

Business Side of Farming.

PLENTY OF POTATOES IN SIGHT.

The nearly 3,000,000 acres of land under potato in the U S has yielded one of the best crops on record, placed by American Agriculturist at 245 million bu, compared with 204 in '98, 174 in '97, and 286 millions in '95. The high prices last winter and spring served to stimulate heavy seeding to this crop, and fairly favorable weather conditions throughout the growing season brought the big tonnage indicated. In N E an excellent crop has been secured, particularly in the famous Aroostook potato section of Me.

Midsummer drouth shortened the yield to some extent in N Y, where the crop is not a full one, yet compares favorably with the last two years. This is true in a measure of other middle states, while the crop of the west is proving somewhat disappointing, not turning out as well as earlier anticipated. This is noticeable in Mich, northern Ind, Ill, Wis and the northwest generally, although following the harvest liberal quantities are now moving and frequently at low prices to farmers. The quality of the western crop as a whole is good. In Canada and the maritime provinces a moderately full yield is the rule. The important potato crop of Europe is liberal, yet scarcely above an average. Prices to farmers in N E and N Y are very largely 30@50c p bu, Pa and O 35@50c, Mich 25@35c, Ill 25@45c, Wis 15@25c, and further west and northwest 15@30c. The big cities are well supplied and the undertone is one of comparative steadiness.

GOOD DEMAND FOR STAPLES.

Farm prices are well maintained as a rule, with few evidences of weakness, either in cereals or live stock. Cotton has advanced materially compared with late summer, under the belief that the southern crop will fall very much short of first estimates, and due to good demand from spinners. Farmers are busily engaged harvesting corn, and while the '99 crop will not quite reach that of '96, when 2270 million bu were raised, it will closely approach this. Thus is insured a liberal surplus for export and what is much more important, plentiful home supplies for conversion into beef, pork, mutton and dairy products. The yield of wheat and oats and the minor cereals, now all safely housed and in process of distribution, is moderate but not burdensome, and prices are fairly well maintained. Recent sharp advances in ocean freights have served to restrict the foreign movement.

A PROFITABLE CROP.

Growers are getting unusually good prices for sound winter apples, and unless an unexpected reaction takes place there is now every assurance of high quotations throughout the fall and winter. Harvest is practically ended and it turns out that the states always depended upon for a good apple surplus will not have as much choice winter fruit as earlier hoped. Western N Y has a good many apples, and so with portions of Pa, Ct, Mich and the southwest. Yet, believing in a general shortage, dealers have been active buyers for cold storage purposes. Much of the western fruit is deficient in keeping qualities. The final apple report of American Agriculturist places the in-creasable crop of the U S at 35 million barrels, compared with about 25 in '98, 41 in '97 and 68 millions in the bumper crop year of '96.

The Average Condition of Corn Oct 1 according to the gov't crop report was \$2.7, a little less than a month earlier, compared with \$1.9 the mean of Oct averages for the last ten years.

A Good Barley Crop has been secured, the present average rate of yield, 27 bu per acre, according to the gov't crop report being highest since '69. The quality is not especially high, however, yet liberal supplies of good barley are moving to market, meeting ready reception on both home and export account. Foreigners are interested buyers of low grades suitable for mixing with other feed.

Mutual Fire Insurance—I have been a member of one of the Iowa farmers' mutuals for 20 years or more. We have over \$2,000,000 insurance and 1200 to

THE AMERICAN AND FOREIGN PRODUCE MARKETS AT A GLANCE

The highest quotations of wholesale prices for standard grades of farm produce in the leading markets of the world on the dates named, poorer stuff lower.

Table with columns for various commodities (Wheat, Corn, Oats, etc.) and markets (Boston, New York, Chicago, etc.) with prices listed.

1500 policy holders. Our assessment this year will be about four-tenths of 1 per cent or four mills on the dollar.—O. A. Kenyon, Clayton Co, Ia.

The Season for Exporting Apples is at hand and fairly liberal quantities have already gone forward. Shippers look for a big trade. Europe one season took 3,000,000 bbls from this side the Atlantic. Ontario and N S, especially the latter, have a good surplus and this will naturally go to England. Exporters of apples from N Y, N E and the central west fear this Canadian competition. Canadian apples are packed and shipped in excellent manner and have secured a good reputation abroad. The English apple crop was only moderate, northern Europe had a fair harvest, but all of these will be practically out of the way by the middle of Nov.

Moderately Active Live Stock Markets are the rule, although salesmen have experienced difficulty in holding the price level. Fancy cattle are about as high as ever, but the stock yards are full of fair to really good heaves and these are a little easy in tone. Sheep supplies have been excessive, while the hog trade is active at the narrow range of prices, packers endeavoring to secure concessions.

An Excellent Record has been made in the cheese market this fall. It has ruled active and firm, with an advancing tendency which has carried the market to prices around 12@13c p lb both west and east. The movement is liberal and the home consumptive demand broad. In some directions the fears expressed that any higher prices will restrict the outlet.

The Shortage in Field Beans has been keenly felt in the market, with prices a third higher than early in the fall. At Chicago pea beans have advanced to \$1.65 p bu compared with prices around 1.15 during the summer. There is a recognized shortage in Mich and N Y, heavy producing states, a good consumptive demand and some speculative buying.

Butter Indifferently Supported—Outside fancy creameries, the market is easy in tone, receipts at the big cities continuing liberal, although it is a fact that in many dairy sections farmers are obliged to resort to dry feed.

Egg Prices Next Winter will be influenced largely by the offerings of cold storage stocks. These are now said to be largely in excess of last year at this time.

The Depression in Silver—Not in many months has interest in the silver market been smaller. The price has recently worked down a little further to the level of 55c p oz, or substantially the lowest quotations of the year.

A Ten-Year Rye Average in rate of yield, according to the gov't Oct report is 13.7 bu; the preliminary estimate of yield of '99 is 14.4.

The Year's Cotton Record—According to Sec Hester, of the New Orleans cotton exchange, the total commercial

crop for the season ended Sept 1, '99, amounted to 11,275,000 bales compared with 11,200,000 bales one year ago and 8,580,000 bales two years ago.

A Wool Fleece in N S W—The estimated weight of fleeces in that colony is 5 1/2 to 6 1/4 lbs.

Cotton Has Advanced materially since the new crop began to move and present prices a shade under 7c p lb show a gain of 2c over the low point reached by the last crop. The belief is general that the crop now being harvested will prove smaller than early estimates.

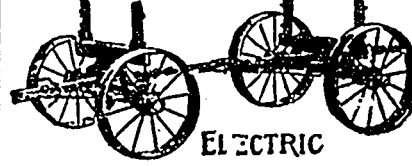
Wheat Growing in Australia—in the province of N S W the '99 crop, officially reported at 10,560,000 bu, was the heaviest ever raised, owing to increased acreage; the av yield p acre was 10.6 bu compared with an av of 12.4 bu for a period of 30 years.

The Borden Condensing Co at its Elgin factory has contracted for 400,000 lbs milk daily, to be delivered at its various condenseries in that part of Ill. It pays \$1.25 p 100 lbs milk from Oct to Feb, and 1.10 for Mar.

An Unrighteous Toll—Farmers have to give half their wheat to the miller to get the other half ground, as well as all the bran and shorts. This appears to me to be clear robbery. All millers ought to be under obligation to do custom work and allowed to take only a certain per cent of the wheat. In the east, years ago, the miller was allowed to take only the eighth bushel. Those were the days when farmers made the laws.—Jonathan T. Havens, McDonough Co, Ill.

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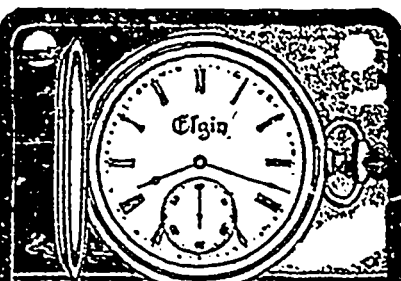
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