April 27.—An important meeting of the executive of the Grain Growers' Association was held in this city today. A mass of business was transacted, necessitating an all day session. Those present were: Pres. F. M. Gates, of Fillmore; vice-president, J. A. Murray, of Wapella; A. G. Hawkes, Broadview; J. H. Maharg, Moose Jaw.

Secretary F. W. Green took charge of the members who they arrived and conducted them in an auto tour of the city.

After a pleasant trip the members of the executive met in solemn convocation to deal with the great mass of business which had accumulated since the last meeting. The most important of the business considered perhaps was that in connection with the elevator commission sittings, which commence in Regina on Thursday next. The advisability of presenting a memorandum to the commission and of securing a solicitor to take charge of the interests of the association during the sittings was considered. So also was the question of making presentation of a memo for the purpose of securing an itinerary that would be suitable to local associations throughout the province and outlining what in their opinion should be the depth of the inquiry into which the commission should go.

A Programme Outlined. In view of the fact that no plan could be prepared to cover the scope of the coming season, it was the opinion of the executive that every opportunity should be taken of the opportunities offered to make a thorough investigation of all problems in connection with securing a permanent solution of questions involved and suggested the following, as an outline of what would meet their views:

1. To gather evidence fully as to practical methods necessary for instituting government owned, and operated elevators at initial points.

2. To secure necessary evidence and make proper representation as to the necessity of co-operation by the Dominion Government in the matter of reformed facilities at terminals and in the matter of a grading system more in accordance with milling values and of establishing a sample market and at the same time to secure evidence bearing on the question of the advisability of Saskatchewan being formed into a separate inspection district.

3. In view of the near prospect of the opening of the proposed Hudson Bay route and of our wheat trade growing larger with the United States and the development of the Oriental trade necessitating the routing of grain in various directions and also the building up of a larger milling industry within the province, to consider whether the interests of this province and the producers of grain do not demand that grade be determined nearer home and provision made for sample markets within the province.

4. To inquire into the reasons causing the wide fluctuations which occur at certain seasons of the British markets in the price of Canadian wheat exceeding the fluctuations affecting wheat grown in other countries and also to enquire into the reasons why Minneapolis wheat should sell for more than Canadian wheat while at the same time Canadian flour sells on the British market for the same price as Minneapolis flour, with a view to suggestion a system of grading, storing, transportation and marketing which will ensure to the Saskatchewan grower the full value of his product.

5. And to this end that consideration be given to the matter of giving power to a permanent commission which will operate the new system to act as agents for the marketing of all grain passing through the said system—in other words that the commission of inquiry consider the advisability of applying the principle of co-operation to all grain passing through the new system as suggested in private pamphlets as well as on the draft presented by Mr. F. M. Gates through the columns of the Grain Growers' Guide in reference to quantities of less than car load lots.

In regard to subsection 5 of the memorandum the suggestion referred to is the following: "That provision be made by some system for handling single loads or quantities less than car loads and arrangements made whereby the owner of such loads may receive an advance of not less than 65 per cent, if possible 80 per cent, of the estimated value if he so desires.

THE SASKATCHEWAN FARM RECORD AND REVIEW

THE ALFALFA COMPETITION

Best Methods to Employ in Cultivation—When, Where and How to Sow and Cultivate.

Many persons upon reading the announcement which was published recently regarding the offer made by the Saskatchewan Department of Agriculture of \$5,300 in cash prizes for fields of alfalfa will be anxious to get some information regarding the growing of this important crop.

As the plot to be entered in the provincial competition must consist of at least 10 acres and must be sown not later than 1912, persons who intend to take part in the contest must soon begin their preparation. It would be well to begin with a small plot this year and the experience thus gained will be invaluable at a later date when the competition is on in earnest. 1912 will soon be here so our farmers should get busy and be among the 1,000 progressive ones who will take up this competition.

While alfalfa is adjustable to a variety of conditions and is found in all countries where agriculture is practiced it has certain well defined characteristics which must be kept in mind if the greatest degree of success in growing it is to be attained. Alfalfa thrives best on a well drained loamy soil with a porous subsoil, and a large tap root to a depth of from five to fifteen feet. While it utilizes a large quantity of water during its growth, it is essentially a drought resistant plant and kills out when sown in fields that are subject to flooding. In land that is not too heavy but inclined to be sandy its root system is better able to penetrate and draw the required supply of soluble plant food.

The soil should be well cultivated and deep plowed when grown on land which was planted in the previous year with potatoes or some other hoed crop. For the same reason a piece of summer fallow land is very valuable for alfalfa as, if it has been properly and intelligently worked, the growth of weeds will have been checked, moisture will have been conserved, the soil will be firm and in a good state of tilth so that the tiny rootlets can obtain a foothold and be able to develop for the support of the plant at a later date. This crop, however, should never be sown on summer fallow that is subject to drifting as the seed may be covered or blown away. If other suitable land is not available, a piece of stubble should be prepared early in the spring. The preparation of spring plowed land involves early plowing to a depth of about five inches followed by once or twice harrowing and packing or rolling. Plowing should be done as early as possible in May and seeding about the end of May.

It is a heavy among the worst enemies of alfalfa and a serious menace to the young crop, but if the land is well worked the weed seeds within germinating distance of the surface will have grown and been killed by frequent cultivation and the young plant will thus have a chance of developing without the competition of weeds. The cultivation necessary to secure these results will have left the land firm and with sufficient moisture near the surface. Nothing could be much worse for the young plant than a layer of loose soil at the bottom of the furrow, such as would result from leaving the plowed land without the necessary after cultivation. Never sow alfalfa with a nurse crop. Cultivate properly and let the alfalfa use the moisture that the "nurse" crop would use and thus prevent the so called "nurse" crop from becoming a "murder" crop.

The crop should be seeded during the last half of May or early in June, or at such time as there is an abundance of warmth and moisture in the soil. The quantity of seed per acre varies, but from 12 to 20 pounds per acre is sufficient for our conditions. If there are weed seeds in the soil more than this might be sown. A well worked summer fallow having reasonably heavy soil will carry a heavier stand of plants than will sandy soil spring plowed. Alfalfa can be seeded with an ordinary drill by mixing it with chopped wheat or barley and adjusting the drill to sow the required quantity. Or if one is going to sow a quantity that will make it worth while it will be found advantageous to buy a wheelbarrow grass seeder. Sowing broadcast by hand and har-

THE ALFALFA COMPETITION

rowing with a light harrow may be resorted to if the other facilities are lacking. Seeding twice, using half of seed each time, and sowing the second time at right angles to the first seeding, will give good results. The seed should be planted to a depth of 1 to 1 1/2 inches.

The seed should be clean and a hardy strain. Turkestan alfalfa is most commonly grown in this country and has proven hardy and suitable for our climate. As it is easy to practice deception in supplying seed patronize a seedsmen with a reputation for fair dealing.

For success in growing alfalfa it is necessary to have present in the soil the root nodule bacteria peculiar to alfalfa. These bacteria are not present in all soils, and the absence of them is denoted by the alfalfa plants turning yellow thus indicating a lack of thriftiness and vigor. The remedy is to apply at the rate of about 100 lbs. per acre soil obtained from an established alfalfa field. One sack can be obtained from either the Indian Head or the Lethbridge experimental farms the applicant paying the freight charges.

During the first year the plot should not be allowed to produce a crop of hay. It should be mowed several times during the first season. No should the plot be pastured before the third year. Sheep crop it too closely and swine are liable to root up the crop. If any weeds are noticed, the mower should be run over the plot before they have a chance to form seed. The last cutting should not be later than the beginning of August, and when the crop goes into the winter it should be about 8 or 10 inches high so as to collect the snow and thus protect the young plants during the winter. The cuttings during the first year may be left on the plot where they will act as a mulch.

Fuller particulars may be obtained from F. Hedley Auld, Regina, Sask., and questions relating to the growing of alfalfa will be fully answered upon request.

Alfalfa Growers Should Know. (1) What to sow. Alfalfa seed of a hardy strain and free from noxious weeds. Turkestan alfalfa is the kind most commonly grown, but home grown seed if it can be procured is likely to be the best.

(2) Where to sow. Alfalfa thrives best on a well-drained, well-tilled, firm, fertile loamy soil. Potatoes or other hoed crops leave land in good condition of alfalfa. Likewise a summer fallow, if there is not a danger of drifting, will give good results. Stubble land, plowed in the spring, well harrowed and packed, makes a good seed bed if cultivated until it is of the required firmness. Spring plowed land is not so liable as the summer fallow to drift.

(3) When to sow. Alfalfa should be sown when there is sufficient warmth and moisture to insure quick germination and rapid growth. This condition is usually found about the last half of May or early in June.

(4) How to sow. The best way to sow alfalfa is with a wheelbarrow broadcast seeder at the rate of from 12 to 20 pounds per acre. Harrow with light harrows so as to cover the seed to a depth of from 1 to 1 1/2 inches. The seed should reach moist soil but should not be placed too deep in the soil, hence the necessity for careful tillage. Alfalfa may be sown by hand or with an ordinary grain drill if the seed is mixed with chopped wheat or barley so that the quantity per acre may be carefully regulated. By using half the quantity of seed and sowing the plot a second time at right angles to the first sowing, better results may be obtained. Apply about 100 pounds per acre of soil from an established alfalfa field so as to introduce the bacteria which are essential to the healthy growth of alfalfa, and are not present naturally in all soils.

Some Don'ts. Don't sow alfalfa in land that is liable to be flooded. Don't expect every kind of alfalfa seed to produce equally good results. Don't cut a hay crop the first year.

Don't allow the weeds to seed in your alfalfa plot, but run the mower over them whenever they attain sufficient growth. Don't clip the alfalfa plot too low as this is liable to injure the crown. Don't mow the alfalfa after August but leave a good growth of from 8 to 12 inches to collect the snow and protect the plants during the winter. Don't turn to alfalfa patch into a hog pasture. Alfalfa should not be pastured before the second or third year.

Needs Good Food.—The dairy cow cannot make milk without proper feed.

FARM TELEPHONE.

Benefits That Farmer Derives From This Source.

People who live in the country and on the farm today do not realize the many benefits which they enjoy over those of the past. Really, there is no country today. What we call such is the suburbs of the city. In the olden time a visit to the city was a momentous undertaking. It required several days' time and often elaborate preparation. There was a sharp line of demarcation between the city dweller and the country dweller, which exists today only in tradition. Farmer Hayseed, if he ever existed, is a thing of the past and a standing article in the trade of jokesmith. The building of railroads was the first movement to break down the distinction between city and country, then the trolleys rapidly accelerated the work. All of these have been instrumental in the matter of giving the country dweller all the advantages of the city, with the added advantages of room, fresh air and sanitary surroundings. The country resident now has all the advantages of the city man with all the pleasures of country life added and he is infinitely better off than his city friend.

Nothing has done more to this end than has the rural telephone, which has brought neighbors and friends within earshot of each other, has afforded the dweller in the remote country opportunity to converse immediately with his friends or agents in the cities. It has annihilated time and space for him, and while sitting at his own fireside he can at the same time for all practical purposes, be in the city, or enjoying social converse with a friend in another country. There is nothing which has done so much to broaden down the loneliness of farm life as the telephone.

The farmer's family is no longer isolated, but with a rural telephone at hand they can communicate with friends at any hour of the day or night and visit socially without leaving their own homes.

While the expense of installing a telephone is comparatively light, as a convenience it is invaluable, and for conducting the business of the modern farm is absolutely indispensable. In the past, if there was a breakdown in the farm machinery, all work had to stop and the farmer had to take a day off and drive all the way to town to get the necessary repairs, or he had to wait until he could communicate with the city and get returns, sometimes losing several days of valuable time in the operation. With present arrangements, he simply takes the telephone off the hook and sends his order to town or to the more distant city, and in a very short time his machinery is running again, and perhaps several days of precious time, in the midst of the harvest season, is saved to him.

There is another way in which the telephone on the farm is valuable beyond all computation. In the case of serious accidents, or sudden sickness, when a few moments' time may mean life or death to the sufferer, medical aid can be instantly summoned and relief afforded, whereas if a team had to be hitched up and a doctor brought out, the patient might die while help was being sought.

For business, for pleasure, and for safety, the farm telephone is indispensable, and every farmer should install one. It should not be a question as to whether he can afford it, but whether he can afford to do without one. Often a single service from the instrument will save him more than the cost of installing and maintaining it.

The telephone should now be within the reach of every farmer.

Alberta Crops. The department of agriculture of Alberta has issued its final bulletin on the out-turn of the crop of 1909. This gives the total yield of wheat as 8,467,799 bushels, or 6,155,455 bushels of spring wheat, with an average yield of 18.97; 2,312,344 bushels of winter wheat with a average yield of 22.63. The yield of oats is placed at 24,819,961 bushels, or an average of 35.76 per acre; barley 3,310,332 bushels, or an average of 30.72 per acre.

This shows a very much heavier return from the crop than was anticipated by the Alberta government earlier in the crop year. The figures prepared by Deputy Minister George Harcourt for the British association in August placed the total yield of wheat at 6,790,000 bushels; oats 19,600,000 bushels, and barley 2,500,000 bushels.

It is hard to realize that the average yield of oats could have been so low as 35.76 per acre, as the crop was a very fine one, but is probably accounted for by the fact that in preparing the figures the government appears to have left the acreage at that originally seeded, while as a matter of fact there were very heavy hail losses, and some oat fields were not cut.

Needs Good Food.—The dairy cow cannot make milk without proper feed.

HOG RAISING.

(By N. H. Sorenson, Markerville, Alta.)

I use in my hog business eight acres of land bordering upon the Medicine river. The slope towards the river is covered with brush, and the rest of the land is partly native grass and partly seeded down with mixed grain for pasturage, which is a great help to keep pigs in good growing condition.

The principal building provisions pens for some 50 hogs, and in one end of it I have feed-room with tanks for storing water and buttermilk. The seed room is surrounded on three sides by feeding yards fenced in, and they are arranged so that hogs of nearly the same size are fed together.

Buildings Used. Outside of the regular feed yards I have other buildings used principally for brood sows whenever I find it advisable to separate them; while these as well as straw stacks are available for farrowing quarters. The sows seem to prefer farrowing in the bushes in summer.

Breed Yorkshire. My bunch of hogs is of the Yorkshire breed, bred from registered stock, and consisted in February, 1909, of one boar, 13 sows and 27 young hogs for fattening. During the year the brood sows had 17 litters, totalling 138 pigs of splendid vitality, farrowed as follows: Eight litters in March, five in May, and four in August. I bought 65 half-grown hogs for fattening between Sept. 11 and Nov. 15, 1909. In February last I had 25 pregnant sows and two boars, having sold altogether 297 head during the year. During pregnancy the sows are fed on oats, otherwise barley is the staple grain ration. In my experience the young pigs show less vitality when their dams have been fed largely on barley.

About Feeding. Separate feeding yards are provided for the small pigs, where they can always find barley, whole or ground, and fresh buttermilk. It is very important to have small pigs feeding well when they are weaned, and they should be fed liberally so as to keep a clean skin and a good appearance without being fat.

I start fattening the pigs when they are three to four months old and give them all the barley crop they will eat, and any buttermilk which is not needed for the small pigs. I feed regularly three times a day, but only what they will eat up clean.

Size of Pens. The best size for the pen is 12 ft. by 10 ft. with a 12 ft. trough, and it gives room for 10 hogs; larger pens and several hogs in each gives too much disturbance. The pens are cleaned out daily and some bedding is placed in one corner of each. Hogs do not thrive well unless they are kept absolutely clean, and the skin free from scurf.

In order to secure the best results we must keep the hogs comfortable and treat them kindly. A hog so handled should gain on an average of 1 1/2 lbs. per day from the day it is farrowed until it is five months old. Beyond that age every pound of grain in eight costs more than under that age.

My hogs have been in splendid health, and I have not lost a single pig from disease. This I attribute to the open air exercise and excellent shelter afforded by the husband surrounding my hog yard. It also provides shade a summer for the young pigs.

The Douks Prospering. Nelson, B. C., April 29.—Peter Veregin, head of the Doukboons Society, has purchased the Macey ranch at Grand Forks, containing 480 acres. This brings Grand Forks holding of the society up to 3,500 acres. The last previous purchase was the Vaughan estate, which has a water system and a fine orchard, Mr. Vaughan removing to Chilliwack. The Grand Forks colony has set out about 11,000 fruit trees this year, making 20,000 in all. The latter includes 4,000 prune trees. In addition to the other enterprises carried on by the Colony, a saw and grain mill is operated, also brick yards. There are 300 people in the Grand Forks colony and several hundred more are shortly to be brought out.

Canada's Wheat Yield. In average wheat yield per acre, Canada exceeds her chief competitors in the European market. They are, per acre, as follows: Russia, 10 bushels, United States 12 bushels, and Argentina 13 bushels.

Canada in 1906 produced 19 bushels, and in 1908 16 bushels per acre.

Just the Difference.—The smart man knows when to quit the game, but the fool keeps overvaluing it until he advertises his failure.

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