

## Stacking vs. Threshing from the Stook

It is somewhat of a problem with many farmers as to just whether they will stack their grain or thresh from the stook. With the idea of throwing some light upon the subject we have solicited the following letters from representative farmers in the three prairie provinces and we believe they contain some valuable information. We recommend them to our readers—Ed.

### Depends Largely Upon Conditions.

In answer to yours requesting information on the stacking of grain versus threshing from the stook, I will just give you the history of my experience since starting in this province.

Coming to the province in the year 1877 before the advent of railroads, it was a few years before there was any grain grown in the country save for local use.

I cut my first crop in the year following my arrival here and threshed about 70 bushels of wheat, 200 of oats, and some 40 bushels of barley. This was my first stacking and I continued to stack until the year 1895. In that year the crop was very heavy and it would have entailed the employment of considerable more help than was available. So I started to thresh out of the stook. Some of my neighbors thought I was fit for the lunatic asylum, but since then stook threshing has become the rule, and there is little or no stacking done in this district save by those who only have a few hundred bushels of crop.

I have nearly always been able to get threshed in good time, and to get the best market price for my wheat. The only exception was in the year 1901, when I did not get threshed until about the 5th of November after the first snow came. Although there was considerable ice in this grain I got the top price that was paid that fall, but as I sold to the local mill, cannot give you the official grade.

My reasons for beginning to thresh from the stook were the shortness of the season and the scarcity of help to handle the crop in any other way. By threshing from the stook the work is done in a week, which otherwise would not be done in a month, and then the grain is safe from the weather and can be sold or shipped at any time.

In the old days of stacking, sometimes the threshing was not done until mid winter and although machines have become more numerous since then and are able to handle the crop before winter sets in, those who stack always have to wait until the

stooks are disposed of and often have to take a lower price for their crop when the season's rush is on.

For the past two seasons I have had a small rig of my own, and find that I can get my fall work fairly well done up before frost comes to stop it, which I could not do when I helped back and forth with a big rig, but will say right here that I was always favored and got my grain safe in good time, even if the plowing had to stand over.

I always try to have the stooks put up well, with a cap sheaf well put on, and find that the greater part of the grain does not get weathered and besides, the cap head keeps the center of the stook dry, and the outside

Hoping this may be of use to you, I will close.

Yours very truly,  
James J. Stewart,  
Cherry Grove Farm,  
Gladstone, Man.

### Prefers Stacking the Grain.

In reply to yours re stacking versus stook threshing. From experience extended over some thirty years in Manitoba, I prefer stacking could sufficient help be obtained of practical, careful men that would stack properly and hired at reasonable wages, and the crop to be stacked not of large acreage. Where the amount of grain to be stacked exceeds 150 acres and the owner having a machine of his own, I consider

sheaves in a stook properly built, when settled will withstand wind and keep dry inside and receive little damage generally.

It would be as well for farmers depending on the hiring of a machine to stack some of their grain, in the event of wet weather while the thresher is with them. Too often the owner of the machine and the farmer also are often in too much of a hurry to get through, and threshing is resumed before the grain is in a condition to thresh. Whereas if there are some stacks to work at, the grain in stook will have time to dry.

Yours truly,  
Walter James,  
Rosser, Man.

### Stook Threshing has Come to Stay.

In answer to yours re Stacking versus Stook Threshing, I would say that whatever may be our opinion of the relative merits of the two systems, stook threshing has come to stay.

The scarcity of labor makes it imperative that all unnecessary work in the handling of the wheat crop, be cut out, and the stacking is not only cut out by the system of stook threshing but the work of gathering the grain is done to better advantage by the thresher than it can be done by the individual farmer, especially the small farmer.

Owing, no doubt, to the attraction and novelty of working in large gangs, the thresher can demand of his men, longer hours and more strenuous work than the farmer can expect. Suppose, for instance, the latter should insist on his men breakfasting and being in the field before daylight, allowing only time for hasty meals (no time to Fletcherize on a threshing gang) and hold them long after dark as the thresher often does. How long could he keep his men? Though such long hours are not to be desired even by a threshing outfit, it helps to save the crop. Still stook threshing has to my mind some serious disadvantages.

The greatest objection is perhaps the spreading of noxious weeds. Your correspondent is not by any means the only farmer



Disking the Ground Immediately After the Grain is Harvested

soon dries out after a shower. I always try to have about twelve sheaves put in a stook and have them evenly built, else they will push from the heavier side, and take the rain almost as bad as if they were not put up at all. Nearly every year my grain has graded 1 Northern and I think this is about as good a record as I could expect.

My advice is, for those who can get a rig, to thresh from the stook where they have any considerable quantity of grain to handle, but if there is not any prospect of getting threshed in good time it would be better to stack, if the stacks are properly built; otherwise the grain is as safe in the stook and perhaps even safer.

it better to thresh from the stook, as one handling means a great saving in expense, and I would prefer should the grain be not properly stacked to run the risk of getting a lower grade if the grain should get wet in the stook, than trusting to badly built stacks.

I have seen very wet falls here where numbers of stacks, through being badly built, were a total loss. Too much care cannot be given in stooking the grain. Simply throw the grain into heaps, or build stooks from one side so that the first wind blows them over, and they would be about as well left as they fell from the binder, as a couple of day's rain on a badly built stook works havoc. Eight or nine