C.R. No. 4.
1935

By Authority of the Hon. R. B. HANSON, K.C., M.P.,
Minister of Trade and Commerce

DEPARTMENT OF TRADE AND COMMERCE
DOMINION BUREAU OF STATISTICS - CANADA
AGRICULTURAL BRANCH

Dominion Statistician: R. H. Coats, LL.D., F.R.S.C., F.S.S. (Hon.)
Chief, Agricultural Branch: T. W. Grindley, Ph.D.

Ottawa, June 7, 1935, 4 p.m. The Dominion Bureau of Statistics issues to-day a report on the numerical condition of field crops in Canada at the end of May as compiled from the returns of the Bureau's corps of crop correspondents.

SUMMARY

The condition figures for all field crops in Canada at May 31, 1935 were below the long-time averages but well above the condition figures reported for the same date a year ago. The fall-sown crops of wheat and rye show the greatest improvement over last year's figures, mainly because of reduced winter-killing. The four principal spring grains and pastures, however, all show considerably higher condition figures this year in comparison with those of May 31, 1934. The marked improvement in crop conditions in the Prairie Provinces is offset to some extent in determining the averages for Canada by the poor and backward state of the crops in Eastern Canada and the Maritime Provinces. In these latter provinces, the condition figures at May 31 of this year were the lowest recorded in the past twenty years.

In the Maritime Provinces, the spring weather has been very cold and backward and all crops are poorly developed. Pastures and hay lands are particularly backward in growth. In Quebec, the season is even later than in 1934. The low temperatures and lack of soil moisture have prevented the usual growth and condition figures ranged between 85 and 90 at May 31, the lowest in many years. Similar conditions prevailed in Ontario, but in this province heavy rains at the month-end and somewhat higher temperatures have alleviated the situation. Condition figures at May 31 ranged between 80 and 93. Pastures and hay prospects were particularly poor, but may be expected to improve rapidly. The fall-sown crops came through the winter with less injury than in the previous year.

The features of the crop situation in the Prairie Provinces are the lateness of seeding, the 'come-back' of the southern drought areas, and the uniformity of crop conditions over the arable area. In Manitoba the condition figures are much higher than they were a year ago and the Crop District figures are remarkably uniform. The most notable improvement is shown in the southwestern districts which were so ravaged by drought at this time a year ago. Grasshoppers and soil-drifting have been much less troublesome so far this season. The 'drought areas' of Saskatchewan have also benefited from abundant spring rains, although limited areas are still subject to soil-drifting. Rains have been heaviest in the eastern part of the province. Sub-soil moisture remains limited, which means a greater dependence on summer rains. In Alberta, the areas of good crop prospects have been reversed from north to south. Seeding was so delayed in the north that the prospects of ripening are reduced. Southern districts, however, benefited from the heavy rains in May and had the best prospects in the West at the end of May. There is less uniformity in crop conditions in this province.

The spring crops of British Columbia have been retarded in growth by the cool, dry weather and have much less promise than at this date of 1934. Fall-sown crops are higher in condition.

NUMERICAL CONDITION OF FIELD CROPS

Expressed in percentages of the long-time average yields per acre, the condition of the principal field crops on May 31, 1935, for all Canada was as follows, with the condition figures for the same date last year within brackets: Fall wheat 88 (45); spring wheat 97 (79); all wheat 97 (78); oats 94 (85); barley 95 (83); fall rye 99 (59); spring rye 97 (75); all rye 99 (63); peas 90 (91); mixed grains 92 (89); hay and clover 88 (83); alfalfa 88 (66); pasture 85 (81).

In the Prairie Provinces, the condition of theprincipal cereal crops on May 31, 1935, was as follows, with last year's figures in brackets: Manitoba - Wheat 100 (82); oats 98 (83); barley 97 (83); rye 99 (83). Saskatchewan - Wheat 97 (73); oats 95 (73); barley 95 (74); rye 99 (53). Alberta - Wheat 96 (88); oats 94 (89); barley 94 (91); rye 102 (74).

Weather Conditions Since June 1.

Since the reports of the crop correspondents were filed, there has been an almost general improvement in crop prospects across the Dominion. This betterment has been less apparent in the Maritimes and Quebec than in the provinces further west.

Growth remains backward in the Maritime Provinces, but the weather has been seasonably warmer and rains have added to the soil moisture, which was already generally ample. In Quebec, also, the weather has not been warm and wet enough to encourage a strong growth, but there has been an evident improvement in prospects, especially in the Ottawa and Upper St. Lawrence Valleys. The farming districts of Ontario have been virtually transformed during the past week or ten days. Crops are now green and thriving where they were backward and thin previous to the month-end rains. The season, however, is still late.

In the Prairie Provinces, the crop is developing normally, under generally favourable conditions. Continued rains and rather low temperatures have not quickened growth in the late-seeded areas to the desired extent, but on the other hand, these conditions have enabled the grain to get a strong root development. In the southern districts the unseasonable weather has delayed the hatching of grasshoppers. Manitoba received some very heavy rains subsequent to the filing of the schedules by crop correspondents and there has undoubtedly been a fairly general improvement in crop prospects as a result. A few degrees of frost were recorded at scattered points on the 5th of June but no great resultant damage has been reported. Eastern Saskatchewan benefited from the same heavy rain and further showers fell over southern areas on the 5th of June. The dry area in central and west-central Saskatchewan (particularly Crop Districts 6 and 7) has not been relieved by rain and the soil has been drifting. Alberta has only received scattered showers since June 1, but except in those northern districts where seeding was so greatly delayed, crop prospects remain favourable.

In British Columbia, the weather has been somewhat more favourable for crop growth, but more rain and warm weather are required.

Charts Showing Condition of Spring Wheat by Crop Districts.

The chart showing the condition of spring wheat by crop districts at May 31, 1935 is accompanied by one showing the condition at the same date a year ago. While the patterns used are not the same, even a casual observation indicates that there has been a real transformation in western crop prospects. The southern and central districts which showed such low condition figures at May 31, 1934 have been benefited by spring rains this year and have better prospects than the districts further north. These northern districts show low condition figures mainly because seeding was retarded by the late spring. Soil moisture conditions are actually much better in the northern park belt than on the southern plains (where condition figures are presently high) so it is quite likely that the present disparities in condition will be reduced as the season advances.

The crop prospects this year are much more uniform than at the same date of 1934. The range in the Crop District condition figures is much lower this year - from 74 to 106 - than it was at May 31, 1934 - from 41 to 102.

A great change has taken place in the south-western districts of Manitoba. For example, Crop District 1, that had the lowest condition figure in the West at May 31, 1934, showed a condition of 96 at May 31 this year. Crop District 2 to the eastward was 77 last year and 101 this year. Over the whole province, conditions are very uniform, the range in figures being from 96 in Crop District 1 to 105 in Crop District 8.

Similarly in Saskatchewan, great improvements in the condition of spring wheat in the southern districts are shown. Crop Districts 1 to 4 which ranged in condition from 50 to 65 last May 31 showed a range from 93 to 100 at May 31, 1935. Even in Crop District 7 situated in the west-centre of the province, where spring conditions have not been favourable, the condition figure is 94 compared with 89 a year ago. As in Manitoba, there is a remarkable uniformity of crop prospects, the district condition figures ranging between 93 in Crop District 3A and 100 in Crop District 1. Last year the low condition was 50 in Crop District 3A and the high condition 96 in Crop District 5.

In Alberta, the area of high crop prospects has moved from the north to the south, as may be clearly seen from the charts. The southern Crop Districts 1 to 4 ranged in condition from 99 to 106 this year compared with a range of 49 to 78 at May 31, 1934. The central Crop Districts 5 and 6 have better prospects than in 1934 but Crop Districts 7, 8 and 9 are slightly lower in condition this year. Largely as a result of late seeding, the northern Crop Districts 10 to 17 are all lower in condition than they were a year ago. Crop conditions in Alberta are not nearly as uniform as in Saskatchewan and Manitoba.

GENERAL CONDITIONS AT THE END OF MAY.

Prince Edward Island -

The season was cold and dry until the end of May when frequent showers and warmer weather were experienced. Good conditions now prevail for seeding and germination, and pastures and hay and clover are making steady improvement.

Nova Scotia -

In many districts seeding was only commencing at the end of May owing to the cold, backward season which was two weeks later than usual. Hay, clover and pastures were generally poor, partly owing to last season's drought, but recent warmer weather with showers has quickened growth, and provided favourable conditions for work on the land. Spraying operations have commenced and there seems to be evidence of heavy bloom.

New Brunswick -

The month of May was cold, dry and windy and very little grain was above ground at the end of the month. Hay and clovers made slow growth and showed considerable winter-killing. Pastures were very short and cattle were still being fed in the stables. Recent higher temperatures and rains, however, will bring rapid improvement.

Quebec -

In general, growth is backward from ten to fifteen days and very slow. Seeding is progressing rapidly in the prevailing fair weather. The soil, however, is generally dry and rain is badly needed. Pastures, as well as meadows, are generally poor and, in some counties, have suffered from winter-killing. Live stock, as a rule, are reported in poor condition owing to a longer period in the stables.

Ontario -

Cool, dry weather during May retarded growth somewhat, but heavy rainfalls over most of the province on the 27th, 28th and 29th of May, followed by warm weather, has resulted in very rapid growth and the outlook at the present time for the spring crops is very promising. Alfalfa, hay and clover, and pastures are below average in condition but are improving. Strawberry blossoms and early-sown potatoes were damaged slightly in two or three localities by frost, but not sufficiently to affect the yield.

Manitoba -

Spring work was delayed by unseasonably cold and wet weather and seeding was about 2 weeks later than in 1934. Moisture conditions were much better, however, and the grain crops have a much better start than has been the case in recent years. Soil-drifting has been very limited mainly because the southwestern areas where it was prevalent last year have received soaking rains. The hatching of grasshoppers has been delayed by the weather and they have not caused any serious damage yet this year. Pastures and hay lands across the southern part of the province have made a remarkable come-back and the greenness of the fields has been a principal factor in the development of a more hopeful feeling on the farms. While there has only been a small decrease in wheat acreage, it is commonly reported that greater acreages of barley and oats were sown.

Saskatchewan -

So far, the grain crops have developed with remarkable uniformity throughout the province. Dry areas exist south of Regina and south and west of Saskatoon, but the remainder of the province has been favoured with fairly ample moisture for current growth. The deficiency of sub-soil moisture reserves over a wide area, however, makes the crops more dependent on heavy and timely rains during the growing season. The size of the harvest will, as usual, be determined in June and July. The crop is quite late and has a good root development. The hatching of grasshoppers has been delayed by the cool, wet weather so that the crop will be better able to withstand attacks later. Cut-worms and wireworms have already caused some damage while soil-drifting has been troublesome in west-central areas. The reductions in wheat acreage indicated by the 'Intentions to Plant' report a month ago will probably be exceeded. The 'come-back' of the southern wheat areas is the most striking feature of the crop situation at this date and it is to be hoped that the season will continue favourable in these districts. At the end of May, Crop District 1 in the southeastern corner had the best wheat prospects but all the other districts showed condition figures only 1 to 7 points below the long-time average. Pastures and hay lands are much more promising than in recent years.

Alberta -

A serious delay in spring seeding has lowered the prospects of grain crops over most of central and northern Alberta, but the southern districts were benefited by the heavy rains and have good prospects. As an exception to the usual conditions, the four Crop Districts south and east of Calgary reported the highest condition figures at the end of May, 1935. Crop District 1 in the southeastern corner and Crop District 3 immediately north show the highest condition figures for spring wheat at May 31, 1935 (105 and 106 respectively) whereas they showed the lowest figures just a year ago (69 and 49 respectively). This marks an important change in crop conditions. The central districts of the province encountered delays in seeding but the crop progressed well towards the end of May, when condition figures for spring wheat were only a few points below the long-time average. The late seeding was more serious north and west of Edmonton. Crop District 14 had the lowest condition figure for spring wheat in the West (74). The other three Crop Districts north and west (15, 16 and 17) ranged between 80 and 89 in condition. The Alberta grain crops are quite late, which will encourage a lot of speculation as to their ability to ripen before the fall frosts. Pastures, meadows and minor crops are all very promising.

British Columbia -

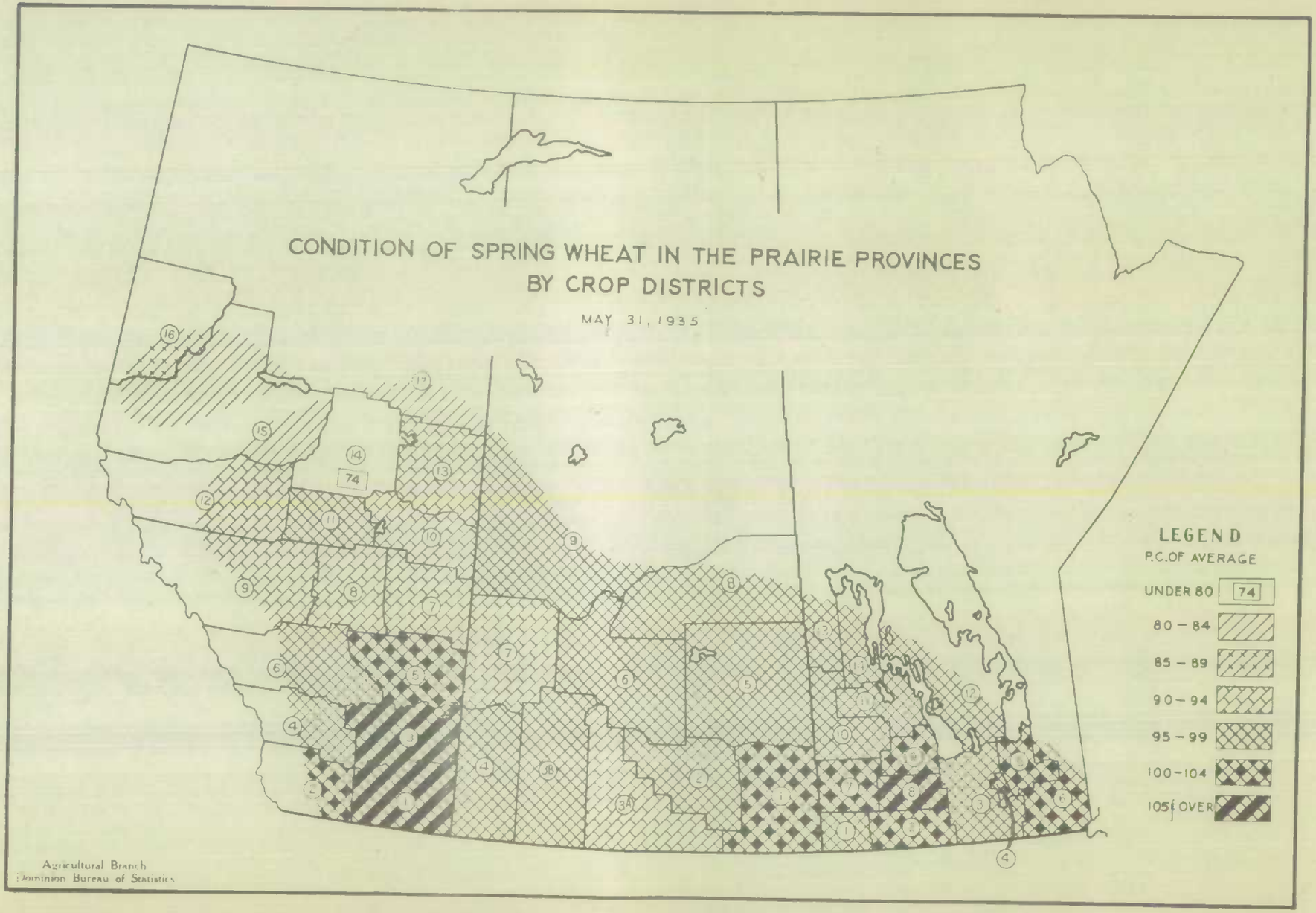
Fall wheat crops are in good condition with a number of stands showing the shot blade already. Spring grains look fair but are in need of rains for a good start. Alfalfa and hay crops are very backward. The drouth has been worst on Vancouver Island and the Lower Mainland, but the interior fruit valleys have also suffered. Some frost damage to potatoes, beans and strawberries in the Fraser Valley was reported on May 24th. A good fruit and berry crop is promised in most localities. Warm, rainy weather would be of general benefit.

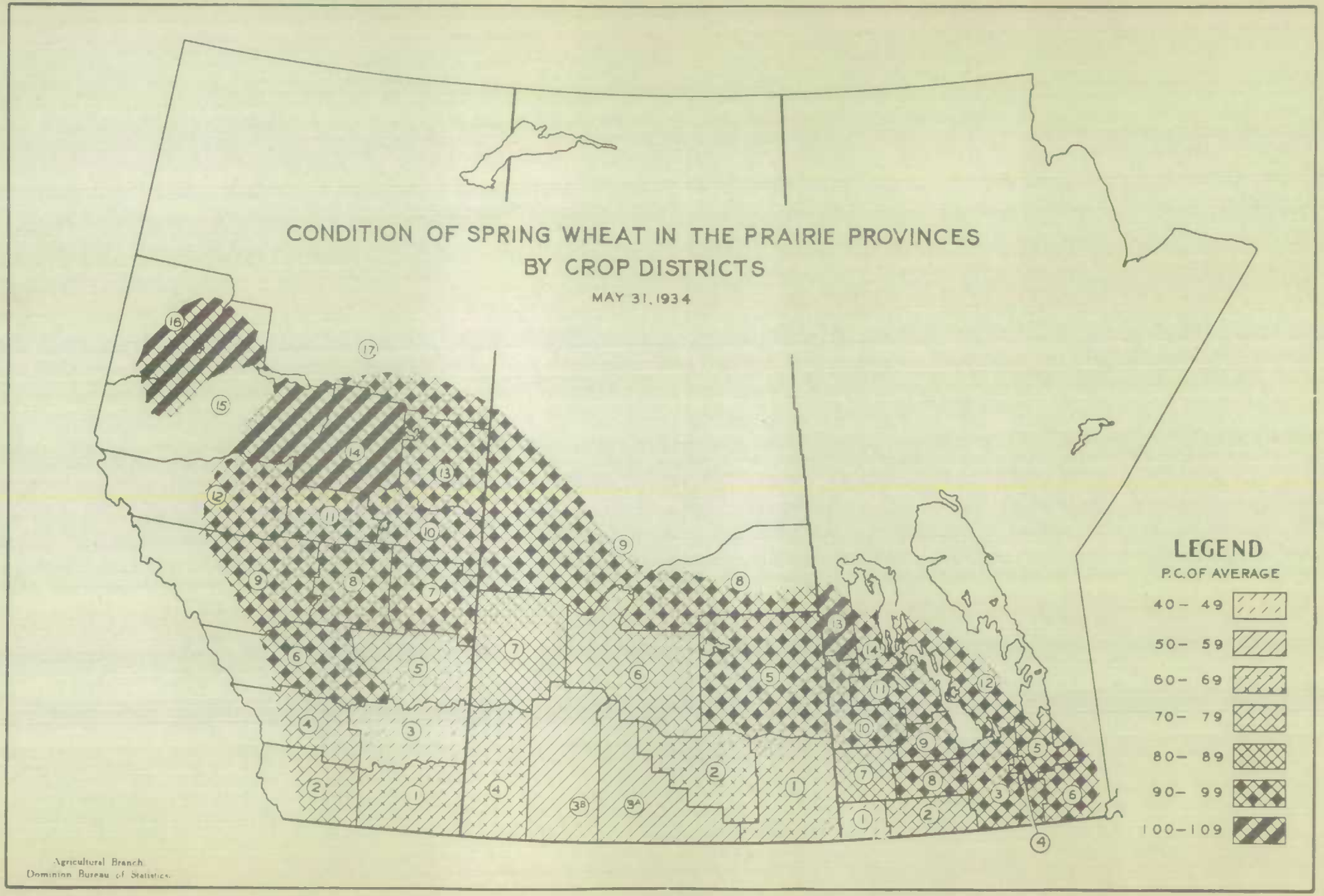
Condition of Field Crops, May 31, 1931 - 35.

Note: 100 = the long-time average yield per acre.

Field Crops	1931 P.C.	1932 P.C.	1933 P.C.	1934 P.C.	1935 P.C.
Canada					
Fall wheat	97	100	95	45	88
Spring wheat	80	96	99	79	97
All wheat	81	96	99	78	97
Oats	88	95	95	85	94
Barley	85	93	95	83	95
Fall rye	72	86	93	59	99
Spring rye	86	95	97	75	97
All rye	76	88	94	63	99
Peas	98	96	95	91	90
Mixed grains	99	95	97	89	92
Hay and clover	98	91	93	83	88
Alfalfa	100	97	98	66	88
Pasture	97	91	93	81	85
P.E. Island					
Spring wheat	102	100	96	99	94
Oats	101	100	97	98	93
Barley	101	100	99	98	97
Mixed grains	102	100	98	98	98
Hay and clover	108	100	94	95	92
Pasture	104	98	91	96	87
Nova Scotia					
Spring wheat	102	99	98	98	95
Oats	103	100	97	97	95
Barley	101	98	98	96	95
Mixed grains	102	98	96	97	97
Hay and clover	105	97	95	96	89
Pasture	101	93	91	95	82
New Brunswick					
Spring wheat	100	98	96	99	95
Oats	102	98	97	97	94
Barley	101	97	98	99	94
Mixed grains	102	98	98	99	92
Hay and clover	106	94	93	99	88
Pasture	103	91	89	94	83
Quebec					
Spring wheat	99	95	91	97	86
Oats	101	96	92	98	86
Barley	100	96	92	98	87
Spring rye	99	91	91	97	90
Peas	98	94	89	96	86
Mixed grains	100	96	93	98	85
Hay and clover	103	87	88	96	90
Alfalfa	102	86	88	94	86
Pasture	101	85	87	93	86
Ontario					
Fall wheat	99	100	95	45	88
Spring wheat	99	95	96	87	93
All wheat	99	99	95	54	89
Oats	100	95	96	89	93
Barley	99	95	96	88	92
Fall rye	97	96	94	66	90
Peas	98	97	97	89	91
Mixed grains	100	95	97	88	93
Hay and clover	98	93	97	63	82
Alfalfa	102	97	99	59	86
Pasture	97	95	97	66	80

Field Crops	1931 P.C.	1932 P.C.	1933 P.C.	1934 P.C.	1935 P.C.
Manitoba					
Spring wheat	89	98	99	82	100
Oats	87	94	97	83	98
Barley	86	93	96	83	97
Fall rye	87	95	96	83	99
Spring rye	88	91	96	84	98
All rye	87	94	96	83	99
Peas	94	95	100	97	100
Mixed grains	92	88	97	82	98
Hay and clover	80	89	97	80	94
Alfalfa	88	95	98	87	97
Pasture	76	91	96	78	96
Saskatchewan					
Spring wheat	77	92	99	73	97
Oats	76	90	96	73	95
Barley	77	90	94	74	95
Fall rye	67	81	91	48	99
Spring rye	83	91	96	68	97
All rye	70	83	92	53	99
Peas	80	95	94	70	95
Mixed grains	79	92	98	70	90
Hay and clover	68	88	96	73	92
Alfalfa	79	93	95	72	100
Pasture	63	89	98	66	94
Alberta					
Spring wheat	84	102	98	88	96
Oats	85	101	95	89	94
Barley	87	99	94	91	94
Fall rye	80	98	97	72	103
Spring rye	87	101	99	78	98
All rye	83	99	98	74	102
Peas	89	100	96	96	99
Mixed grains	89	100	94	87	93
Hay and clover	77	103	100	84	98
Alfalfa	84	98	98	87	96
Pasture	75	106	101	81	97
British Columbia					
Spring wheat	97	99	95	101	95
Oats	98	98	95	101	94
Barley	96	99	94	99	94
Spring rye	97	99	97	100	97
Peas	98	98	96	100	95
Mixed grains	99	97	97	101	95
Hay and clover	98	98	92	104	91
Alfalfa	98	100	95	105	94
Pasture	98	99	93	104	89


CONDITION OF SPRING WHEAT IN THE PRAIRIE PROVINCES
BY CROP DISTRICTS
MAY 31, 1935
74
LEGEND
P.C. OF AVERAGE
UNDER 80
74
80 – 84
85 – 89
90 – 94
95 – 99
100 – 104
105 & OVER
Agricultural Branch
Dominion Bureau of Statistics


CONDITION OF SPRING WHEAT IN THE PRAIRIE PROVINCES
BY CROP DISTRICTS
MAY 31, 1934
LEGEND
P.C. OF AVERAGE
40 – 49
50 – 59
60 – 69
70 – 79
80 – 89
90 – 99
100 – 109
Agricultural Branch
Dominion Bureau of Statistics.