

Agriculture Minister tours Brazil

Agriculture Minister Eugene Whelan visited Brazil last month as the guest of Brazil's Minister of Agriculture, Alysson Paulinelli.

"Brazilian efforts in expanding the country's agricultural production have received world-wide recognition. It is a prime example of what is being done in Latin America to help fill world food needs," Mr. Whelan said.

More than 60 per cent of Brazil's exports were agricultural in 1975. Brazil remains the world's largest exporter of coffee and sugar and the second largest exporter of soybeans.

Canada imported approximately \$61-million worth of agricultural products from Brazil in 1975, up from the previous year's level by \$23 million.

Canadian agricultural exports to Brazil totalled \$56 million in 1975, compared to \$240 million in 1974.

"Continuing emphasis on the agricultural sector will mean that Brazil can make an increasing contribution towards meeting world food needs. As a Canadian, I am pleased that our country continues to play a part in Brazil's development," said Mr. Whelan.

Co-operative housing in Canada

Continuing housing co-operatives in Canada are still in their infancy, much as credit unions were 40 years ago. The first non-profit continuing housing co-operative in Canada was officially opened in Winnipeg in August 1966, a 200-unit complex known as Willow Park. Since then, over 100 such co-operatives have appeared across Canada. While these innovative housing developments have had some growing pains, the general experience has been favourable. Willow Park's original rent for a three-bedroom unit of 1,137 square feet was \$124 in 1965. Nine years later in 1974, the cost was \$165. This included parking, maintenance, appliances, snow removal, grass cutting, taxes, mortgage payments and utilities. More important, perhaps, has been the sense of sharing. Co-op neighbours may take part on committees for financing, welcoming new members and planning social events, and joke about transferring to the senior citizens wing of their co-op in their old age. Willow Park now has a multipurpose commu-



The DeCosmos Village Housing Co-operative, Vancouver, B.C., received the Vincent Massey Award for Excellence in the Urban Environment last

year. These awards are sponsored by the Massey Foundation, the Canada Council and Central Mortgage Housing Corporation.

nity centre which includes a store, a recreation hall, meeting rooms, a coffee shop, a day-care centre, and a community health centre.

Member-owned and controlled

In a continuing, non-profit housing co-operative, members jointly own housing and occupy individual units under a rental agreement among themselves. There is no "downpayment". Instead, the individual resident purchases a share in the co-op, which is redeemed for its original value when the member wishes to leave. One member, has one vote in all decisions.

The resident pays a monthly "rent" to the co-op, to cover the cost of the mortgage, operation and maintenance of the total project. Thus, the member pays only for the use of his or her housing.

Security of tenure

A member of a housing co-operative has long-term security of tenure and yet may leave simply by redemption of his or her share. Monthly charges are stable, rising only with taxes and operating expenses, and the member has access to all information on specific costs.

Co-op services

Co-op members often provide themselves with other co-operative ser-

VICES — day-care, bulk-purchasing and recreational facilities.

People of all incomes and occupations can be found in housing co-operatives. This form of home ownership appeals particularly to people in the moderate income range who are ordinarily in the market for rental housing but who prefer not to be in a "landlord-tenant relationship"; to young couples including those saving to buy their own homes some day; to retired people who no longer wish to have the burden of home ownership but fear arbitrary rent escalation; to people whose type of work requires that they be fairly mobile; and to those who feel their homes should be part of a larger community.

Expansion of the co-operative sector

The expansion of the co-operative housing sector can be expected, although the problem of land assembly, the requirement for capital and interim financing, and the liaison with federal, provincial, and municipal governments make it complicated. Much assistance to groups interested in starting co-operative housing projects is provided by "resource groups" which are springing up regionally. These organizations provide their clients with advisory services on co-operative organization and incorporation, project development, and follow-up assistance in property management after occupancy.