

mation here now, and if there is nothing further to be said on item 17 I would suggest that we go to item 14.

Item stands.

14. Central experimental farm, \$1,330,560.

Mr. Gardiner: The other evening the hon. member for Winnipeg North asked a question with regard to the Ottawa central experimental farm, and questions were also asked by the hon. member for Victoria-Carleton. The first question was as to the size of the central experimental farm at Ottawa. I am informed that the size of the farm is 1194.4 acres, made up in the following way: The old original farm, 468 acres; the Caldwell farm of 300 acres, purchased some time ago and added to it; the Scott farm of 65 acres; and the Booth farm of 361.4 acres, making a total of 1194.4 acres.

Then, with respect to the land added to the central farm in the last two or three years, I would point out that the Caldwell farm of 300 acres was added in 1947 at a total cost of \$75,000, averaging \$250 per acre. In 1949 the Scott farm of 65 acres was added at a total cost of \$56,000, at an average of \$861.50 per acre. I might add that this last purchase comprises a piece of land lying close to the city between the experimental farm and Dow's lake. On that land we have located some of the equipment necessary to naval wireless control, affecting radio and different matters of that kind. In order to prevent buildings being placed upon that land in the immediate vicinity of this equipment, if the equipment was going to remain there, it was found necessary to have that land secure against such buildings being placed there. We had the land rented for experimental farm purposes, and on the suggestion of the department concerned we purchased it, rather than have it subject to that kind of development at this time. We were satisfied to pay that price per acre because it is estimated that if that equipment is placed elsewhere at some future time this property can be easily sold. The purchase was made of farm lands for experimental farm purposes only because of the necessity of having it under government control for the time being.

Mr. Knowles: What is the figure for the Booth farm?

Mr. Gardiner: The average cost per acre for the two parcels of land I have mentioned is approximately \$365, as compared with the decision handed down by the exchequer court in connection with the expropriation of the Booth farm in 1929. That is an old matter which had to do with a decision made before I came to the department, and I believe before most hon. members were in the house. They

disagreed on price, and it was expropriated in the legal manner. The 361.4 acres cost an average of \$838 per acre, which is about the same as or a little less than the price we paid for this special land during the last year. The total price paid for all that land was \$302,500.

A question asked by the hon. member for Victoria-Carleton had to do with the operating costs of the Fredericton experimental station. The total cost was \$163,765.62, broken down as follows:

Main farm	\$107,965.69
Construction of warehouse and cold storage	44,490.00
Completion of three cottages	6,000.00
Construction of reservoir	499.95
Overhauling obsolete electrical wiring ..	4,810.00

Those are the figures for 1948-49.

Mr. Stewart (Winnipeg North): Is there any reason for continuing this farm so close to the city, except that it adds to the amenities of the neighbourhood?

Mr. Gardiner: There have been discussions from time to time of the advisability of retaining the farm in such close proximity to the city of Ottawa. It is argued by some that the property could be converted to other uses and thereby bring a considerable return to the government, and the farm could be moved farther away. I presume that some time that may be done, but the argument up to date has always been that it is a real asset to the city, to the eastern part of Canada, and to a very considerable extent to the people of Canada as a whole. When people, particularly from agricultural areas, come to the capital they can go out and see the latest experiments that are being carried on at a place close to the city. If it were ten or fifteen miles away many people would not go near it or would not be able to find the opportunity to go. Most people who come from the outlying sections of Canada look upon the farm as being one of the sights that they want to see while in Ottawa and I have no doubt that many of them carry away beneficial ideas in connection with agriculture that otherwise they would not get.

Mr. Fair: Regardless of any profit or benefit that might accrue from the sale of the central experimental farm, I submit that it is the duty of the government in the interests of Canadian agriculture not only to see that that farm is kept there but that the experiments are extended. There are many people who do not give sufficient credit to the agricultural industry of this country. I say again that if we have an agricultural industry that is prosperous, then all Canada is prosperous. The only way to make that industry prosperous is to continue the experiments that make for progress in the production of a wide range of agricultural products.