

# Experimental Farm Activities Covered Wide Field This Year

The following summary of major activities at the Dominion Experimental Station, Charlottetown, for the year 1951 has been supplied by Superintendent R. C. Parent:

### General Improvements

A very important improvement to the Experimental Station property during the year 1951 was the paving of an additional half mile of road. This, together with the half mile paved in 1950, provides good roads to all the main farm buildings, including the pig testing station, and enables visitors to take a scenic drive through the station grounds and around the lily ponds. In addition, the erection of gates at both entrances added much to the attractiveness of the property. These posts were built by Col. E. W. Johnstone who has secured this type of work at his own beautiful farmstead at Long River.

Several new buildings were constructed or completed during the year. The round hen house was completed and automatic feeders and waterers installed, thus providing a practical lesson in feeding efficiency. At the Upton Farm a new dwelling house was built and a scale house was also constructed for the purpose of weighing steers in pasture experiments. A roof was also placed over the feeding troughs in the new barn and a new machine shed built.

The station bought an additional block of land from J.A. Moore of St. Edward Road, which will be used as a building area. This makes the total area of the Station 200 acres.

### Field Days, Meetings, and Visitors

The Experimental Station was host to a number of prominent visitors in 1951. The most important visitors being Her Royal Highness Princess Elizabeth and His Royal Highness Prince Philip, who visited this Station on November 9th for the purpose of planting an Oak tree, seeing the Station livestock and poultry and having afternoon tea. The Royal visitors showed keen interest in the research work at the Station and in farm work in general.

During the summer of 1951, two groups of agricultural officials from India, Pakistan and Kashmir visited the Station and reviewed methods of studying agricultural problems in Prince Edward Island. These men visited the Province from the Colombo Plan of aid to backward countries in the Far East. They were all highly trained officials and were able to offer many very valuable suggestions to agricultural officials and farmers in Prince Edward Island, as well as other data for use in their own countries.

Practically all divisional chiefs or their assistants visited this Station some time during the year. In addition to this, we had visits from Superintendent Green of the Canada Experimental Station, New Brunswick; W.A. Ross, Head, Fruit and Insect Division, Science Service, Dr. D. Akenhead, director of the Commonwealth Bureau of Horticultural and Plantation Crops, England and many others.

Mr. S. R. N. Hoddeins and Mr. F. C. Tyrrell from the Information Service, Ottawa, spent two days at the Station photographing various projects.

Members of the Experimental Station staff attended a number of conventions and conferences and gave lectures and papers. A series of seminars was presented by members of the staff. This series of seminars was primarily for the benefit of the station staff.

Some of the organizations holding meetings or field days at the Experimental Station were as follows: The Prince Edward Island Ayrshire Breeders' Club, Junior Farmers' Leadership Course, Charlottetown Rotary Club, Maritime Strawberry Growers' Association, and Peatry Clubs from Kingsboro and Vernon River.

In order to cope with the great increase in visitors and to guard the Station property against petty thievery and vandalism an arrangement was entered into with the R.C.M.P. and the Superintendent of Commissioners for the employment of three Commissioners. These veterans are on twenty-four hour duty and are rendering a valuable service.

### Weather 1951

The monthly mean temperature for the winter months of 1951 was well above the average and the winter was one of the mildest in recent years. There were no prolonged spells of cold days and the lowest temperatures were recorded on January 31 and February 1st when the thermometer dropped to 14 and 5 below.

Above normal precipitation and temperatures were recorded during the spring months. Rainfall during the summer was above the 42 year average. Temperatures were average but the absence of a succession of fine warm days put the summer season in the cool class.

The hours of bright sunshine were about 250 hours less than normal with the month of August down to 128.4 hours from the average of 227.3, and November 44.9 hours from the average of 76.9.

### Agronomy

Though snow cover during the winter of 1950-51 was light and often entirely absent, owing to frequent thaws, clover and alfalfa wintered well.



Mr. R.C. Parent, Director of the Experimental Farm here, who during the past year has entertained a wide assortment of visitors from all parts of the world. Among them were numbered Her Highness Princess Elizabeth and her Consort, Prince Philip, the Duke of Edinburgh.

was harvested in poor condition and in some districts a considerable quantity was not harvested at all.

The oat crop was above the average, but lower than that produced in 1950, and showed more variation as between districts.

Potatoes made good growth during the first half of the season; but many acres were killed early by blight. The total yield in the Province was approximately 20 bushels per acre less than in 1950. The loss from rot was much less than was anticipated.

The yield of corn for silage was about average. Swede turnips gave a yield that was above average but owing to extensive damage from root-maggots a large percentage of the crop was unfit for export as table stock.

Among the older seedings of alfalfa varieties, at the Experimental Station, Rhizoma is showing the greatest longevity. In point of annual yield, it compares favorably with Grimm and Ontario Variegated. However, it has shown little spreading by rhizomes before the plants were two years old.

The roadside turf plots seeded last year made excellent growth during the past season. All mixtures of grasses and clovers gave good surface protection. Time alone will determine which of the twenty mixtures in the test will be the most persistent.

### Upton Farm Project

A project was begun during the year at the Upton Farm on simple mixtures of grasses and legumes for pasture. It has been found that where grasses have been grown in a mixture there is a tendency for the more vigorous grasses to crowd out the others. It was, therefore, considered desirable to investigate the possibility of growing pure species of grasses with a leucome. These species of grasses will be rotationally grazed as a means of extending the pasture season and increasing pasture production. Four species were seeded with ladino clover (grain as a nurse crop). These included Orchard Grass, Bromes (Great Timothy, and Meadow Fescue), Orchard Grass, and Meadow Fescue. Timothy, which is naturally slow in becoming established during the first year, did not show up as good as the other three species.

The sloping land at Beach Grove was laid out, in the fall of 1950, on the contour. The first of these contour strips to be broken up produced an excellent crop of grain this past year. A rotation of crops will be followed on these contour strips with much of the rotation being devoted to grasses for hay and grass silage.

### Beach Grove Project

Two soil fertility projects were under study at Beach Grove during the past year. For one of these projects, "Sources of Organic Matter for Potatoes in Rotation", it was the first year that results are available. It is interesting to note that all treatments except Aldermud (No. 9) and Aldermud and manure (No. 10) were superior to the check. On the other hand, Aldermud (No. 9) was poorer than the check. The treatments under study were (tons per acre):

1. Check (No organic matter applied).
2. 20 tons of cow manure, straw as bedding.
3. 20 tons of cow manure, straw as bedding plus stable phos.
4. 20 tons of cow manure, shavings as bedding.
5. 20 tons of compost.
6. 20 tons of cow manure + woody peat in gutter.
7. 20 tons of cow manure, straw as bedding plus 2 tons of straw.
8. 20 tons cow manure from the loose pen barn.
9. 20 tons of Aldermud.
10. 10 tons of Aldermud plus 10 tons of cow manure.
11. 20 tons of Seaweed (Irish Moss, Kelp, Rockweed, etc.).

Cobblers potatoes were grown and the average yields in summary forms are as follows: Check—164 bus. per acre. No. 9—122 bus. per acre. All other treatments—221 bus. per acre (Nos. 1, 9, & 10 omitted). The other project "Rates of Applying Manure and Commercial Fertilizer Combinations for Potatoes" is being conducted in a three year rotation, and also in a block where potatoes are being grown year after year. This is necessarily a long term project, and will

have to be carried on for several years before any conclusive results can be obtained.

### Soils

Fertilizer experiments were continued in 1951 to determine the relative merits of different fertilizer formulae for potatoes and grain grown on the three major soil types in the Province. These experiments were conducted in co-operation with farmers located on the different soils, and in the green-house at the Experimental Station. Substantial increases in yield were obtained, with all the fertilizer formulae used, on each soil type. While there was a difference in the magnitude of response to fertilizer applications in relation to soil type, no single formula was outstanding.

Over eight hundred soil samples, from experimental plots, were collected for laboratory studies. Over three hundred samples were received from farmers throughout the Province. These were analyzed and farmers were advised regarding the best fertilizer treatment.

### Illustration Station Activities

Experiments of a fact-finding nature involving 881 experimental plots, and comprising upwards of 190 acres, were under study on seven Illustration Stations representative of various soil types in the Province. These field experiments are so designed that information acquired may supplement research work now conducted by the Experimental Farm Service and, in turn, benefit the individual farmer.

The improvement of permanent pastures by the use of chemical fertilizers has been an active project on Illustration Stations in Prince Edward Island for a number of years. Experiments conducted during the past year at seven Stations indicate the beneficial effect of a complete fertilizer applied annually. Pasture plots treated with 600 pounds of Superphosphate plus 100 pounds Muriate of Potash every three years with a supplementary treatment of 61 pounds Ammonium Nitrate annually have also given substantial increases in yields over unfertilized plots.

Benefits derived from surface applications of well rotted manure cannot be overemphasized. Experiments have shown that top dressings of manure even in small quantities have not only encouraged the establishment of Wild White Clover but have served to prolong the grazing period carrying the pasture through prolonged dry periods.

### Rotational Pastures

Hand in hand with manurial treatments and the application of commercial fertilizers is the management of permanent or rotational pastures. Close grazing has been found very essential for the establishment and production of Wild White Clover. During the past year, periodical mowing of pastures has been practised at the Monticello, New London, O'Leary, Rose Valley and Urbainville Stations.

These farm owners have found this practice very beneficial from the standpoint of keeping the pasture grasses and clovers growing vigorously as well as discouraging the development and spread of noxious weeds. Experience has proved that where pastures are under-grazed and where grasses are allowed to shoot into head production of herbage is somewhat reduced and the resultant pasture forage is not relished by livestock. Periodical mowing of pastures which have developed a rank growth also facilitates the establishment and production of Wild White Clover so highly relished by cattle.

Five Illustration Station Field Days held during the year attracted a total attendance of 1,053 farmers. Record attendances were registered at the Rose Valley, Monticello, and New London Stations with 250, 300, and 400 farmers present respectively. A special address on "Grassland Farming and the Methods Adopted in Establishing Grasses and Clovers" by J.E. Shuh, Nova Scotia Agricultural College.

Mr. Robert Woodside, Illustration Station operator, O'Leary, and Mr. T. Albert Hicken, Illustration Station operator, Alliston, ensiled grasses and clovers for the first time this year utilizing the upright and trench type of silos respectively. At the present time, this high quality ensilage is being utilized in the feeding of dairy cattle with excellent results.

### Soil Experiments

In view of the increased interest among farmers in a grassland farming program, the Division of Illustration Stations, sensing the need of new and improved strains of grasses and clovers, established seven field experiments on soils of different types in 1948. A study is being made of the behaviour of Bromo Grass, Meadow Fescue, Reed Canary Grass, Orchard Grass,



All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy, so the members of the staff of the Experimental Farm take time off to enjoy an outing at the North Shore. The picture was taken during the past summer as the members took their wives and youngsters along to get the benefit of the sea breezes.

Ladino Clover, and Birdsfoot Trefoil. These varieties have been seeded in association with varying rates of Timothy, Red Clover, Alfalfa, and Alsike Clover.

It is interesting to note that Bromo Grass has shown considerable promise at a number of Stations but some difficulty has been experienced in obtaining a good catch due to the fact that this particular variety must be seeded comparatively shallow.

On the farm of John L. Clark, Rustico, an excellent stand of Bromo has been secured which has persisted during the past three years, providing an abundant supply of excellent quality hay followed by a lush growth of aftermath.

On low-lying land, Reed Canary Grass has shown up exceptionally well but in order to obtain the best quality hay, this species must be cut early, otherwise the stems become comparatively coarse. At the New London Station, an excellent aftermath of Reed Canary Grass was afforded for fall pastures.

During the past year, excellent stands of Ladino and Birdsfoot Trefoil had been obtained at all Stations when seeded along with the regular grass and clover seed mixtures. These two legumes which have proved to be rather useful in pasture and grass seed mixtures in some sections of Canada and the United States are presently being studied for winter hardiness and productivity under our soil and climatic conditions.

### Cereal Grain Tests

During the past year, the testing of cereal grains was continued at the O'Leary, Urbainville, Rose Valley, and Monticello Stations. In co-operation with the Cereal Division, Experimental Station, Charlottetown, twelve varieties of oats, eight varieties of wheat, and 6 varieties of barley were tested. Farmers attending the Annual Field Days were afforded an opportunity to view the various varieties growing in the field and discuss the respective merits of each.

In co-operation with the Division of Horticulture, Experimental Station, Charlottetown, a new experimental orchard, comprising an acre of 12 acres, was established at the Alliston Illustration Station in 1951. The object of this experiment is to learn if various varieties of apples can be successfully produced on the light sandy soils of this section of the Province by the use of various types of surface mulches. These mulches include black muck, straw, manure, sawdust, potato tops, litter, etc. A 9-7 fertilizer formula is being utilized in connection with this experiment. During the past year, 80 young seedlings made very satisfactory growth.

Special investigational studies, comprising 27 fertilizer formulae, were established for the fourth consecutive year at the New London Station. All plots were established in duplicate with and without manure. Studies are being pursued on a four-year crop rotation basis, featuring potatoes, grass seeded, clover, and timothy. Trends to date, indicate the beneficial effect of barnyard manure particularly its residual effect on the clover and timothy crop. The necessity of utilizing a balanced fertilizer with a relatively high nitrogen content, in the vicinity of 6%, is further indicated.

### Poultry

During the year, the Station disposed of the flock of Barred Plymouth Rock hens utilized for many years as a basis of breeding and

selection work with utility laying stock.

Replacing the work formerly undertaken with Barred Rocks, two new projects, mentioned last year, are now being conducted. The feasibility of selecting, based on the progeny test, as a method for increasing the producing ability of fowl and "The improvement of the Broad Breasted white breed of fowl for meat production". The first of these makes use of several strains of White Leghorns, the latter, a new breed of fowl developed at the Central Experimental Farm, Ottawa, and noted for its excellent meat type carcass.

It was necessary to provide new laying house accommodation for the more than one thousand Leghorns in the first project. A new circular laying house, 72 feet in diameter was constructed, the work being completed in time for pullets starting to lay in August. This house is fitted with automatic waterers, automatic feeders, and steep trap nests. Ventilation is by means of slots at the eave line, and thermostatically controlled exhaust fans.

The Broad Breasted white birds are housed in the standard type 25 x 100 foot laying house formerly used for the Barred Rocks.

### Cereals

The oat crop continues to occupy the leading place in cereal tests at the Station. A standard test of twelve varieties was grown in replicated plots at Charlottetown and at four Illustration Stations. In these tests, the registered strain of Abegweit outyielded all others and every effort is being made to build up a supply of this seed as quickly as possible. It is anticipated that a limited quantity will be available to farmers for the 1953 seeding.

Erban oats continues to stand up well in yield tests and shows consistent lodging resistance. Beaver and Ajax are also useful varieties but their yields are somewhat lower than Abegweit or Erban. Victory, a late variety with no disease resistance continues to yield well under favorable conditions but it does not appear to be any better than the newer rust resistant sorts and there is always the risk of a rust epidemic.

Many hybrid strains of oats were under test this season including several hullless selections. Disease resistance and lodging resistance combined with high yield and quality are the objectives aimed at in the oat breeding program.

A new project was initiated this year to determine the effect of stage of maturity at harvest time on the quality and yield of oats. No conclusions can be drawn from a single year's work but it is anticipated that interesting and valuable data will be obtained from this project.

### Barley Variety Tests

Barley variety tests at the Station were seriously damaged by barley joint worm, and yield results are not of much value. Unfortunately, Charlottetown No. 80 seems particularly susceptible to joint worm injury. It is likely that a breeding program will be undertaken in the near future to develop varieties resistant to joint worm injury.

Replicated tests of six barley varieties were grown at two Illustration Stations and these gave very satisfactory results. Three varieties developed in Scandinavian countries were included in these tests and put up a good showing from a yield standpoint. Cariberg, in particular, produced

an excellent crop. These varieties are a bit too short in the straw to merit a recommendation but they may prove useful as parent material.

Wheat variety tests again indicated the high yielding ability of Cascade. This wheat has been well received in the Province but difficulty is often experienced in saving the crop under adverse conditions. Cascade germinates very readily in the stock and must be watched closely at harvest time.

A new variety, Acadia, has been licensed recently and it, too, has given good yields for the past several years. Acadia is a beardless wheat, resistant to rust and has a little better milling quality than Cascade.

Regent, a high quality milling wheat with good rust resistance, continues to be popular. The yield is somewhat lower than that of either Cascade or Acadia.

A fairly extensive row test was conducted this year to compare the effect of regular commercial fertilizer, liquid fertilizer, and micro fertilizer on the yield of Abegweit oats. 300 lbs. per acre of 3-15-6 fertilizer applied broadcast gave an average increase of 17.5 bushels per acre over the check receiving no treatment. No increase over the check was recorded on the plots treated with liquid fertilizer or with the micro fertilizer.

### Horticulture

Flowers—As in 1950, the dahlias display at this Station was very outstanding. Some of the new plants were added to our collection in the spring of 1951, and many of these proved to be of exceptional size and quality. While it is always difficult to select outstanding varieties, we would consider the following twenty to be excellent for garden decoration. These are all large-flowering types: Grand Masterpiece, chrome yellow with lilac reflex; Elite Glory, deep velvety maroon; Monarch of the East, gold with apricot and orange suffusion; Setting Star, gold and salmon; Frieda Gaylord, rose-pink; Premier's Window, light delicate pink; Lighthouse, scarlet vermilion; Carolina Maid, deep rose, salmon suffusion; Jambooree, soft mallow pink; Dixie's Windout, red and white; Wossal, deep salmon; Lady Moyra, Pansonly, yellow; Model 999, fiery red with gold centre; Alice May, pure white; Windermere, golden yellow; Ogden Reid, ashes of roses; D-Day, rose pink; Pink Elephant, pink; Black Monarch, almost black; Crocydon Radiance, rose-purple.

Vegetables - Potatoes - The release of the two new blight resistant potato varieties, Canso and Keswick, originated at the Fredericton Experimental Station and grown for increase in this Province in 1950, proved to be of great interest to growers. These varieties have shown themselves to be quite resistant to late blight and their performance the next few years will be watched with interest. Other seedlings, equally or even more resistant to blight, are now under test at this Station and it is hoped that one or more of these will be of sufficient quality to merit their introduction.

Scab and virus resistant varieties of some promise are also under test.

In addition to seedlings, the Station has now some 80 named varieties under test and these include many of the newer United States introductions.

### The Old McIntyre

The old McIntyre is also having its face lifted and a more uniform strain in shape and color is being selected.

Cucumbers - Since more than six hundred acres of pickling cucumbers are being grown in this Province, considerable time is devoted to this crop. Perhaps the highlight of the 1951 season was the discovery of a spot or scab resistant picker which is likely to step up the yield of cucumbers to a remarkable extent. This variety was bred by American research workers and is called Maine No. 2. The total yield per acre of Maine No. 2 in 1951 was approximately 6 1-2 tons of all grades as compared to Chicago Pickle, the standard variety, of some 3 tons. The difference in yield was largely a matter of spot resistance.

### Fruits - Tree Fruits

Experimental orchards are maintained on the following farms: T. Albert Hicken's, Alliston; William Beers', Belle River; Willard MacKay's, Vernon River; and Ivan Dawson's, Central Bedouque. All of these orchards are now coming into bearing. About one-third of each orchard is double-worked, or in the process of being worked over, as a test for hardiness. Dou-

### Livestock

At the present time, the Ayrshire herd at the Station numbers 52 head of which 21 are milk cows, 23 young cattle and calves, and 5 herd sires. All young cattle are housed in the pen barn at Upton. They are maintained very cheaply on hay and grass silage with a very small amount of grain fed on the silage. All the heifers housed there last winter were grown up and in fine fit in the spring indicating this is a very suitable way of growing dairy heifers.

This winter, the barn and yard have been divided with very young heifers in one half and the older ones in the other half. Some cows will be taken over from the dairy herd as they go dry and maintained there during their dry period. This should reduce the cost of maintaining the dry dairy cow.

The herd passed a clean test for Tuberculosis and Bangs on November 23. This herd has now been a Bangs disease free listed herd since 1938 and accredited since 1922. Twenty milk cows were classified on August 13, 1951, three individuals were classified as very good, eight good plus, six good, three fair, with no animal in the poor classification. The herd average was 80.25% of the points on the score card and is an increase over the initial classification of 1950 when the average score on seventeen head was 78.38%.

The progeny testing of Ayrshire bulls by means of artificial insemination was carried on again this year with over 165 cows receiving at least one insemination. This compares with 95 cows inseminated in 1950. Three bulls were used almost exclusively namely: Evans Sir Roderick, our senior herd sire which was disposed of this fall; Fairvue Sovereign, a young bull on loan from A. MacRae & Sons; and Burton Duellist, the older of the two bulls recently imported from Scotland. The idea behind the project is to obtain daughters of these different bulls from the same cows, then comparing the B.O.P. records of the different groups of daughters with each other and with the dam's records and arrive at an estimate of the transmitting ability of the bull.

### Dairy Ration Test

At the present time, a group of 12 cows are on test comparing potatoes and turnips as a part of the dairy cow ration.

### Apilary

The production of honey in Prince Edward Island reached a new high in 1951 when 72,000 lbs. were produced.

Beekeepers in Prince Edward Island consider it more profitable to import package bees each year rather than overwinter them as is commonly done in other provinces. For this reason, the main project at the Experimental Station has to do with a study of different size packages and the time of arrival of these packages. Over a three year period, this experiment has indicated that 2 lb. packages of bees, imported during the last week of April or the first week of May, will give higher yields than 2 or 3 lb. packages imported later, and will prove as profitable as 3 lb. packages imported at the same date.

## BULLETINS FROM BIRDLAND



### DRIED FRUITS ARE GOOD

We Canadians find it difficult to understand how fruit eating birds are able to spend the cold months with us, and survive. Yet, when fresh fruit is not available, we ourselves are often very glad to use dried prunes, apples, or apricots as substitutes. And so we should not be surprised to learn that certain species are wise enough to do the same thing.

Our parks and cemeteries are likely places for us to find fruit eaters in winter, because there have been planted mountain ash, hawthorn, snowberry, bitter-sweet, and various other trees and bushes for decorative purposes. But it is the fruit which has been left hanging from the branches that is so attractive to several kinds of birds. Here the occasional Robin is seen in snowy surroundings and zero temperature, feasting on the dogwood berries. Supplied with wild fruits and berries, even a Hermit Thrush has been known to forget that migration time is long past, and its relations are miles away. The Gray-cheeked will hardly spend the winter in Canada, but may postpone departure from early October to late November.

Quite rightly, we think of Purple Finches as seed eaters. They are. But no seed delights them more than mountain ash berries. Whole flocks of these birds winter in a vicinity where an abundance of waste left-over fruit can be had, but it is the mountain ash trees that receive most attention.

Those gypsies, the Evening Grosbeaks, prefer the seeds of Manitoba maples to anything else, yet they also are fond of dried, winter fruit, and have one rather odd habit: that of taking the seeds out of old, rotten apples that they find hanging from branches in mid-winter. Their first cousins, the

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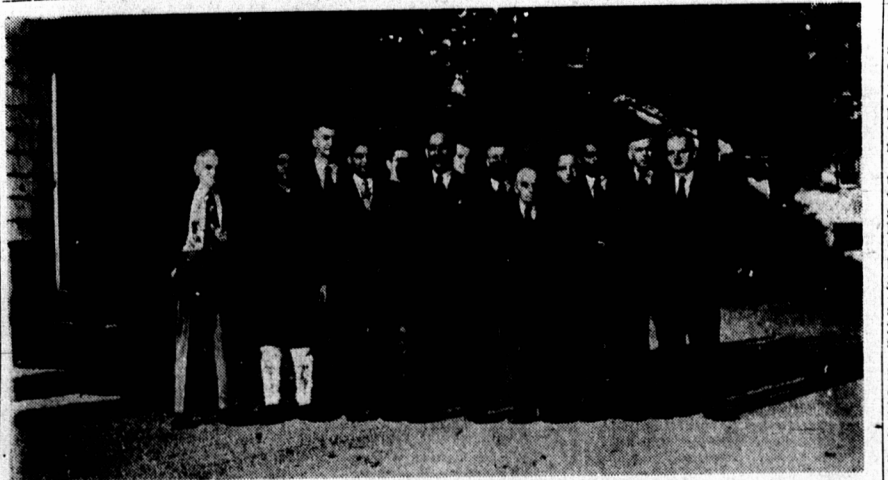
They are being fed hay at the rate of 1 3-4 lbs. per 100 lbs. live weight, meal at 1 lb. per 3 1/4 lbs. of 4% milk produced; turnips at 4 lbs. and potatoes at 1 3/4 lbs. per 100 lbs. live weight. The rate of feeding is calculated to make both rations equal in total digestible nutrients. This is the third year this project has been under study. The results so far show there is very little difference between the two rations, and indicates that potatoes make a suitable substitute for turnips.

A ten year project comparing two grass mixtures for pasture was begun at Upton during the past summer. One is the common mixture grown for hay on Prince Edward Island and contains timothy, red clover, alsike, and alfalfa; the other mixture contains timothy, bromo, orchard grass, reed canary, grass, red clover, alfalfa, ladino, and alsike. Both mixtures were seeded at approximately the same rate, each on two 3 1/2 acre plots. A fifth plot of old sod will serve as a check. Yields are taken by measuring gains in weight and value of steers on these plots and also by calculating, from pasture cage duces, the weight of grass produced.

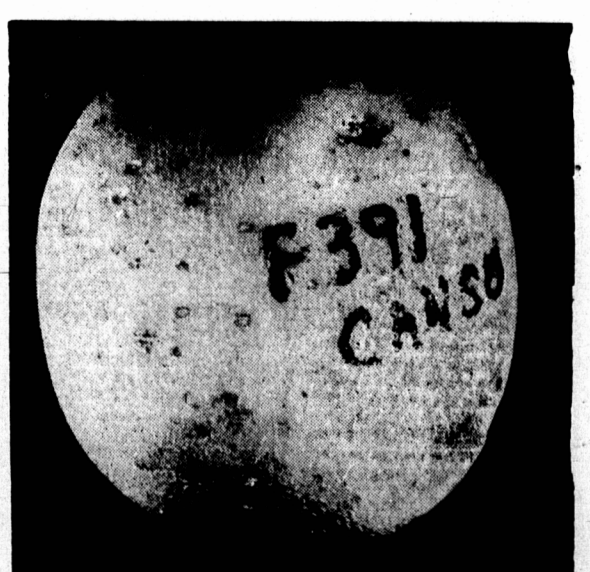
Despite the increased mechanization of the Station, we still find many uses for the five Clydesdale horses which are kept. No breeding program is being carried on and replacements are obtained from the Experimental Farm at Napan when needed.

### Apilary

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Pictured above are members of the agricultural officials from India and Pakistan who were here last autumn on their visit to Canada to make a study of agricultural methods in this country. With them are several officials of the Experimental Farm here.



Shown above is the "Canso", one of the more successful types of blight resistant potatoes introduced into this Province in recent years. The Canso, grown especially last year at the Experimental Farm, has proven to be one of the better new types of potatoes here and indications are that it may offer a far greater resistance to potato blight than other varieties now being grown.