

The Commercial

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LADOGA WHEAT.

THE COMMERCIAL has several times this season published reports of experiments with Ladoga wheat, at points in Manitoba and the territories, all of which have been favorable on the whole, to this wheat. There are two sides to every question, however, and it is well to have both sides fully considered, when the desire is to arrive at a right decision. In the case of Ladoga wheat, there are unfavorable as well as favorable reports to note, and in such an important matter to Manitoba as wheat, it will not do to pass over these unfavorable reports lightly. In Minnesota this wheat has been experimented with considerably during the past two or three years, and so far as we have been able to learn, it has not been regarded at all with favor. R. Russell, of Stephen, Minnesota, states in a letter to a Minneapolis paper, that his experience with Ladoga wheat has not been very satisfactory. After giving it a fair test he came to the conclusion that it has not the qualities it is given credit for. In the first place, he says, the grain does not give so vigorous a plant in the spring as fyfe wheat, or stalk as much. Hence it requires more seed to the acre than fyfe. Ladoga wheat produces a weak straw, and its head droops over like barley, and being a bearded wheat with its berries set loosely on the head, it is more easily shelled out or damaged by rain. While Ladoga appeared to be an earlier wheat than fyfe, such is not the case, as it will shrink greatly if harvested before it is perfectly matured. In other words, it will not stand cutting before the grain is hard. Long before the Ladoga wheat is ripe, its straw assumes a brownish color, which would lead you to believe it were fit for harvesting, but upon examination of the grain in the head you will find it is far from being matured. As its straw is weak and spindling it is more liable to black rust than any of our varieties of beardless wheat.

W. H. Donaldson, of Northcote, Minnesota, has written a letter for publication, which is much about the same as the foregoing. He says:—

I drilled in on extra well prepared new land, one and a half bushels of Ladoga wheat, adjacent to two fields of fyfe and blue stem, seeded the same day. The Ladoga appeared to ripen six or eight days earlier than the other two, but upon close examination the apparent maturity was deceptive, as the red chaff and beards gave it the appearance of being ripe, while the berry was not yet in the "dough," and, if cut at that stage, would have shrunk very badly. However, I cut the Ladoga about four days before the fyfe and blue stem. The fyfes and blue stem both stood out well and threshed out over 25 bushels per acre of choice, plump wheat, free from smut, while the Ladoga broke down badly before being cut, and was red with rust and threshed out less than 21 bushels per acre of very inferior wheat, with fully five per cent. of the bulk smutty. Quite a number of my neighbors received sacks of Ladoga seed and gave it a thorough test, as well as myself, and the result was the same in every instance. A wheat that is bearded, with a weak straw, which rusts and smuts badly when other standard varieties do not, and does not yield well, is not the kind of

wheat we want to sow, even if it should mature one week earlier than other varieties. So I am frank to say that I have no use for Ladoga wheat.

B. E. Lundeborg, farming at Kennedy, Minnesota, says that Ladoga wheat which he planted on the same day as fyfe, did not ripen any earlier than the other variety. He tried it two years in succession, with the same result. He says that it shells easily, and the yield was fifty per cent. less than red fyfe.

The Minnesota experiments are widely at variance with many tests made in this country. It may be quite possible, however, that while Ladoga wheat would prove a failure in Minnesota, quite the reverse might be the case in parts of our own country. In fact, it is worthy of note, that the farther north and west this wheat is grown, the more favorable has been the result. Experiments with Ladoga in Manitoba have not given such good results as has been the case with tests made at points west and north of Manitoba, in our territories. This would indicate, in conjunction with the result of experiments made in Minnesota, that that state is too far south for Ladoga wheat. Some grand samples of this wheat have certainly been grown at western and northern points in our own wheat country, and the yield and general conditions attending the growth of the wheat, have been in a number of cases exceedingly favorable. It is therefore evident that this wheat requires a northern climate to develop its good qualities.

In referring to Ladoga wheat, THE COMMERCIAL has always pointed out that no decision should finally be made in favor of this wheat until its milling qualities are better known. It is to be regretted that there seems to be no very definite knowledge upon this point, though the opinion seems to prevail among grain men and millers, that this wheat will not prove a good milling variety. Before deciding against the wheat as a milling variety, however, we will prefer to wait until a practical and thorough test is made of its milling properties. Some of our millers have endeavored to make such a test, but so far they have not been able to obtain a sufficient quantity of the wheat to make a straight run, with a view to a thorough milling test. Arrangements have been made at the experiment station of the University of Minnesota for the comparative milling of two samples of each of the following kinds of wheat: Ladoga, blue stem, Scotch fyfe. Each test will be made using 25 bushels of each kind of wheat, and the amount of bran, shorts, germ, first, second and third flours and screenings will be determined. From analysis of the wheats, flours and breads, the relative values of the different wheats, it is hoped, can be determined. This test to be made in Minnesota, may be taken as something of a guide to the milling value of the wheat, though it will not be altogether satisfactory so far as this country is concerned. Experiments in growing Ladoga wheat in Minnesota, it is already learned, have not been so successful as has been the case in this country. For the same reasons, Ladoga wheat grown in Minnesota, might not prove so valuable for milling, as wheat grown in our more northern latitudes. The Minnesota experiments, however, will be awaited with interest, by those interested in the matter here.

ONTARIO CROPS.

The final bulletin of the Ontario Bureau of Industries summarizes the grain reports thus: Fall wheat and spring wheat extraordinarily good; oats very good; barley and peas good; rye medium. Fall wheat is much better than was expected, averages 25 to 30 bushels per acre in many sections and weighs from 60 to 66 pounds per bushel. The yield of barley is good, but the reports as to quality are variable and the acreage sown is diminished.

The total yield of fall wheat is 21,872,488 bushels, being an average yield for the province of 25.7 bushels per acre, and more than 7,000,000 bushels greater than last year, when the yield was 19.8 bushels per acre. The average for ten years has been 20 bushels per acre. The total crop of spring wheat is 10,711,538 bushels, the average yield being 21 bushels to the acre, against 12.8 bushels per acre last year, and an average of 15.8 bushels for the past ten years. The crop is about 3,000,000 bushels larger than last year, though the area sown this year was less than last. The area of barley declined from 701,326 acres in 1890 to 553,166 this year, but the total crop is larger this year, being 16,141,904 bushels, at an average of 29.2 bushels per acre, as compared with 22.2 bushels per acre last year. The oat crop is the largest on record, being 75,009,542 bushels, and the average yield 40.8 bushels per acre. Last year the crop was 52,768,207, and the yield 23 bushels per acre. The average yield of oats for ten years has been 31.5 bushels per acre. Peas give 18,232,459 bushels, with an average yield of 24.4 per acre, as compared with 19.7 bushels last year. About 1,135,000 bushels of rye have been grown, which is slightly less than usual, owing to decreased acreage. The corn area is gradually extending, 241,086 acres having been planted this year, and producing a crop of 18,238,559 bushels, in the ear. About 2,600,000 bushels of buckwheat have been produced, yielding 24 bushels per acre. The area in beans, though small, is growing each year. The total crop this year is 769,600 bushels, at 18.6 bushel, per acre, which is under an average yield. Potatoes returned 150 bushels per acre, making a total crop of 24,165,886 bushels, or about 7,000,000 bushels more than last year, when the yield was 111 bushels per acre. Roots are grown rather extensively, particularly turnips, the latter producing 68,853,432 bushels, at 546 bushels per acre; 11,779,448 bushels of mangels and 3,814,018 bushels of carrots were also produced. Hay is about the only thing which makes a poor showing, the yield being .94 tons per acre, against 1.75 tons last year, and 1.25 tons as an average for ten years. The area of hay was 2,549,975 acres, and the return 2,392,798 tons.

The area in spring wheat was about 100,000 acres less than last year, and fall wheat about 126,000 acres greater area. The bulletin states that the area sown to fall wheat the past fall is about 15 per cent. greater than the crop gathered this year, but the condition of the crop is not as favorable as a year ago.

Altogether the sister province has undoubtedly produced a grand crop all round this year, and the prospect is therefore for good times ahead.