

duction at the level of last year we shall have to ship about fifty per cent more feed grain to the eastern provinces.

As far as the western situation is concerned, I believe western members and others know it is about three or four weeks too soon to begin to talk about what our crop is even likely to be. However I had in my office yesterday one of the chief authorities in the west in connection with grain production, and he told me the prospects for a crop this year are as good as they have ever been at this time of year, taking western Canada as a whole. So I think it is proper to say that the acreage of coarse grains seeded in western Canada this year is as great as anyone anticipated it would be; and if the season continues to be as good as it has been up to the present—apart from the fact that it is about two weeks late, which may be helpful or otherwise—we should have sufficient feed grain to supply the needs of eastern farmers as well as the needs of western producers if live stock production is kept at about the level of last year. We are hopeful that if we have a bumper crop we can take care of even more live stock than we took care of last year. So at present we are urging farmers not to anticipate shortages of feed grain for at least another month, until we have a look at the western crop and are able to advise better as to what that crop is likely to be.

Mr. WRIGHT: Would the minister say something in regard to the establishment of artificial insemination areas in Canada with respect to dairy animals or other live stock?

Mr. GARDINER: I wish the hon. member would wait and bring up that question when we reach the item concerning health of animals.

Mr. WRIGHT: Very well.

Mr. QUELCH: Could the minister give any information as to what is likely to be the market for horses in future? I am not referring to the canning factories, but I should like to know if there is likely to be any market in Europe.

Mr. GARDINER: As hon. members know, our chief market for horses outside Canada during the last two years was in France and Holland. In Holland it was anticipated that a considerable number of horses would be required in the years immediately following the war, and they entered into an agreement with the government under which they agreed to take five thousand. Unfortunately for us, but fortunately for the people of Holland conditions were not nearly as difficult as they thought they would be. I was in Holland in January, 1946, and visited the officials of the

department who were concerned with the importation of horses. They suggested that, although Holland had taken only half the number they had contracted for, they preferred to drop the contract and not take any more, because they expected to be exporting horses within a year instead of importing them. So that market, which about a year and a half ago we regarded quite hopefully, will probably not be taking any horses from this country.

At the same time we had a contract with the French government under which we were to deliver horses to that country. A year ago last fall we did deliver horses to France; then in the spring of 1946 the French government expressed the desire to deal directly with our private dealers, and sent buyers from France to deal with our people and arrange for a considerable shipment of horses to that country. When the French minister of agriculture was here during the winter months he told me that they desired to get just as many horses this year as they had obtained last year, and that they were sending buyers to look after the purchase of the horses in the same way as they had done a year previously. I am not in a position tonight to say when those buyers will be here or the extent to which they will purchase horses this year, but my understanding is that they are just as anxious to have them this year as they were last year, and that buyers will be here to purchase them.

Mr. McCULLOUGH (Assiniboia): I understand that the provincial government is undertaking to provide a certain amount of storage in order to build up a fodder bank. Is the federal government cooperating with the government of Saskatchewan in any way along that line?

Mr. GARDINER: For many years there has, of course, been talk in Saskatchewan of building up a fodder bank, and also of building up a bank of feed grain. So far as I know, most of the fodder, which has been stored up in Saskatchewan under any plan, up to date, has been stored in connection with the operations of the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Act. We had considerable storage of feed at Valmarie in the south central part of Saskatchewan. Some of it was put up as far back as 1938. Some of the feed that was put up in 1938 I saw there a year ago. That feed was in the form of oat straw which had been baled and properly protected from the weather; and that oat straw, which had been there from 1938 until 1945, to all appearances looked to be about as good as when it was first baled and piled up. It is true that only