

FACTS FOR FARMERS



Advise For Growing Grain In Prince Edward Island

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For many years the acreage sown to grain crops in P.E.I. has been falling and in 1965 the total cereal area was about 40,000 acres less than that grown in 1945. In spite of fewer acres the total yield has held steady and in some years, 1964 for example, has increased. It is true that yields were down in 1965 but this was due to the unusually dry season.

While grain yields have increased considerably in the past several years there is still room for improvement. Many factors contribute to better grain yields and some of these will be discussed here.

SEED

Let us consider the seed first. If a grower is buying seed he should accept only the best even though the price may be little higher. Registered and Certified seed have been inspected in the field and must meet high standards for purity, freedom from disease, germination and weed seed content. If home-grown seed is used it should be thoroughly cleaned in preparation for seeding and all seed should be treated with an organic mercury compound before planting. Seed treatment will control smut in oats and in all seeds it reduces the damage from a number of disease organisms carried on the surface of the seed. Cleaning and treating can be done at home if suitable equipments is available. If not there are many custom seed cleaning plants in the province. Some, but not all, of these are equipped with treating machines.

SEEDING RATES

There are great differences of opinion regarding seeding rates. If germination is 90 per cent or higher and a drill seeder is used the following rates are generally considered adequate? Oats 2 1/2 bu. per acre, barley 2 bu. per acre, and wheat 1 1/2 bu. per acre. Rates higher than these rarely improve yields and may increase lodging.

TIME OF SEEDING

Early seeding is essential if the best yields are to be obtained. Experiments with different seeding dates have consistently shown that late seeding gives lower yields and poorer quality grain. As soon as the soil is dry enough to prepare a good seed bed, the land should be cultivated and the crop sown.

SOIL PREPARATION

Thoroughly prepared soil will contribute much to improved yields and will also provide better conditions for harvesting machinery. A lumpy or soddy field cannot be expected to give a satisfactory crop.

Following sod or pasture, fall plowing is recommended and the earlier it is done the better, so the soil will have a chance to rot. Occasionally seasonal conditions will favor spring plowing but this is the exception rather than the rule.

FERTILITY

Soil tests are most helpful in deciding the kind and amount of fertilizer to use. If soil samples have not been taken the usual practice on soils of average fertility is to apply 300-500 lbs. of 6-12-12 or its equivalent is the crop is seeded down. If not seeded down 200-300 lbs. of 10-10-10 is recommended.

WEED CONTROL

Weeds compete with the crop for moisture, plant food and sunlight are a major contributing to poor grain yields. Properly cleaned seed and good cultural methods will help to reduce weeds but in most cases chemical sprays are needed to keep weed loss to a minimum. So many materials are now available that it is out of the question to go into detail regarding them. However, by contacting the P.E.I. Department of Agriculture

and the Experimental Farm, recommendations on weed sprays can be readily obtained. It is important to remember that if weeds sprays are used, they must be applied when the plants are young. If left until the crop is nearly ready to head, spraying is likely to do more harm than good.

VARIETIES—OATS

Well adapted varieties should of course be used. Several varieties of oats have been shown to do well in P.E.I. If early maturity is required Fundy is the most satisfactory. In the medium to late maturing class both Garry and Abegweit are good. A new late maturing variety called Dorval has given consistently high yields in test plots. For best results with Dorval early seeding is essential.

BARLEY

Three barley varieties are worthy of mention. Herta, a two-rowed variety, is first choice. Under favorable conditions yields of over 60 bushels per acre are common with Herta but it does not do well on very acid soils. Here again a soil test proves its value. Charlottetown No. 80 is also a two-rowed variety and some farmers prefer it to Herta. It tolerates acid soil better than Herta but has not produced the high yields obtained with Herta under the best conditions of fertility. Among the six-rowed varieties the best choice is Keystone. It is capable of producing high yields but the awns may be difficult to remove in threshing.

While on the subject of barley it might be well to point out that barley should not be grown on the same land two years in succession. Barley is subject to certain disease organisms that live in the soil and a second crop of barley on the same land is very liable to suffer from disease.

WHEAT

Selkirk wheat is recommended at the present time. It is a beardless variety with good resistance to rust. It is also of excellent milling quality and will produce high yields on fertile soil.

For further information contact either the Experiment 1 Farm, Charlottetown or the P.E.I. Department of Agriculture in Summerside or Charlottetown.

NOTE—The Television Short Course for farmers "Our Farm Business" is scheduled for March 29, 30, 31 and April 1. This year the programs deal with how to plan, grow, harvest and feed forage crops. These sessions are one hour in length for four days at 10.30 a.m.-11.30 a.m. in the morning. If you are a livestock farmer you can't afford to miss this series on which the LATEST, MOST UP TO DATE INFORMATION is presented.

Capital Punishment Debate Scheduled For Next Week

By RONALD LEBEL
OTTAWA (CP)—An historic Commons debate on the abolition of capital punishment will begin Wednesday, government House Leader McIlraith announced here.

The government had hoped to open the free debate today but House leaders agreed on the postponement to permit more talks on procedure.

A committee of five backbenchers set up about a month ago failed to reach agreement on procedural disputes. The House leaders will meet next week to seek a solution.

The issue of abolishing the death penalty cuts across party lines.

Procedural wrangles could break out even before MPs begin to discuss the subject matter. There is disagreement over whose bill should be debated. There are six private members' bills dealing with capital punishment on the order paper.

DELOGUED BY MAIL

The government hopes the main issue can come to a free vote after three days of debate. Many MPs doubt this will be possible. They have been delogued with mail, which is split right down the middle in many areas.

Ralph Cowan, a Liberal who wants to retain the death penalty but substitute the gas chamber for the gallows, predicts debate will run off and on for two years or more.

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WOMAN DIES IN BLAZE

HULL, Que. (CP)—A 69-year-old woman burned to death here in the kitchen of her home while preparing her husband's supper. The body of Ermeline Bergeron was found on the floor of the smoke-filled kitchen by her husband, Joseph, when he returned home from work Wednesday. The table was set for supper and the kettle was boiling on the stove. Her clothing apparently had caught fire from the stove.

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