The Ontario Corn Show at Chatham

Corn Classes of Inferior Quality Reflect the Condition of Seed Corn Generally. The Situation Discussed With Leading Growers. Where is Our 1918 Seed Corn Coming From?

"THE boys know that this is not good seed corn," remarked L. L. Gregory, President of the Ontario Corn Growers' Association, in reference to the exhibits at Chatham last week. "It is, however, the best we have in southwestern Ontario and it was brought along to make a show."

Some of the ears exhibited at the Ontario Corn Show were really deserving of more praise than Mr. Gregory bestowed on them. The average quality, however, was undeniably low; lower, in fact, than at any time since the show was started a decade ago. Some lots that had been tested did not show a germination of 40 per cent. Part of the corn used in a large district display tested as low as 16 per cent. And this is a condition that prevails generally in all of the corn growing counties. So serious is the situation that for a time the advisability of cancelling this show altogether was considered. Under the conditions, the show was a credit to the growers and what was lacking in corn was made up in the other seed sections. In one class of oats, for instance, there were 20 one-bushel entries; "and some right good oats," remarked Dr. C. A. Zavitz. Spring and fall wheat, barley and peas were also well represented and the small seed—clovers and timothy—were excellent. Beans, too, made a good showing as was expected in such a bean growing centre as Kent county. Several of the exhibitors in the grain section had competed successfully at Guelph and Kemptville.

The Seed Corn Supply.

Where are we going to get our seed corn this year? was the question on everybody's lips. It was generally agreed that there is not enough good seed to reseed the counties in which it grows. In order to preserve these strains the government has ordered that all home grown seed must be kept in southwestern Ontario. One farmer, who journeyed to the show expecting to buy 500 bushels for his farmers club in a more easterly county, went home without any. "If the rest of Ontario can't get its seed corn from the United States, it will have to go without any," remarked Mr. A. McKenny, manager of The Essex Seed Farms. "We will have enough for ourselves whereas we usually have 10,000 bushels fit for seed."

Mr. B. R. Cohoe related what seems to have been a usual experience when he told of "pegging" 500 bushels of seed in a specially constructed drying house built last year and finding recently that, as a result of the depredations of frost some of it will not germinate 25 per cent. "We usually grow 20 acres of corn," said he, "and have 500 to 800 bushels to sell for seed. This year we have only 50 to 75 bushels." Mr. Everett, who lives in one of the best White Cap districts in Ontario remarked that his neighbors would not have one-half enough corn testing 50 per cent to replant their farms. One man of his acquaintance paid $5 a bushel for seed, took it home and found that it didn't test six per cent.

Then we asked the corn judge, Mr. C. A. Gearhart of Ohio, what the situation was in the United States. "Your corn here," he replied, "is just as good as we have been having at our corn shows in the States. For the most part our growers, too, are going to be hard put to get a supply of seed. Recently we tested 1400 samples of seed corn in Ohio. Eighty per cent of these were from the crib, of these 95 per cent germinated less than 40 per cent. Our seed will have to come from a small residue of 1916 crop, from a few growers who were fortunate in having good crib corn and the 18 per cent or so who saved seed

early and dried it. I would not like to see any corn go out of Ohio, but I believe there are other sections of the United States, notably Missouri, from which Canada might get a supply were the United States to raise its embargo on seed corn."

Last of all we encountered Mr. J. O. Duke of Ruthven, Ontario's big seed corn dealer. He thought that the prospects of the ensilage growers to get seed was as good, if not better, than of the seed growers themselves. "I have eight cars of Indiana corn in store that will germinate 70 per cent," he told us. "I also have 82 cars ordered and a deposit paid on the purchase in Missouri. This is of such varieties as Leaming, Wisconsin No. 7, Reid's Yellow Dent and Early St. Charles. It will germinate 90 to 100 per cent and would do much to relieve the scarcity for ensilage purposes. The trouble is that I may not get half of it in. Cars seem to be particularly scarce and the embargo is still in the way. The corn is there, however, if we can get it over in time."

"Seems to me the Government should give all the cooperation it can," remarked one searcher after seed. A chorus of approval followed. Evidently the seed corn situation for the ensilage growers too, must still be regarded as serious.

The Awards.

The sweepstakes for best ten ears of Dent corn went to B. R. Cohoe, Woodslee, with Wisconsin No. 7. The Farm and Dairy Trophy for the sweepstakes 10 ears of flint corn was won by A. S. Maynard, Chatham, with Longfellow. Mr. Cohoe had the best single ear of Dent and A. S. Campbell & Son, Blenheim, had the sweepstakes ear of flint. Other prominent exhibitors were as follows:

Dent classes: G. W. Coatsworth, Kingsville; Walkerside Dairy, Walkerville; Geo. E. Newman, Cottam; John Gould, Essex and Arthur Mitchell, Woodslee.

Flint classes: R. J. Johnson, Chatham; Frank S. Smith, Port Burwell and Albert Gilbert, Simcoe.

Educational Features.

The southwestern counties are "in the mud." The heavy clay soil gives value to the land, but is ever a trouble to the traveller. A well staged exhibit of the Ontario Highways Branch was well designed to show visitors just how they could get out of the mud. It showed 14 small models of roads of various types. Perhaps the most interesting model was that showing the construction of "The Appian Way," built by Appius Claudius Caesar about 300 B.C. This wonderful highway was 20 to 30 feet wide and 360 miles long. Its base was heavy mashed stonework and on top of that were several courses of crushed rock and lime mortar. This great road was built entirely by slave labor. All roads then led to Rome but all were not of this type. The common type was also shown—15 feet wide, based on two or three layers of flat quarried stone and broken stone on top. Other models showed the French roads, Telford and Macadam models, the cement and asphalt highways, and finally, for the benefit of city folks, the brick pavement. Methods were shown for resurfacing old roads and even the split log drag was not forgotten. A card over the dragged road bore this inscription: "By the systematic use of this simple tool it is possible to keep earth roads in the best possible condition. The grading machine should be used to construct. The log drag can then be used to maintain permanently. The cost is insignificant when compared with the benefits derived."

"The self feeder is certainly coming

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