

provide suitable breeds for both eastern and western farming. In field crops we are carrying on the usual experiments.

Mr. SENN: In what way did the Landrace hogs fall down, and what is the prospect of their ever being produced profitably in this country?

I also mentioned flax. Are any experiments going on regarding flax?

I understand that about a year ago or more some breeding horses were brought to this country. What were those breeds, from where did they come and what was the price?

Mr. GARDINER: As to the hogs, the experiments for the four years did not show any particular weakness in the Landrace hog as a hog to be bred in this country, neither did they show any particular advantage on balance over the Yorkshires, which had already been generally distributed from coast to coast, so it was thought that there was no advantage in encouraging farmers to change from the Yorkshires which were very well established in Canada.

Mr. SENN: Were there any experiments in cross-breeding?

Mr. GARDINER: Yes, there was considerable experimenting. I think the hon. member for Haldimand went out with us four or five years ago—

Mr. SENN: No I was not there.

Mr. GARDINER: Well the results of the experiments were seen by many who visited the farm. At present the hogs are not there. There was some difficulty about obtaining boars from Sweden or elsewhere in order to keep up the proper cross-breeding of this type through Canada, so the experiment was discontinued.

Regarding flax, hon. members will recall that during the last war the acreage seeded to flax was greatly increased, I think from somewhere round twelve thousand acres to about forty thousand acres. After the war considerable difficulty was experienced as a result of the changes made; there was too much land under flax, and factories had been built to treat it which could not be fully employed after the war was over, so considerable financial difficulty arose. When this war began, similar demands were made for flax. Just prior to the war we had been carrying on certain investigations as to machines used in Belgium and elsewhere, largely produced in Belgium, for processing flax. Those machines had been introduced at two points I think, one in Ontario and one in Quebec, for experimental purposes, and those experiments were quite successful. As a result the acreage

[Mr. Gardiner.]

seeded to flax has, I believe, been about doubled up to the present as compared with years just preceding the war, the idea being to produce some of the flax fibre which is required to supply the needs of Great Britain and also to supply seed for Great Britain and for Ireland. The department is attempting to keep control over the sale of the seed. We took possession of the seed last year at a price and distributed some to the different areas where we thought flax could be grown to best advantage, and the remainder was sold to Ireland or England to be used there. We are keeping control over the seed, hoping thus to keep some control over the acreage seeded in Canada, and so take the industry through the war without the difficulties arising that were experienced after the last war.

Mr. WRIGHT: Is a rust-resistant barley being developed at the central experimental farm? If so, how soon will it be ready for distribution?

Mr. GARDINER: There are three or four strains of rust-resistant barley at the central experimental farm here and at Winnipeg, but none of them is yet ready for distribution.

Mr. HARRIS (Danforth): To go back to the subject of flax for a moment, from the minister's remarks I gathered that the ebb and flow of activity within the department as far as flax is concerned depend on market conditions and requirements. I also gathered from his remarks that there has been a substantial expansion in the acreage seeded, to perhaps twice the former acreage. I should like to ask two questions. First, is there any sizable quantity of seed in the hands of the government? The second question is based on the first, and perhaps the minister might enlarge upon it for the benefit of the committee, since probably he knows more about it than we do. It is a fact that the price of flaxseed has dropped materially, and now is almost half what it was. In view of that, and in view of the fact that the policy seems to be to harmonize the effort in accordance with the economy of the situation, would the minister feel disposed to peg the price of flaxseed?

Mr. GARDINER: I am informed that there has not been any material increase in the price of flaxseed during the last four or five years.

Mr. HARRIS (Danforth): There has been a decrease to about one-half.

Mr. GARDINER: There has been no decrease, either.

Mr. HARRIS (Danforth): Oh, yes.