THESE IDEAS HELP INCREASE NEEDED GRAIN STORAGE SPACE

by

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Western Farm Life - June 1, 1942

Grain growers are facing a serious storage problem this summer. Prospects are good for a bumper wheat crop but the question of where to put the wheat has not been answered. There is more wheat on hand than ever before. This means that less storage space will be available for the new crop.

The carry-over of wheat for the United States as of July 1, 1942, is estimated to be 630,000,000 bushels. This is 63 per cent above the amount on hand last year and more than twice the 10-year average 1931-40. Stocks of wheat on farms, in country elevators, and commercial stocks are much larger than in any previous year. The situation in Colorado is no better. Stocks of wheat in elevators, country mills, warehouses, and on farms on April 1 were estimated to be over 10,000,000 bushels. This is nearly twice as much wheat as was held in storage in Colorado a year ago.

It is also possible that some difficulties may develop in moving the wheat from the country elevator to the terminal market. Although there is no shortage of grain cars at present, it is possible that the movement of wheat to market will not be as rapid as usual because of the heavy demand upon the railroads for hauling war materials.

If the situation becomes as serious as present conditions indicate, it will be necessary for farmers to find storage for a considerable portion of their wheat. There are several things that a farmer can do now. Any old bins that are now empty can be repaired and put into condition for storing grain. Other buildings that are not in use can be converted into storage
space. Hog houses or poultry houses with concrete floors may provide some space for storage. A little moisture may draw into grain stored on concrete, but if the area around the building is well drained this should not be serious. This can be avoided by placing waterproof paper on the floor before filling the bin with grain.

Many barns still have horse stalls which are no longer used for horses. These can be used for grain storage in an emergency with little expense. Even though the grain is stored on a dirt floor, it is much better than piling it outdoors with no protection. Storage space of this nature can be made grain-tight by lining it with building paper.

Building a new granary is still permissible. Farmers are permitted under war regulations to construct new buildings costing less than $1,000, although the supply of lumber may be somewhat limited this summer. One should consider whether a new granary is needed under normal conditions or whether extra storage is needed only for this year. Unless a granary will be used for a number of years one could hardly justify the expense of a new building.

Good oats and barley crops will complicate the storage situation still more. Wheat should generally be stored in the best bins and oats and barley in less desirable places, for any loss from spoilage or waste would not be as great in the case of oats or barley as in the case of wheat.

To get a government loan on wheat it must be stored under specified conditions. Farmers who are providing temporary storage in buildings not generally used for grain should check with their county AAA committee, if they want to make sure their storage space meets all the requirements to qualify for a loan. It is also advisable for farmers to keep in touch with their local elevator managers as harvest time approaches and see what the possibilities are for marketing their wheat.