

## Canadian Grass and Legume Seed Data: 2020 Inspected Acres

### Overview:

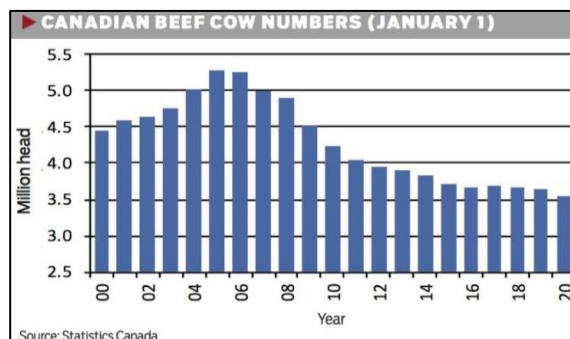
2020 will forever be remembered as the year of Covid-19. It won't be remembered for any new news in the grass and legume seed certification sector. Certified production of grass and legume seed in Canada continued to roll along, with no spectacular changes, although total acres continue to fall.

2020 certified grass/legume seed acres fell by close to 12,000 acres, with inspections conducted on a total of 129,875 acres. Once again, all inspected acres occurred west of Ontario, with no acres reported in any of our eastern provinces. Alberta, led by alfalfa seed (21,500 ac.), timothy seed (11,300 ac.) and fescue seed (7,600 ac.), led all provinces with over 53,000 inspected acres. Manitoba, with over 15,000 acres of ryegrass (mainly perennial), and 8,600 acres of alfalfa seed, followed with almost 44,000 acres. However, both Alberta and Manitoba saw a drop in total inspected acres of 5,000 and 8,000 acres respectively.

Saskatchewan certified acres were focused mainly upon alfalfa seed (12,500 acres of her total), with another 6,500 acres of timothy (up from 4,200 acres in 2019). Overall, Saskatchewan inspected acres rose by 1,600 acres in 2020.

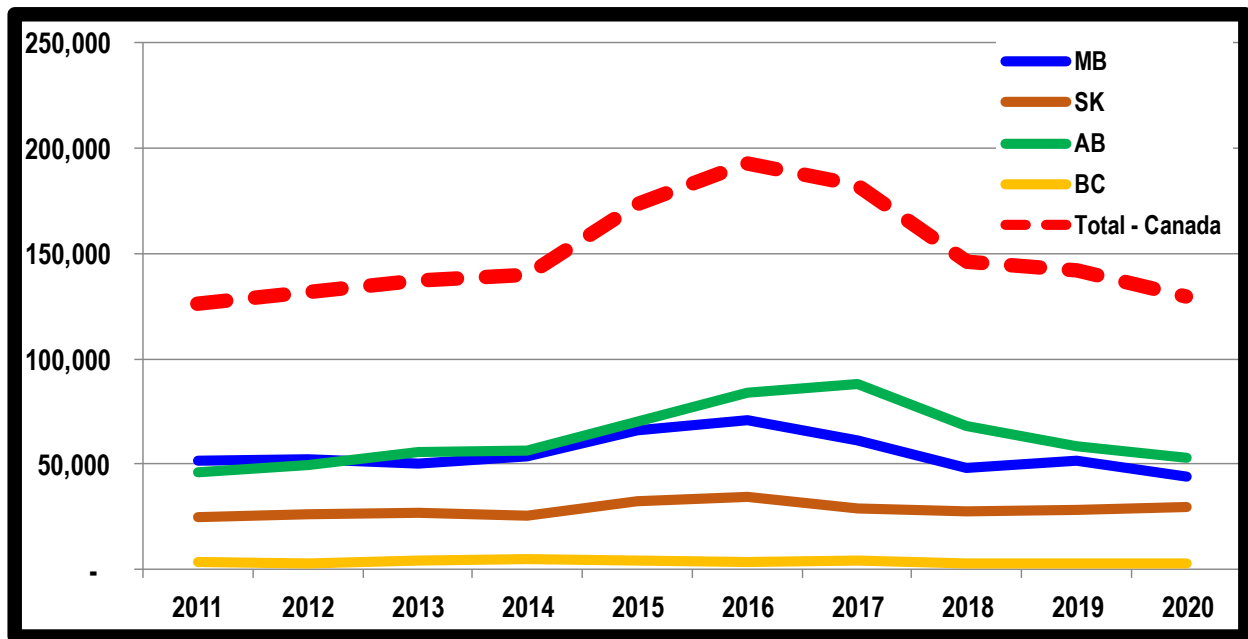
CFIA: 2020 Acres Applied For Inspection - Crop by Province, Acres												Change (+/-) Acres	% change
Crop Kind	PEI	NS	NB	QUE	ONT	MB	SK	AB	BC	2020	2019		
Alfalfa						8,677	12,513	21,542		42,732	55,354	(12,622)	-22.80%
Birdsfoot Trefoil						2,117	130			2,247	3,209	(962)	-29.98%
Bromegrass						523	2,647	3,618	418	7,206	7,767	(561)	-7.22%
Clover						290	1,878	2,162		4,330	4,443	(113)	-2.54%
Fescue						6,593	2,416	7,672	310	16,991	14,193	2,798	19.71%
Ryegrass						15,663	1,957	1,798		19,418	24,672	(5,254)	-21.30%
Timothy						9,881	6,427	11,325	2,183	29,816	25,413	4,403	17.33%
Wheatgrass						98	1,946	5,091		7,135	6,715	420	6.25%
<b>Total by Prov. - 2020</b>						<b>43,842</b>	<b>29,914</b>	<b>53,208</b>	<b>2,911</b>	<b>129,875</b>	<b>141,766</b>	<b>(11,891)</b>	<b>-8.39%</b>
<b>Total by Prov. - 2019</b>						<b>51,848</b>	<b>28,352</b>	<b>58,803</b>	<b>2,764</b>				
<b>Total by Prov. - 2018</b>						<b>48,066</b>	<b>27,457</b>	<b>67,872</b>	<b>2,604</b>				

Domestic usage of Canadian forage grasses and legumes is tied to Canada beef industry, and the latest beef cattle industry shows a declining beef herd in Canada, although the American beef herd remained neutral in its' latest beef industry report.



**CFIA: Grass/Legume Acres Applied For Inspection: 2011 to 2020  
Total Crop Inspected by Province**

	MB	SK	AB	BC	Total - Canada
2011	51,617	24,596	46,195	3,584	126,001
2012	52,246	26,389	49,759	3,021	131,441
2013	50,641	26,959	55,564	4,172	137,336
2014	53,517	25,274	56,641	4,838	140,270
2015	66,447	32,498	70,027	4,265	173,287
2016	70,684	34,578	83,731	3,707	192,751
2017	61,265	29,023	88,249	4,294	182,881
2018	48,066	27,457	67,872	2,604	145,999
2019	51,848	28,352	58,803	2,764	141,766
2020	43,842	29,914	53,208	2,911	129,875
10 Yr, Avg	55,017	28,504	63,005	3,616	150,161



## Inspected Acres by Crop Groups:

### 2020 Pedigreed Turf Grass Seed Acres:

Inspected acres of **ryegrass** (primarily perennial ryegrass) fell by over 5000 acres in 2020, with the majority of acres lost in Manitoba (down by 5,600). Alberta though, saw an increase of 700 inspected ryegrass acres to 1,800. Saskatchewan's 1,950 acres was a drop of 350 acres from 2019.

Alberta's **fescue** acres (creeping red fescue) rose by 1,300 acres to 7,670 inspected in 2020. Manitoba's fescue acres also rose, by 1,200 acres, to 6,600 inspected in 2020. However, the majority of Manitoba's "fescue" acres are of the "Tall Fescue" species. Saskatchewan's inspected fescue acres rose by a modest 600 acres to come in at 2,400 acres.

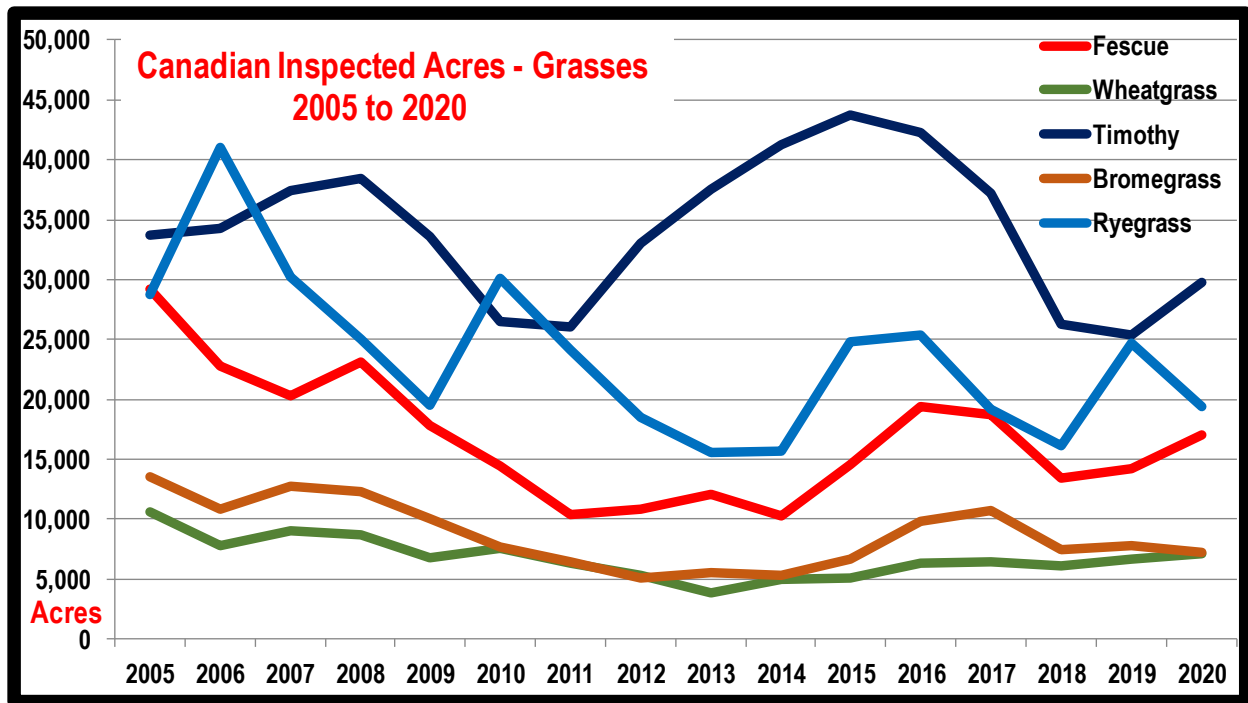
Canadian Inspected Acres by Crop: 2005 to 2020								
	Ryegrass	Fescue	Wheatgrass	Timothy	Bromegrass	Alfalfa	Clover	Birdsfoot Trefoil
2005	28,776	29,227	10,633	33,723	13,572	60,853	5,461	2,859
2006	41,024	22,760	7,774	34,296	10,855	58,402	6,379	3,784
2007	30,181	20,284	9,029	37,439	12,795	62,872	5,343	5,248
2008	25,084	23,131	8,644	38,403	12,353	57,057	4,186	5,707
2009	19,456	17,826	6,808	33,582	10,075	49,159	4,123	4,206
2010	30,112	14,453	7,596	26,454	7,694	50,866	3,195	4,143
2011	24,074	10,422	6,319	26,025	6,434	44,116	3,600	5,010
2012	18,469	10,875	5,290	33,012	5,138	47,456	3,886	7,315
2013	15,564	12,039	3,857	37,582	5,587	51,018	4,247	7,442
2014	15,714	10,230	4,959	41,271	5,372	56,319	2,494	3,910
2015	24,851	14,501	5,044	43,763	6,685	69,967	5,870	2,606
2016	25,386	19,398	6,376	42,246	9,872	81,260	6,106	2,107
2017	19,204	18,675	6,387	37,177	10,750	81,573	6,243	2,872
2018	16,104	13,457	6,146	26,284	7,425	69,650	4,596	2,337
2019	24,672	14,193	6,715	25,413	7,767	55,354	4,443	3,209
2020	19,418	16,991	7,135	29,816	7,206	42,732	4,330	2,247
10 Yr, Avg. 2011 to 2020	20,346	14,078	5,823	34,259	7,224	59,945	4,582	3,906

### 2020 Pedigreed Forage Grass Seed Acres:

Inspected acres of both **wheatgrass** species and timothy seed saw increases from 2019. Wheatgrass acres of over 7,100 are now 1,300 acres above the 10 year average for that crop.

Following huge **timothy** seed crops in the mid 2010's, resulting in certified acres falling from over 43,000 (2015) down to 25,400 in 2019, this past year saw acres of timothy increase by 4,000 to 29,800.

**Bromegrass** pedigreed acres remain steady, with 7,200 acres reported in 2020. Alberta and Saskatchewan are producing most of the bromegrass (meadow and smooth), while all three prairie provinces are actively involved in timothy seed production. Saskatchewan's pedigreed timothy fields increased by 2,200 acres in 2020, as did Alberta acres (up by 2,700), whereas acres fell in Manitoba (down 1,100).



### 2020 Pedigreed Legume Seed Acres:

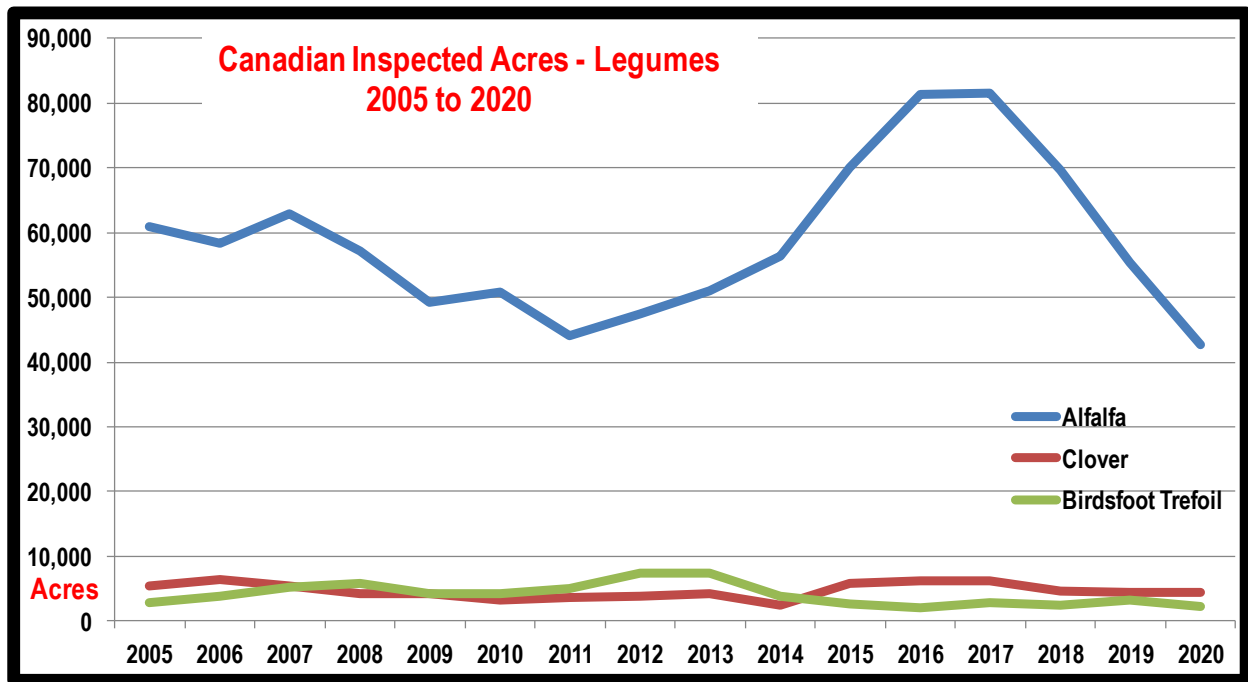
The consequences of the huge 2015 to 2017 **alfalfa** seed crops in Canada, with many of the pedigreed status, is still being felt in 2020. With huge price drops associated with surplus production, a large carryover of alfalfa seed, both common and certified, was felt in the market place. 2020 inspected acres saw inspections fall another 12,600 acres to 42,700 acres in 2020. Inspected alfalfa acres in Manitoba fell by 1,700, in Saskatchewan by 1,200 and in Alberta by an astonishing 9,700.



Pedigreed **clover** (red, alsike and sweet) seed acres remained steady at 4,300. Alberta (2,100 acres) passed Saskatchewan (1,900 acres) as having the most inspected clover seed fields in Canada. Manitoba had 290 acres in 2020.

Manitoba, which grows almost Canada's entire pedigreed **birdsfoot trefoil** crop, saw acres fall to 2,100 acres in 2020. This loss of 962 acres from 2019 represents a loss of almost 30% of trefoil acres.





### Summary:

Pedigreed grass and legume seed acres continued drop in Canada in 2020. However, with globalization of all agricultural sectors, the demand for Canadian certified seed production should continue, primarily in the form of contracted certified seed production back to contracting companies. Although better management and more work is required, pedigreed production of grass and legume seed allows growers to continue to diversify their farm operations, and hopefully, continue to be profitable in the future.

**Note:** Due to Canada's Freedom of Information Act (**FOIP**), many plant types are not broken down to species level. The main Canadian grass/legume seed species applied for inspection includes:

- **Bromegrass:** primarily meadow bromegrass, smooth bromegrass or hybrid bromegrass
- **Fescues:** primarily creeping red fescue, tall fescue, or meadow fescue
- **Clovers:** primarily red clover, alsike clover, sweet clover, or white clover
- **Ryegrasses:** primarily perennial ryegrass or annual ryegrass
- **Wheat grasses:** primarily crested wheatgrass, slender wheatgrass, northern wheatgrass, pubescent wheatgrass, or intermediate wheatgrass

### Prepared by:

David Wong

BSc Ag., B.Ed., CACE

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Beaverlodge Ab Canada