

Some Effects of the Seed Control Act

How It Works Out in Actual Practice

Nearly everyone who has observed the goods offered by the seed trade this year must be struck with the quality they present. Most of the seed retailers have remarked this about the seeds they are getting from the large seed firms.

Where a retailer is selling farmers' seed, usually it is some of the best lots they have bought and many of them have dressed it up through a clipper mill, so that it is gilt-edged stuff and compares very favorably with some of the best brands sent out by the seedsmen. This is on the principle that the private dairymen who has under his control the feeding and caring properly for his cows, the milking and general care of the milk and butter, can make a better article than is turned out by the average creamery. Yet, as in dairying, we believe in co-operation and the manufacture of the cream into butter in the creamery, for the export trade. So it is certainly better on the whole that most of the farmers' seeds should find this way into the hands of the large seed firms where they are provided with good re-cleaning plant and can grade up the seeds in a uniform way.

Now that the

LOW GRADE SEEDS

are cut out for seeding purposes in Canada, the better grades are alone being offered for sale.

As a result of the Act coming into force no doubt greater care is necessary on the part of the seedsmen and it costs him more to prepare his seeds for market than before the Act became law. As a rule too, the farmer is found willing to pay for this extra cost when he is assured that his seeds are comparatively pure and that they will grow when sown. Of this he is assured when he buys the higher grades. In the lower grades there is likely to be some weed seed impurities and a considerable amount of small, dead and immature seeds which never give as good satisfaction either to buyer or seller as the high grade seed does. In some districts the most advanced in up-to-date methods of farming, there is almost an exclusive demand for the high grade seeds. In places less progressive you find the run is on the medium grades, and at a few other points still less progressive the low grade seeds are most in demand. Now that the very low grade seed is cut out of the retail market, there will no doubt be a greater appreciation even in the last mentioned districts for higher grade seeds.

A FORTUNATE DEMAND

In some respects it has been most fortunate that this year the American market has been open to us. It certainly has been a dumping ground for much of our low grade seeds and seeds especially bad with buckhorn. Much of that class of seeds goes to Virginia and to the dryer regions of Texas, Colorado, and other states where anything which produces growth is appreciated for stock. It was the shortage of the seed crop in the States this year that gave us this outlet. We cannot bank on it in the future. They usually are competitors with us in the old country markets in clover seeds, and it is generally acknowledged that they have us beaten in timothy seed. It is fortunate, perhaps, that this is the case and that they are supplying us with the bulk

of our timothy seed. Timothy is a surface feeding plant and robs the soil of fertility, while as is generally known clover adds to the fertility. It will be well for us to let the United States continue to grow our timothy seed for us. There is no doubt but that clover seed will be produced in other sections of Canada than middle and western Ontario, from which source the bulk of it now comes. Quebec can produce seed, so can the Maritime Provinces, and no doubt it will be produced in some parts in the West as well.

FARMERS SELL LOW GRADE SEED

Through a general misunderstanding of the application of the Act there will be a larger traffic among farmers in Ontario this year in low grade clover seed, more especially in the ribgrass or buckhorn and ragweed districts. Many of the dealers have told the farmers who brought them such seed to sell, that they could not handle the seed; but in order to let them down easy they have told them they could sell it to their neighbors for seeding purposes. If the Act would have prevented the retailer

selling such seed for seeding purposes, it would apply with equal force to the farmer as he comes under the same provisions of the Act with respect to the sale of timothy, alsike and red clover seeds as does the dealer, in that it is a violation of the law to sell seeds for seeding purposes by any person, where there are more than five of the noxious weed impurities mentioned in sec. 4 of the Act, per 1,000 seeds of the sample indicated. When you come to think of it, the sale of 5 to 1,000 is getting pretty bad. There are some other points to be regretted in the seed trade and that is that some of the farmers who get their seed re-cleaned by local dealers with their clipper mills, persist in taking home the screenings, in some cases to feed, but in too many cases to sow the

CONCENTRATED RUBBISH

of their seed back on the farm. In some cases, it is alleged, it is sown on broken or wood lot pastures which is even a worse practice than sowing it in the ordinary rotation, as when the weeds come up on the meadow lands they may become a menace to their neighbors who had comparatively clean farms.

It is to be hoped, too, that no dealer in seeds will be found selling the lower grades of seed by a higher



Sowing the Seed