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DOMINION BUREAU OF STATISTICS - CANADA
AGRICULTURAL BRANCH

DOMINION BUREAU OF STATISTICS

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Ottawa, May 10, 1938, 4 p.m. - The Dominion Bureau of Statistics issues today the first crop report of the present season, indicating (1) the intended acreage of principal field crops as reported by crop correspondents at May 1; (2) the progress of spring seeding and (3) winter-killing and condition at April 30, of fall wheat, fall rye and hay and clover meadows.

SUMMARY

Intentions to Plant, 1938.- A decrease of nearly 1.4 million acres in the area sown to spring grains in Canada in 1938 is indicated by farmers' intentions as of May 1. The intended area of spring wheat is 24,105,900 acres, compared with 24,851,400 acres sown in 1937 and 26,646,100 acres in the peak year, 1932. The indicated decrease in the spring wheat area from that of last year is 745,500 acres, or 3 per cent. The principal decrease will occur in Saskatchewan, while increases are indicated in Manitoba and Alberta. Durum wheat acreage will be decreased considerably from 2,322,000 acres sown in 1937 to 1,693,000 acres intended for 1938. This decrease will take place mainly in Manitoba where it will be more than offset by an increase in the sowing of rust-resistant bread wheats. Oats and barley are also expected to show decreases of 3 and 5 per cent respectively, with the principal reductions occurring in Saskatchewan. Barley acreage in Ontario will be moderately reduced. Spring rye will show a decrease of 16,600 acres, or 9 per cent, and flaxseed a reduction of 48,600 acres or 20 per cent. The area sown to mixed grains will remain normal in eastern Canada, while showing a moderate reduction in the western provinces. Potato acreage will be reduced in nearly every province to a total level 20,200 acres or 4 per cent less than that of a year ago, if farmers' present intentions are realized.

Fall Wheat.- The area of fall wheat remaining for harvest in Ontario amounts to 613,000 acres, which is 105,800 acres or 15 per cent less than the area harvested in 1937. The area winter-killed this year amounted to 9 per cent or 61,000 acres, compared with a winter-killing of 8 per cent a year ago. The condition of fall wheat at April 30 was 94, equal to that of a year ago.

Fall Rye.- The winter-killing of fall rye amounted to 5 per cent or 26,000 acres, leaving 485,000 acres for harvest, compared with 700,300 acres harvested last year. The condition for all Canada at April 30 was 94, compared with only 82 at April 30, 1937.

Hay and Clover.- Winter-killing of hay and clover amounted to 6 per cent this year compared with 12 per cent in 1937. The condition of hay and clover meadows at April 30, 1938, was 100 for all of Canada, compared with only 91 a year ago. Improvement was indicated in every province this year, compared with the condition last year, with the exception of Prince Edward Island.

Spring Seeding.- The seeding of spring grains in Ontario, Manitoba and British Columbia was ahead of the seeding last year at April 30, while in Saskatchewan and Alberta, seeding operations were considerably behind those in the very early season last year. For Ontario and western Canada, 22 per cent of the spring wheat crop was sown by April 30 this year, compared with 45 per cent a year ago. Oats and barley were each 12 per cent sown, compared with 8 and 6 per cent respectively a year ago, due to the advanced season in Ontario this year.

INTERPRETATION OF "INTENTIONS" REPORT

This is the eighth year in which an 'Intentions' report for spring grains has been compiled. The acreages shown in this report for 1938 should not be expected to compare exactly with the actually sown acres as shown by the results of the June Survey. The intended acreages are merely indicative of farmers' plans about the first of May and the areas actually sown may be altered by the subsequent weather, by changes in prices, and by many other conditions. An effort is made, however, to eliminate the habitual bias in the 'Intentions' figures as disclosed by the previous years' experience.

GENERAL CROP CONDITIONS

At the End of April.- The progress of farm work during April presents a mixed contrast throughout Canada in comparison with the same month in 1937. While field operations do not usually commence in the Maritimes and Quebec before May, this year being no exception, seeding has been particularly early in Ontario and Manitoba. Cold weather and snows in April delayed operations in Saskatchewan and Alberta this year, whereas a year ago April was a warm month in these provinces, and seed was put into soil which had very little reserve moisture. Spring work, on the other hand, has been comparatively early this year in British Columbia.

Whereas last year, crops made an early start in Saskatchewan and Alberta, the subsoil and surface moisture reserves in these provinces were very low, so that lack of current rains through June and July withered the crops completely in southern Saskatchewan and southeastern Alberta. Last autumn above-normal rainfall occurred in most areas, excepting west-central Saskatchewan and parts of eastern Alberta. Heavy wet snows at the end of March and rains from April 25 to 27 added moisture to these areas. The result is that, while spring work has been delayed, the current moisture reserves have justifiably increased optimism that this year's wheat crop will withstand the ravages from drought to a much greater extent than was the case in 1937.

Since May 1.- Soaking rains in the first few days of May fell where most needed in southwestern Saskatchewan and eastern Alberta, in addition to extending over practically the whole of the wheat belt. In eastern Canada the weather has been mostly clear, and fine warm days have aided the farmers in getting ahead with their field work.

INTENDED ACREAGES OF PRINCIPAL CROPS

For all Canada, the intended acreages for 1938 as reported at May 1 are as follows, with the 1937 acreages within brackets: Spring wheat 24,105,900 (24,851,400); oats 12,690,900 (13,048,500); barley 4,121,400 (4,331,400); spring rye 176,800 (193,400); flaxseed 192,700 (241,300); mixed grains 1,119,800 (1,128,200); potatoes 511,000 (531,200).

For the Prairie Provinces, the intended acreages of the principal grain crops in 1938, as compared with the 1937 acreages shown within brackets, are as follows: Spring wheat 23,857,000 (24,599,000); oats 8,199,000 (8,579,000); barley 3,376,000 (3,562,300); spring rye 166,000 (182,600); flaxseed 185,000 (233,300). By provinces the intended acreages are as follows, with the 1937 figures within brackets: Manitoba - Wheat 3,044,000 (2,872,000); oats 1,326,000 (1,410,000); barley 1,365,000 (1,393,000); spring rye 17,000 (18,600); flaxseed 33,000 (38,300). Saskatchewan - Wheat 12,587,000 (13,893,000); oats 3,986,000 (4,380,000); barley 986,000 (1,174,000); spring rye 76,000 (89,000); flaxseed 133,000 (175,000). Alberta - Wheat 8,226,000 (7,834,000); oats 2,817,000 (2,789,000); barley 1,025,000 (995,300); spring rye 73,000 (75,000); flaxseed 19,000 (20,000).

PROGRESS OF SEEDING

As usual at the end of April, little seeding had been done in the Maritime Provinces and Quebec. In the other five provinces the percentages of seeding completed by April 30 were as follows, with figures for the same date last year within brackets: Spring wheat - Ontario 44 (4); Manitoba 66 (38); Saskatchewan 15 (46); Alberta 19 (45); British Columbia 58 (32). Oats - Ontario 47 (5); Manitoba 13 (6); Saskatchewan 3 (10); Alberta 5 (13); British Columbia 35 (20). Barley - Ontario 45 (3); Manitoba 13 (6); Saskatchewan 2 (6); Alberta 4 (7); British Columbia 24 (15).

WINTER-KILLING AND CONDITION OF FALL WHEAT, FALL RYE AND
HAY AND CLOVER MEADOWS

In Ontario, where practically all the fall wheat is grown, it is estimated that 61,000 acres or 9 p.c. of the 674,000 acres sown in the autumn of 1937 were winter-killed, leaving 613,000 acres for harvest in 1938, as compared with a harvested area of 718,800 acres in 1937.

In all Canada, where the area seeded to fall rye in the autumn of 1937 amounted to 511,000 acres, 26,000 acres or 5 p.c. were winter-killed, leaving for harvest 485,000 acres as compared with 700,300 acres harvested in 1937. By provinces the acreages winter-killed and left for harvest are estimated as follows: Ontario 3,000, 62,000; Manitoba 4,000, 124,000; Saskatchewan 14,000, 218,000; Alberta 5,000, 81,000.

During the winter of 1937-38, the following percentages of hay and clover meadows are estimated to have been winter-killed, with corresponding figures for the previous winter within brackets: Canada 6 (12); Prince Edward Island 10 (6); Nova Scotia 4 (6); New Brunswick 3 (15); Quebec 5 (14); Ontario 9 (14); Manitoba 2 (5); Saskatchewan 3 (5); Alberta 3 (4); British Columbia 1 (2).

The condition of fall wheat, fall rye and hay and clover meadows at the end of April, 1938, expressed in percentages of the long-time average yields per acre, is as follows, with the condition at April 30, 1937, within brackets: Fall wheat - Ontario 94 (94). Fall rye - Canada 94 (82); Ontario 95 (95); Manitoba 97 (93); Saskatchewan 92 (75); Alberta 96 (83). Hay and clover - Canada 100 (91); Prince Edward Island 95 (99); Nova Scotia 97 (94); New Brunswick 99 (89); Quebec 102 (94); Ontario 99 (86); Manitoba 97 (92); Saskatchewan 91 (85); Alberta 98 (91); British Columbia 100 (94).

GENERAL CONDITIONS AT THE END OF APRIL

Summarized from the Reports of Crop Correspondents.

Maritime Provinces -

Throughout the Maritimes April was cold and wet, and the frost came out of the ground only towards the end of the month. There was a much better snow cover during the past winter than was the case in the previous season. Consequently the winter-killing on meadows promises to be fairly small. Spring work does not ordinarily get under way until May, and it is expected to become general this year between May 10 and 20.

Quebec -

Farmers are enjoying the advantage of a comparatively early spring, and nearly everywhere in the province the general prospects are good. Meadows and pastures have been less damaged than was the case last year. The heavy blanket of snow which covered the ground throughout the winter served to protect the young alfalfa and clover stands. Farmers began the season's work under favourable conditions with fine warm weather at the end of April. Ploughing and harrowing are now at their height. While there has been practically no sowing to date, the greater part of it will be done within the next three weeks.

Ontario -

Seeding has been progressing earlier than usual this season, with weather and soil conditions generally good to excellent in southern Ontario. Sowing of spring grain was practically completed in this area by April 30. For the entire province spring sowing was about 50 per cent completed by the end of the month. Since May 1, progress has continued satisfactorily in central and eastern Ontario. Moisture supplies are ample, but generally are not excessive. Fall wheat, hay and clover averaged about 9 per cent winter-killed, with old alfalfa stands suffering most. New seedlings wintered in excellent shape everywhere. Winter crops are now making splendid growth. Many cattle are now on grass and nearly all will be turned out in old Ontario by the middle of May.

Manitoba -

Spring sowing was commenced early this year, during the warm period around the end of March. Cold weather during the first half of April held up operations, but by the end of the month about 66 per cent of the wheat seeding had been completed. Moisture conditions in most parts of the province are very favourable. Precipitation in the autumn months was above normal, and during April there were complaints of lack of current moisture only in the southwestern corner of the province. On April 25 and again at the beginning of May general snows and rains included this area. The prevailing price differential between durum and bread wheats, together with the admission of the new rust-resistant Thatcher wheat into the top northern grades, has resulted in a considerable shift of sowings from durum wheat to the Thatcher and Renown varieties. In the middle of the month there was a certain amount of soil drifting, which did not prove serious, and was completely checked by the additional precipitation toward the end of the month. Tractors are in more extensive use this season, partly due to the loss of horses last season through paralysis.

Saskatchewan -

About 15 per cent of the wheat acreage was seeded by the end of April. The best progress was made in southeastern Saskatchewan, where almost 50 per cent was completed. In the east-central area almost 25 per cent was finished, and in the Regina-Weyburn district, about 20 per cent. The northwestern districts were also 20 per cent completed, while in the rest of the province sowing varied from 6 to 12 per cent completed at the end of the month. The weather generally has been cool and backward. Spring operations were delayed by snow and sleet over a wide area in southern and east-central Saskatchewan on April 25, and again by moderate to heavy rains in most parts of the province during the first few days of May. Moisture conditions have been materially improved, and except possibly in a few local areas where precipitation was light, there is now ample moisture for present requirements. General moisture conditions in the eastern half and much of the northern portion of the province appear on the whole to be well up to normal or better. Reserve moisture supplies, however, become more variable towards the west and southwest, and timely rains will be needed in those areas to maintain crop progress. Fall rye appears to have wintered well, and now requires warm weather to promote growth. Some soil, blowing occurred but it has been checked by recent rains. The grasshopper area is much larger than before, but total egg deposits are probably the same as a year ago. There is a striking increase in the park belt, compensated for by a considerable reduction of egg deposits in the prairie area.

Alberta -

Wheat sowings this year have been delayed from one to two weeks later than usual, partly because of snow and cold weather during April. In southeastern Alberta, relatively few growers had adequate seed supplies of their own, and seed distribution was just getting under way at the end of the month. In the southwestern part of the province, many correspondents reported that they were delaying their seeding for purposes of cut-worm control. On the whole, sowing has not been unduly delayed, and as a matter of past experience, good crops have frequently followed late springs. Moisture supplies are generally the best in many years over the whole of the province, although areas in the southeast, northeast and in the Peace River district did not come in for their average share of the April precipitation. Rains since May 1 have benefited these latter areas. Wheat acreage will be reduced somewhat in the eastern and southeastern part of the province, but will be increased elsewhere. In the Peace River area, seeding got under way by April 17, but was delayed by storms and cold weather following April 22. There is about a foot of moisture penetration in this area, suggesting need of further rain. A heavy grasshopper infestation is indicated for this year in the districts north and south of Calgary.

British Columbia -

The spring is well advanced in this province and the outlook at present is very promising. Hay and clover meadows are in excellent condition, and soil moisture penetration is good.

Intended Acreages of Principal Crops, May 1, 1938, as
compared with 1937

Crop and Province	Area 1937	P.C. of 1937	Intended Area 1938	Crop and Province	Area 1937	P.C. of 1937	Intended Area 1938
	Acres	P.C.	Acres		Acres	P.C.	Acres
CANADA -							
Fall wheat ^{1/}	718,800	85	613,000	MANITOBA -			
Spring wheat	24,851,400	97	24,105,900	Spring wheat	2,872,000	106	3,044,000
All wheat	25,570,200	97	24,718,900	Oats	1,410,000	99	1,396,000
Oats	13,048,500	97	12,690,900	Barley	1,393,000	98	1,365,000
Barley	4,331,400	95	4,121,400	Fall rye ^{1/}	116,600	106	124,000
Fall rye ^{1/}	700,300	69	485,000	Spring rye	18,600	92	17,000
Spring rye	193,400	91	176,800	All rye	135,200	104	141,000
All rye	893,700	74	661,800	Flaxseed	38,300	86	33,000
Flaxseed	241,300	80	192,700	Mixed grains	23,800	93	22,000
Mixed grains	1,128,200	99	1,119,800	Potatoes	30,900	98	30,000
Potatoes	551,200	96	511,000				
P. E. ISLAND -				SASKATCHEWAN -			
Spring wheat	18,600	98	18,000	Spring wheat	13,893,000	91	12,587,000
Oats	153,300	98	150,000	Oats	4,380,000	91	3,986,000
Barley	6,500	107	7,000	Barley	1,174,000	84	986,000
Mixed Grains	29,300	100	29,300	Fall rye ^{1/}	429,000	51	218,000
Potatoes	35,800	94	34,000	Spring rye	89,000	85	76,000
				All rye	518,000	57	294,000
NOVA SCOTIA -				Flaxseed	175,000	76	133,000
Spring wheat	4,000	98	3,900	Mixed grains	18,800	90	17,000
Oats	87,400	103	90,000	Potatoes	48,600	96	47,000
Barley	9,600	101	9,700				
Mixed Grains	6,400	101	6,500	ALBERTA -			
Potatoes	22,000	101	22,000	Spring wheat	7,834,000	105	8,226,000
				Oats	2,789,000	101	2,817,000
NEW BRUNSWICK -				Barley	995,300	103	1,025,000
Spring wheat	13,000	100	13,000	Fall rye ^{1/}	80,000	101	81,000
Oats	210,400	101	213,000	Spring rye	75,000	97	73,000
Barley	13,400	103	14,000	All rye	155,000	99	154,000
Mixed grains	3,900	100	3,900	Flaxseed	20,000	96	19,000
Potatoes	50,200	95	48,000	Mixed grains	18,000	96	17,000
				Potatoes	31,000	97	30,000
QUEBEC -							
Spring wheat	53,000	100	53,000	BRITISH COLUMBIA -			
Oats	1,644,500	101	1,661,000	Spring wheat	69,600	103	72,000
Barley	168,500	102	172,000	Oats	110,000	104	114,000
Spring rye	6,700	100	6,700	Barley	15,200	97	14,700
Flaxseed	2,800	100	2,800	Spring rye	4,100	101	4,100
Mixed grains	133,800	104	139,000	Flaxseed	200	100	200
Potatoes	143,200	97	139,000	Mixed grains	4,100	99	4,100
				Potatoes	18,900	95	18,000
ONTARIO -							
Fall wheat ^{1/}	718,800	85	613,000				
Spring wheat	94,200	95	89,000				
All wheat	813,000	86	702,000				
Oats	2,263,900	100	2,263,900				
Barley	555,900	95	528,000				
Fall rye ^{1/}	74,700	83	62,000				
Flaxseed	5,000	94	4,700				
Mixed grains	890,100	99	881,000				
Potatoes	150,600	95	143,000				

^{1/} Harvested area 1937, and area for harvest 1938.



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