

The food production record set by Canada during the war years was the result of close co-operation between federal and provincial governments and farmers. Early in the war the federal government adopted the policy of keeping farmers informed of its plans. Each year officials of the federal Department of Agriculture met with officials of the provincial departments and farmers' representatives to discuss production objectives. The demands being made on Canada by its allies were outlined, and the responsibilities of meeting these demands were discussed. Every effort was made to put all the factors concerning production before the farmer himself. These conferences were so successful that they are now being continued into peacetime.

In the fishing industry, all arrangements for carrying out United Nations plans or agreements regarding supplies of fish were made in consultation with appropriate representative bodies in the industry. In some cases special advisory committees were set up from among members of the industry.

Farm Manpower

Farm labour agreements were signed with the federal government in every province. These provided for united action by the federal government and each province in the recruiting, transporting and placing of farm workers, together with measures designed to make the best use of existing labour in agriculture.

Prior to the war there was a surplus of labour on Canadian farms; but almost from the beginning of the war large numbers of young men and women left the farms to go into the armed services and industry. Those left on the land were obliged to work longer and harder than ever before. By April 1, 1945, the number of males working on Canadian farms was only 1,000,000 compared with 1,210,000 on April 1, 1939. Early in 1942 farm workers were exempted from compulsory military service.

Because the harvest period occurred at different times of the year in various provinces, farm excursions were organized to move farm workers to areas of greatest essential need. The federal government undertook to pay the cost of transporting farm workers from one province to another; the cost of moving farm workers within the provinces was shared equally between the federal government and the provinces concerned.

Prisoners of war, internees and conscientious objectors were also employed as farm labour.

Farm Machinery

The farmer's task was further complicated by the difficulty of obtaining new machinery. Manufacturers of farm equipment had switched their plants at the outset of war to the more immediate task of munitions production. The manufacture of new machinery was restricted in October, 1942, but this was offset somewhat by increased quantities of replacement parts.

Although Canada produces farm machinery, the allocation to Canadians during the war was under the control of the Agricultural Machinery Committee of the Combined Food Board and the Combined Production and Resources Board (members of which are the United Kingdom, the United States and Canada).

Subsidies

Subsidies in one form or another have had a part in the Canadian agricultural program since early in the war. They have been used to prevent a rise in food prices to the consumer and to encourage production of needed products. This was particularly true in the case of dairy products; to direct supplies into desired lines of dairy production subsidies are used. A subsidy is paid on the butterfat used in the manufacture of butter and on milk used for the manufacture of cheese and concentrated whole and skim milk products.