

Canadian Harvest Prospects

STATISTICAL REVIEW AND COMPARISON. COMPARISON.

By ERNEST H. GODFREY, F.S.S.

The season is now sufficiently well advanced for us to form a fairly good idea of the Canadian harvest as a whole, although any figures that are put forth can only be regarded as preliminary and tentative until the year's estimates of the areas sown, and of the average yields per acre, have been definitely established. One important fact is already clear, viz., that the season for almost all crops is superior to that of any of the last four years, although not equal to that of the great bumper harvest of 1915.

The spring this year, and consequently the seeding season, was very late; but the favourable weather which immediately ensued caused an extraordinarily rapid growth which soon made up for the lateness of the seeding. Drought in Saskatchewan in the early part of July caused a setback; but rains before the end of the month came just in time to avert repetition of the previous year's disaster.

Forecast of Grain Yields for Canada.

A few days ago the Dominion Bureau of Statistics issued its usual preliminary forecast of grain yields, based upon reports of the average yields per acre made by crop correspondents at the end of August. These average yields were for wheat 16 3-4 bushels, oats 37 1-4 bushels, barley 27 bushels, rye 17 3-4 bushels and flax 9 1-4 bushels. We are consequently in a position to compare the yields of 1920 with those of previous years and with the ten-year averages for 1910-19. This is accordingly done in the following table:

Average yields per acre of Grain Crops, 1915-1920, compared with the decennial average, 1910-19.

Crops	1915 bush.	1916 bush.	1917 bush.	1918 bush.	1919 bush.	1920 bush.	1910-19 bush.
Fall wheat	28.45	21.50	21.50	19.00	23.75	23.00	22.50
Spring wheat	25.87	16.85	15.50	10.75	9.50	16.50	16.50
All wheat	26.05	17.10	15.75	11.00	10.00	16.75	16.75
Oats	40.24	37.30	30.25	28.75	26.25	37.25	33.25
Barley	31.51	23.72	23.00	24.50	21.25	27.00	25.75
Rye	20.43	19.38	18.25	15.25	13.50	17.75	16.00
Flax	13.19	12.56	6.50	5.75	5.00	9.25	9.40

With the exception of fall wheat, the grain crops of last year were, owing to drought in the west, lower in yield than any since continuous annual estimates of Canadian field crops were started in 1908. This year's crops stand out therefore in marked contrast, and we shall get a truer notion of the results by comparing them with the averages struck over a period of ten years which include seasons both good and bad. For fall wheat, this year's average is 3 per cent below last year's exceptionally good yield, but is 2 per cent above the decennial average. Spring wheat is 74 per cent above last year's poor yield of 9 1-2 bushels and is just equal to the ten year average, viz., 16 1-2 bushels. For spring and fall wheat, taken together, the yield of 1920 is 68 per cent above that of last year and is equal to the average, viz., 16 3-4 bushels. Oats yield 42 per cent above last year and 12 per cent above average; barley 27 per cent above last year and five per cent above average, rye 31 per cent above last year and 11 per cent above average; and flax 85 per cent above last year, but 2 per cent below average. Due principally to the cold and backward weather of April, there was a considerable decrease in the area sown to spring wheat, amounting to as much as 10 per cent, as compared with the previous year; but the yields as applied to the latest estimates of the areas sown, indicate a total out-turn of 289,498,000 bushels of wheat, 583,359,000

bushels of oats, 67,647,000 bushels of barley, 12,915,000 bushels of rye and 11,211,000 bushels of flax.

The following table compares these yields with those of the previous five years, 1915 to 1919, the totals being given in thousands of bushels:

Crops	Total Yields of Grain Crops, 1915-1920.					
	1915 bush.	1916 bush.	1917 bush.	1918 bush.	1919 bush.	1920 bush.
Fall wheat	29,321	17,590	15,534	7,943	16,006	18,821
Spring wheat	364,222	245,191	218,209	181,132	177,254	270,677
All wheat	393,543	262,781	233,743	189,075	193,260	289,498
Oats	464,954	410,211	403,010	426,312	394,387	583,359
Barley	54,017	42,770	55,058	77,287	56,389	67,647
Rye	2,486	2,876	3,857	8,504	10,207	12,915
Flax	6,114	8,260	5,935	6,055	5,473	11,211

The figures in the above table give a clear idea of the general excellence of this year's harvest. The wheat yield is higher than any since the bumper crop of 1915 and is, with this exception, the highest on record. Oats is by far the largest crop on record, exceeding even the great year of 1915 by 118,405,000 bushels, and last year's total by nearly 189 million bushels. The area sown to this crop, estimated at 15,684,691 acres, is 4 per cent above that of last year and is the largest area sown to oats in Canada; but the large total yield is also due to the excellent average per acre, as already shown above. The total yields of the other crops in the table, though comparatively of less importance, all make an excellent showing, records being established for both rye and flax.

Forecast of Grain Yields for Prairie Provinces.

In view of the importance of the three Prairie Provinces as producers of grain, we set out in the table at the foot of this page, the total yields of wheat, oats, barley, rye and flax for each of these provinces in thousand of bushels for the same six years, 1915 to 1920, as in the preceding table for all Canada:

Grain Yields of Prairie Provinces, 1915-1920.	omitted)					
	1915 bush.	1916 bush.	1917 bush.	1918 bush.	1919 bush.	1920 bush.
Manitoba—						
Wheat	69,337	29,667	41,040	48,191	40,975	40,305
Oats	50,750	48,439	45,375	54,473	57,698	61,328
Barley	16,658	13,729	15,930	27,963	17,149	19,895
Rye	208	557	638	3,936	4,089	4,349
Flax	120	210	147	1,091	520	605
Saskatchewan—						
Wheat	224,312	147,559	117,921	92,493	89,996	136,880
Oats	145,066	163,278	123,214	107,253	112,157	173,003
Barley	9,523	9,916	14,068	11,888	8,971	11,640
Rye	203	548	998	1,420	2,000	3,535
Flax	5,255	6,692	4,711	4,205	4,490	9,288
Alberta—						
Wheat	66,538	65,088	52,992	23,752	34,575	82,972
Oats	83,876	102,199	86,288	60,323	65,725	124,958
Barley	9,822	9,774	10,386	7,756	10,562	12,227
Rye	375	440	633	826	1,173	1,936
Flax	670	1,310	979	480	222	924
Totals—						
Wheat	360,187	242,314	211,953	164,436	165,546	260,157
Oats	279,692	313,916	254,877	222,049	235,580	359,289
Barley	36,003	33,419	40,384	47,607	36,682	43,762
Rye	786	1,545	2,269	6,182	7,262	9,820
Flax	6,045	8,212	5,837	5,776	5,232	10,817

Generally satisfactory as these totals are, the province of Alberta appears to have special reason for congratulation. The yields of all the crops of Alberta in the table are not only very largely in excess of those of last year; but for all the crops, excepting flax, they are the highest on

record. At the prices now ruling, the returns from these abundant yields will not only ensure the present prosperity of the farmers and sellers, but should also attract a large number of new settlers both from the United States and from overseas.

The Potato Harvest.

It is as yet too soon to make any definite estimate of the yield from potatoes; but, so far as Eastern Canada is concerned, and especially Quebec and Ontario, the reports of an abundant yield are exceedingly welcome after the stringency of the past few months during which potatoes, with prices of \$2.50 per bag upwards, have become to the many almost a forbidden luxury. The reports of the crop correspondents of the Dominion Bureau of Statistics show that the condition of this crop at the end of August is 2 and 3 per cent over average in Prince Edward Island and Nova Scotia, only 1 per cent below average in New Brunswick and 6 and 7 per cent over average in Quebec and Ontario, respectively. In the west, conditions are not so good, the figures falling below average by 12 per cent in Manitoba, by 7 per cent in Saskatchewan, by 6 per cent in Alberta and by 8 per cent in British Columbia.

The following table gives a forecast of the total yield of potatoes as indicated by the condition on August 31. The forecast is compared with the final estimate of 1919, and the indicated yield per acre may be compared with the actual yield per acre in 1919 and with the average yield for the ten years 1910-19.