EM8905: Kitchener-Waterloo Record, June 16, 1989, page ?

Grain moisture testings faulty, survey indicates

Grain dealers are doing a poor job of testing grain moisture when farmers deliver their harvest, judging by the results of a survey conducted by the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food last fall.

Only 55 per cent of the readings the elevators gave farmers fell within "acceptable standards," according to a report that chief inspector Don Stockton of Guelph gave out this week.

The ministry’s inspectors collected 280 corn samples and submitted them to the Canadian Grain Commission office in Chatham to be checked against the readings the grain elevators provided to farmers.

Twenty-seven per cent of the elevators’ readings were too high, which means the famers were paid less than full value for their corn.

Eighteen per cent were too low, which means the elevators paid farmers more than the agreed price.

A similar survey involving 228 samples of soybeans indicated 71 per cent of the readings the elevators provided fell within acceptable standards, 12 per cent were too high and 17 per cent too low.

Accuracy could be greatly improved if the elevators ran three tests on each delivery, but almost all of them run only one test, the report says.

"It is unfortunate that only 29 samples in the 1988 program received more than one ‘drop’ in testing," the report says.

"We believe that three ‘drops’ in higher moisture samples is most important."

The report also recommends that moisture-reading equipment be checked at least once a year and says the Ontario Feed and Grain Dealers Association "should pursue an equipment maintenance program for elevator operators."

Stockton also warned that one of the two digital-type scales on the market is not as accurate as the other, and said he believes it’s worth the investment to buy the more accurate model.

The article EM8905 reprinted above is relevant to Part 2 of the STAT 220 Course Materials and Chapter 6 of the STAT 231 Course Materials.