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PROGRESS OF SEEDING AT MAY 31, 1959

Winterkilling and Condition of Over-wintered Crops and Rates of Seeding

An estimated 88 per cent of the total Canadian ^{1/} acreage expected to be sown to spring wheat, oats, barley, flaxseed and mixed grains were seeded by May 31. The percentage sown at this date is slightly behind the years 1958 and 1957 when 94 per cent was seeded. Seeding in the Prairie Provinces, where the bulk of the spring grains are grown, was delayed considerably during the first half of May by cool, unsettled weather and by May 15 this season some 51 per cent of the wheat was planted compared with 64 per cent a year ago and 58 per cent planted at that date two years ago. Seeding progress was similarly retarded with other crops. During the last half of May the weather was generally favourable for seeding operations, although in parts of Manitoba many farmers were unable to do any seeding by May 31 because of excessive moisture. Soil drifting was a problem in many areas in the Prairie Provinces but reports indicate that damage from this source was not generally severe, although some fields had to be reseeded. Despite these delays, some 88 per cent of the spring-sown grain in the Prairie Provinces was in the ground by May 31 compared with 95 per cent a year ago. In Eastern Canada at the same date seeding of the five major grains was 93 per cent completed compared with 88 per cent a year earlier. Delays because of cool weather were experienced in parts of the Maritimes but seeding progress was excellent during the last half of the month. In Quebec conditions were good throughout most of May and by May 31, some 92 per cent of the crop was in the ground in contrast to 78 per cent a year earlier. About 96 per cent of the seeding was completed in Ontario, the same as a year earlier. Some 92 per cent of the planting had been done in British Columbia by May 31, compared with 93 per cent a year ago. The percentages seeded by May 31 of the intended acreage for Canada for the five major crops, with corresponding figures for 1958 in brackets, are as follows: spring wheat, 95 (100); oats, 86 (92); barley, 80 (92); flaxseed, 70 (81); mixed grains, 82 (91); and total for the five grains, 88 (94).

Hay lands generally came through the winter in fair condition. Across Canada, an estimated 9 per cent of these crops were killed this past winter, compared with 6 per cent for the previous year. However, clovers suffered greatly from winterkilling especially in Prince Edward Island and to a lesser extent in New Brunswick, Ontario and British Columbia. Hay and pasture conditions at May 31, 1959 were not as good as a year earlier in the Maritimes but considerably better in Quebec and Ontario. Conditions in the Prairie Provinces were mostly below average to average but somewhat improved from those of a year earlier. In British Columbia conditions were similar to those of 1958. Winterkilling of fall rye was fairly severe and the estimates for all Canada indicate that 12 per cent was killed, considerably above a year earlier when some 5 per cent of the crop was killed. In Ontario where most of the fall wheat

^{1/} Excluding Newfoundland for which data are not available.

is grown, winterkill was exceptionally heavy. For the province an estimated 38 per cent was killed this year compared with 5 per cent in 1958. In the heavy producing counties such as Essex and Kent the losses were in excess of 50 per cent. Average rates of seeding of spring grains show the usual variations between regions in Canada, but within regions they vary slightly from the preceding year.

Estimates of the progress of seeding, as well as those of winterkilling, spring condition and rates of seeding are based on the May 31 survey of the Dominion Bureau of Statistics' crop correspondents conducted in co-operation with provincial departments.

Progress of Seeding at May 31 Throughout Canada 88 per cent of the five spring-sown grains which normally account for at least 95 per cent of the total spring-sown crop acreage was seeded by May 31. This compares with 94 per cent in 1958 and in 1957. On a regional basis, in the Prairie Provinces and British Columbia seeding was 88 and 92 per cent completed, respectively. The west accounts for some 90 per cent of the intended acreage to be sown to the five crops. In Eastern Canada, where about 10 per cent of the intended acreage of the five spring-sown grains is located, seeding progress was ahead of a year ago. For Eastern Canada as a whole seeding was 93 per cent complete on May 31 compared with 88 per cent a year earlier and 91 per cent two years ago.

Seeding proceeded throughout most of May across the Prairies but cool, unsettled weather caused many delays during the first half of May. In addition, many farmers intentionally delayed seeding to obtain a kill of wild oats. Some farmers, especially in the dry areas of Saskatchewan also delayed completion of seeding of coarse grains and flaxseed because of dry top soil conditions and in some districts of Manitoba excess moisture held up operations. For the Prairie Provinces as a whole, seeding of spring wheat is estimated to have been 95 per cent completed by May 31 compared with 100 per cent a year earlier. Seeding of oats was 83 per cent completed, barley 80 per cent, flaxseed 70 per cent completed, and mixed grains 62 per cent completed. In British Columbia, by May 31, seeding of all crops was virtually completed.

In Eastern Canada some 91 per cent of the spring wheat, 94 per cent of the oats, 92 per cent of the barley, 94 per cent of the flaxseed, and 91 per cent of the mixed grains had been sown by May 31. In Ontario where progress was better than the average for Eastern Canada, the following percentages were sown by May 31: spring wheat, 98; oats, 97; barley, 94; flaxseed, 94; and mixed grains, 94. In Quebec by May 31, some 88 per cent of the spring wheat, 93 per cent of the oats, 90 per cent of the barley, and 89 per cent of the mixed grains had been seeded.

In the Maritimes seeding also progressed faster than a year earlier with the exception of Prince Edward Island. Combined percentages of spring wheat, oats, barley, and mixed grains sown for Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, respectively, with 1958 comparisons in brackets were as follows: 66 (73); 65 (52); 84 (75).

Estimated Progress of Seeding at May 31, 1958 and 1959

	Spring Wheat		Oats		Barley		Flaxseed		Mixed Grains		Total Five Grains	
	- percentage completed -											
	1958	1959	1958	1959	1958	1959	1958	1959	1958	1959	1958	1959
P.E.I.	70	76	73	66	63	50	-	-	74	66	73	66
N.S.	46	46	53	68	46	60	-	-	49	58	52	65
N.B.	65	94	77	84	68	72	-	-	57	82	75	84
Que.	43	88	79	93	72	90	-	-	76	89	78	92
Ont.	81	98	95	97	94	94	85	94	97	94	96	96
Man.	100	75	95	58	94	54	76	26	93	29	94	60
Sask.	100	99	95	92	95	91	79	85	91	88	97	96
Alta.	99	95	92	88	87	79	93	79	87	69	93	87
B.C.	97	98	95	93	87	86	95	87	95	85	93	92
Canada	100	95	92	86	92	80	81	70	91	82	94	88

Condition of Winter
Wheat, Fall Rye,
Tame Hay and Pasture

At May 31, correspondents were asked to report the condition of winter wheat, fall rye and tame hay in their neighbourhood as being above average, average or below average for that time of year. In Ontario, the major winter wheat producing area,

10 per cent of the correspondents reported the winter wheat condition as above average, while 38 per cent reported average and 52 per cent reported below average conditions.

Percentages of correspondents reporting the condition of tame hay, pasture and fall rye in each of the three condition categories as at May 31, 1959 are set out in the accompanying table. A high proportion of the correspondents in all provinces reported conditions as average or below average with average condition predominating.

Percentage of Correspondents reporting Condition of Tame Hay, Pasture and Fall Rye,
as Above Average, Average and Below Average at May 31, 1959

Province	Tame Hay			Pasture			Fall Rye		
	Above	Below		Above	Below		Above	Below	
	Average	Average	Average	Average	Average	Average	Average	Average	Average
P.E.I.	2	25	73	1	31	68	10	30	60
N.S.	9	72	19	12	65	23	-	85	15
N.B.	7	46	47	7	44	49	17	66	17
Que.	24	63	13	24	60	16	30	53	17
Ont.	45	45	10	49	44	7	18	52	30
Man.	13	58	29	13	57	30	13	66	21
Sask.	1	27	72	1	25	74	4	50	46
Alta.	5	46	49	8	46	46	11	62	27
B.C.	16	51	33	20	58	22	14	77	9

Winterkilling of Relatively heavy damage to fall-sown crops and clovers by
Winter Wheat, Fall winterkilling was reported by the Dominion Bureau of Statistics
Rye and Tame Hay correspondents this year. In Ontario, where most of Canada's
winter wheat is grown, it is estimated that 38 per cent of the
area seeded in the fall of 1958 was winterkilled compared with 5 per cent the previous
year. Winterkilling of fall-sown rye is estimated as follows, with the previous year's
figures in brackets: Canada 12 (5); Quebec 3 (3); Ontario 23 (3); Manitoba 6 (8);
Saskatchewan 11 (5); Alberta 6 (4); and British Columbia 5 (2).

During the winter of 1958-59 the following percentages of tame hay acreages,
including grasses and legumes, are estimated to have been winterkilled with the
corresponding figures for the previous winter in brackets: Canada 9 (6); Prince
Edward Island 34 (7); Nova Scotia 7 (6); New Brunswick 16 (7); Quebec 5 (6);
Ontario 13 (7); Manitoba 4 (8); Saskatchewan 6 (4); Alberta 7 (4); and British
Columbia 14 (4).

Average Rates Average rates of seeding as reported by crop correspondents for
of Seeding their own farms this year are set out in the table below.
Seeding rates for the various grains show some variation between
regions with rates generally heaviest in the Maritimes and lightest in the Prairie
Provinces.

Average Rates of Seeding Reported by Crop Correspondents, 1959

Province	Spring Wheat	Oats	Barley	Spring Rye	Flax- seed
- bushels per acre -					
Prince Edward Island	2.2	3.9	2.1	-	-
Nova Scotia	2.0	3.2	2.1	-	-
New Brunswick	1.8	3.5	2.1	-	-
Quebec	1.9	3.1	2.0	1.8	-
Ontario	1.6	2.4	1.8	1.7	0.9
Manitoba	1.5	2.3	1.7	1.2	0.6
Saskatchewan	1.4	2.1	1.6	1.1	0.6
Alberta	1.4	2.3	1.7	1.1	0.6
British Columbia ...	1.6	2.8	1.9	1.4	0.6