

# The Farming World

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## The Hay Crop.

Large Yield Expected—Pointers on Curing.

**P**RESENT indications are that Canada this season will have one of the largest hay crops on record. The abundance of rain and the good growing weather of the past month or two have caused a most rapid growth of clover, timothy and other hay producing crops in almost every section of the country, and as the season is now well advanced we may look for an extra large yield.

A heavy hay crop brings with it much extra work and care in curing it properly and saving it for future use. But it will pay to give this extra labor to the crop. During the past year or two a new market has developed for Canadian hay. Many thousand tons of last year's crop have been sent to South Africa and it is likely a considerable quantity of this season's will find a market there also. Then large quantities of the 1900 crop have been exported to the United States and to Great Britain, the former being the larger buyer. From July 1st, 1900, the commencement of the crop year, up to April 30th last, there were shipped out of Canada 202,594 tons of hay valued at \$1,645,589. Of this amount the United States took 142,888 tons valued at \$1,059,027. Great Britain 46,220 tons valued at \$414,129, and South Africa 12,630 tons valued at \$160,437. Quite a lot of hay went forward to South Africa during May and later, which will increase the last figure considerably.

### THE OUTLOOK.

The outlook just now in Great Britain is not favorable for a good crop. In fact the indications are that there will be a big shortage in the 1901 crop, owing to continued dry weather in the old land. And as a severe draught has also been experienced on the Continent it is doubtful if the crop there will make up for the deficiency in England. The probability is, then, that more Canadian hay will be wanted this coming fall and winter in Great Britain than for several years past, while a fair proportion will find a market in the United States as has been the case during recent years.

Keeping these market conditions in mind it is fair to assume that that there will be a steady demand

for the surplus crop of this year, providing the price is not excessive. To enlarge the market in Great Britain and elsewhere the quality must be good, and therefore it is all important that this season's big crop should be saved in good condition. It will pay farmers, therefore, to give this matter a little extra attention this season in order that none of this surplus hay may be wasted.

### HAY MAKING.

It is hard to lay down any definite rules for the guidance of hay-makers, as conditions vary in different localities. The varying nature of the crops to be converted into hay, the dampness or the dryness of the soil, the moisture in the atmosphere, etc., are factors to be considered. A good plan to follow is to begin early, and this is all the more necessary when there is a big crop to be gathered in. If an early beginning is not made the hay cut last may be too dry and woody to make good feed. The best time for cutting clover is when it is in full bloom. If cut before that stage, the amount of water in the crop is so large that it is very difficult to cure it properly. On the other hand, if the cutting is delayed till the heads are brown, though the curing is much simplified, the hay has lost considerable in valuable protein and carbohydrates. Both practical and scientific men who have studied this question agree that when about one-third of the clover heads are turning brown is the best time, all things considered, for making hay.

In cutting grasses, such as timothy, for hay, an early beginning should be made in order that the whole crop may be gathered in before the seeds are ripe and begin to shell. Early-cut hay also seems more palatable to stock and pound for pound more satisfactory than that cut later. However, a larger quantity of carbohydrates may be obtained by delaying the cutting till the seeds are fully formed. For the dairy cow and sheep early cut grass is best, since these animals do not relish hay that is woody and lacking in aroma, as is the case with the late cut hay. For horses and fattening cattle which subsist mostly on concentrated feed, conditions favor later cutting. Some experiments conducted at the Illinois Station show that the greatest yield of hay per acre is obtainable when the seed has reached the dough stage, so

that it is safe to conclude that at or about this stage is the best time to cut the crop.

### CURING

In making hay very little can be said. An effort should be made to preserve the aroma in hay as it renders the crop more palatable. Both the aroma and green color should be preserved, and this cannot be done if the hay is left lying on the ground too long and begins to bleach. Likewise, hay should not be left scattered on the ground over night as the evaporation of the dew in the morning tends to carry off the aroma or sweet smell good hay should have. For this reason, if the day is fine, the hay cut in the morning should be gathered into cocks or ricks in the afternoon.

Cutting in the morning and putting into ricks or cocks in the afternoon is one of the very best methods of curing hay in order to preserve its most nutritious and palatable qualities. But of course this method is not always followed because of the extra labor entailed. The more general practice, perhaps, and especially where a hay loader is used is to rake the hay into windrows and then take direct to the barn. If the weather is fine and there is a good drying wind, hay cut in the morning, may, if it is not too heavy a crop, be taken in in the afternoon. But whatever plan is followed, hay should be got into the barn in a condition to be mowed away with just sufficient moisture to allow it to settle compactly when treaded down. Hay put into the barn when it is so dry that it will not pack well is not in first-class condition. Salt and lime scattered over hay when put into the mow tend to prevent fermentation and the growth of molds and mildews. Salt renders hay more palatable. These materials are not essential, but are helpful when partially cured hay is being stored in bad weather.

### Destroying Mustard by Spraying.

The application of a solution of sulphate of copper or sulphate of iron for the destruction of mustard has been shown to be a most effective means of getting rid of this weed. Last year some experimental work along this line was carried on at the Ontario Agricultural College, and though not altogether