

While there is exhibited no violent expansion in the quantities of seed certified, nevertheless farmers and merchants alike, in their desire to handle and sow only the highest-quality seeds, are giving the Department every encouragement, if such is needed, to continue the activities already commenced, and to extend operations, from time to time as may be though desirable, to include other seeds into certification.

As an indication, the period under review has seen the inclusion under certification of seed oats, subterranean clover, and broad red clover, while preliminary investigations into a scheme of onion-seed certification have now been completed. In addition, areas of such crops as *Phalaris tuberosa* and rape seed, recent additions to the list of certified seeds, are rapidly increasing.

Increased growing of Pedigree and Selected Strains.—Further areas have been established under contract in order to build up supplies of pedigree and selected strains of grass and clover seed. During the 1938–39 season the acreages coming under this category included—

							Acres.
Perennial rye-grass	..	..	..	..	..	..	44
Italian rye-grass	..	..	..	..	..	..	7
White clover	..	..	..	..	..	..	63
Red clover	..	..	..	..	..	..	19
							133

In view of the great demand for the seed harvested from these areas, arrangements are now in train to still further increase the acreage under contract to the Department. The supply continues to be much less than sufficient to meet all inquiries, while the results obtained by farmers who have already established pastures with these seeds are more than gratifying.

The Department is also interested in the production by the Canterbury Agricultural College, along similar lines, of supplies of cocksfoot of a selected strain.

The Agronomy Division of the Plant Research Bureau is continually reselecting established varieties of wheat and oats, and the distribution to farmers of these lines also comes under the aegis of this Division.

Parallel with the research work which is being undertaken into the linen-fibre industry, the Fields Division is multiplying, under contract on private farms, a supply of linen-flax seed. To this end contracts covering 60 acres were entered into during the 1938–39 season.

Perennial Rye-grass.—A considerable increase in the acreage of perennial rye-grass entered for certification in the 1938–39 season has been recorded. Whereas in each of the two previous seasons approximately 8,000 acres had been inspected, the figure for the present season is about 12,000 acres. A 25-per-cent. increase is also being shown in the quantity of seed submitted for certification in the commercial class. It is unfortunate, however, that seasonal conditions throughout all seed-harvesting districts were such that practically all lines of seed have been reduced in germinating-capacity—some to very serious extent. In this respect the season has been the worst since the introduction of certification ten years ago. Thus, while the increased acreages gave rise to the opinion that the depleted perennial rye-grass seed stocks of the country would be replenished, as a result of the low germination of a large quantity of the seed, combined with the unprecedented demand from Australia on account of conditions prevailing there, it is not now expected that the reserve supply of seed in this country will return to normal.

The acreage of perennial rye-grass entered for certification which has been sown out with selected strains of seed is rapidly increasing, and the demand for this seed is a good indication of the value placed upon it by farmers who have established areas on their farms. Further areas to produce certified Government stock seed are being established under contract between farmers and the Department.

Cocksfoot.—Cocksfoot areas under certification have shown an increase in the current season of about 1,000 acres, the produce of approximately 9,000 acres having come into the scheme during 1938–39.

As with perennial rye-grass, so with cocksfoot there is a considerable increase in the area sown with selected strains of seed.

White Clover.—The quantity of white-clover seed accepted into certification during the twelve months under review approximates 200 tons. The seed has been certified in either the mother or the permanent-pasture class. Additional to this there are areas totalling 50 acres, sown out with certified Government stock seed, which are eligible to produce certified pedigree seed. Such seed is the twice-grown product of specially selected strains, and as such may be considered as a nucleus to still further raise the standard of the product being certified. The production under contract to the Department of supplies of certified Government stock seed is being continued, and from this time on it may be expected that a fairly rapid increase will eventuate in the acreages sown out in these superior strains.

Red Clover.—Approximately 1,100 acres of the “Montgomery” type of red clover have been closed for seed-production under certification this season. With prospects for a heavier seed yield than has been experienced for a year or two, it is anticipated that the demand for this type of seed may be met to a greater degree, thus obviating the necessity of extensive importations.

The certification of the “Broad” type of red clover was introduced this season. As arrangements for the commencement of the scheme were of necessity made rather late in the season, it is impossible to forecast at this stage what acreage might be entered. At the present time, however, over 40 acres have been harvested under certification, and this should make an excellent foundation for more extensive operations next season.