

My own estimate of costs of growing wheat is as follows:—

Cost of teams:—

Capital employed (these prices are less than present market prices of new machinery): Six horses at £35, £210; covers, harness, chains, £50; three-furrow plough, £35; harrows (two sets), £20; disks, £25; cultivator, £35; binder, £60; drill, £80 = £515.							£	s.	d.
Interest on capital at 7 per cent.	..	..	..	..	..	..	36	0	0
Depreciation on plant (10 per cent.)	..	..	..	..	..	..	51	10	0
Plough-shares, repairs, &c. (10 per cent.)	..	..	..	..	..	..	51	10	0
Horse-paddock (10 acres at 30 per cent.)	..	..	..	..	..	..	15	0	0
Teamster—Wages	..	..	..	..	..	..	130	0	0
Teamster—Rations	..	..	..	..	..	..	52	0	0
Horse-feed—20 bags oat-sheaf chaff per week: 52 weeks = 1,040 bags at 3s. 6d.	..	..	..	..	..	..	182	0	0
per bag, including chaff and wear-and-tear on bags	..	..	..	..	..	..	£518	0	0

Average time worked with team for fifty-two weeks: $4\frac{1}{2}$ days per week = 234 days; 234 days for £518 = £2 4s. 3d. per day.

The item shown below, "Depreciation of land and cost of regrassing, £1," is arrived at thus:—

30 lb. rye-grass, 9s.; 4 lb. clover, 4s.; sowing same, 2s.	..	..	..	..	..	..	0	15	0
Average failure of grass to strike necessitating ploughing and sowing again following year, one out of four seasons—one-third on ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	0	5	0
							£1	0	0

Cost of producing Wheat on Land valued at £40 per acre.

(Estimated yield, 40 bushels per acre.)							£	s.	d.
Rent, interest on land, £40 at 6 per cent.	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	8	0
Land and local taxes at 2d. in the £1	..	..	..	..	..	..	0	6	8
Water rates at £2 per 100 acres	..	..	..	..	..	..	0	0	5
Waste land, fences, buildings, 5 per cent	..	..	..	..	..	..	0	2	9
							2	17	10 p.a.
Add one-fourth for fifteen months' occupation by wheat crop	..	..	..	..	..	..	0	14	5
							3	12	3

Teams cost £2 4s. 3d. per day.

Skim-ploughing— $4\frac{1}{2}$ acres per day	..	..	..	..	..	..	0	10	0
Disking—13 acres per day	..	..	..	..	..	..	0	3	6
Cultivating—13 acres per day	..	..	..	..	..	..	0	3	6
Harrowing—30 acres per day	..	..	..	..	..	..	0	1	6
Deep ploughing— $4\frac{1}{2}$ acres per day	..	..	..	..	..	..	0	10	0
Cultivating—13 acres per day	..	..	..	..	..	..	0	3	6
Harrowing—30 acres per day	..	..	..	..	..	..	0	1	6
Drilling—15 acres per day	..	..	..	..	..	..	0	3	0
Harrowing—30 acres per day	..	..	..	..	..	..	0	1	6
Seed— $1\frac{3}{4}$ bushels at 7s. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	0	12	3
Manure— $1\frac{1}{4}$ cwt. at 5s. 9d., plus haulage	..	..	..	..	..	..	0	7	9
Spring harrowing—30 acres per day	..	..	..	..	..	..	0	1	6
Rolling—17 acres per day	..	..	..	..	..	..	0	2	6
Fence-maintenance—30-acre field, 70 chains	..	..	..	..	..	..	0	2	4
Depreciation of land and cost of grassing	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	0	0
Cutting 12 acres—twelve hours	..	..	..	..	..	..	0	5	6
Stooking	..	..	..	..	..	..	0	3	6
Stacking and carting (wages £5 2s., food £1, teams £1, stack 400 bushels, 10 acres)	..	..	..	..	..	..	0	14	2
Threshing—5d. per bushel	..	..	..	..	..	..	0	16	8
Carting—2d.	..	..	..	..	..	..	0	6	8
Sacks and twine	..	..	..	..	..	..	0	2	2
Supervision, interest on capital, and incidentals	..	..	..	..	..	..	0	10	0
							£10	15	3

40 bushels = 5s. $4\frac{1}{2}$ d. per bushel cost.

Any value remaining from stubble feed would not be available within the fifteen-months' period.

In some exceptionally favourable seasons less than the above amount of working might produce the same return, but the grower should count on this amount of work being necessary for the average season.

In considering the profit that should be earned from wheat-growing, I consider that this should be based on the assumption that the grower will employ labour for the purpose at a standard wage (as I myself have done in the past), consequently if a small farmer grows wheat and does all or most of the work himself I contend that if he likes to work longer hours himself he is justly entitled to make more profit on his wheat than I would. In other words, I say that it is manifestly unfair that the margin of profit on wheat should be so small that the small farmer should be compelled to work longer hours and harder than his paid labour, and even then he can only just grow wheat at a small profit.

I have been in this wheat-growing occupation for twenty years, and I say unhesitatingly that any inspection of my property will show that my land is not impoverished, has been well kept and looked after, produces above the average of fat lambs off the mothers, and is capable of still carrying on this method of farming, provided always, of course, that a scientific rotation of crops is adhered to. Surely it is in the best interests of the Dominion that land should be made to produce to its utmost capacity and labour be profitably employed; and, as far as the wheat industry is concerned, this can be continued if the existing sliding scale of duties is left unaltered. My action in using the whole of my land for sheep this year will, of course, upset my usual system of rotation of crops, but there is no reason why it could not be changed back gradually to my original routine.