

Pack of British Columbia Salmon Season 1917

Result is notable for large pack, notwithstanding expected failure of sockeye run to Fraser River.

The British Columbia Financial Times is indebted to the British Columbia Salmon Cannery Association for a statement of the salmon pack of the province for the year 1917. As usual, Secretary Burdis has issued a complete statement, giving in detail the cased pack of each company engaged in the province. Space does not permit us to reproduce more than the totals for each section of the province, together with the record for the same districts from 1915 to 1916 inclusive.

The pack for 1917 is the largest yet produced, totaling 1,557,485 cases. It exceeds by 203,584 cases the pack of 1913, the largest previous pack. The increase for 1917 is due entirely to an increase in the pack of pinks and chums. Notwithstanding the serious shortage of sockeye on the Fraser this season, the total value of the provincial pack for 1917 is in excess of that of any former year.

The failure of the sockeye run to the Fraser as abundantly as in former "big years" was the most disappointing and startling feature of the season. The total pack of all varieties on the Fraser totalled 377,988 cases, a gain of 271,548 cases over that of 1916. The totals on the Fraser, however, should be compared with that of the previous fourth year because the sockeye that run to that river have been shown to reach maturity in the fourth year. Comparing the 1917 pack of sockeye with that of 1913, the previous "big year", shows a loss of 596,182 cases.

The report of the British Columbia Fisheries Department for 1913, affords a basis for an intelligent conception of the conditions on the Fraser spawning grounds in that year, which caused this serious decline in the run of 1917. Owing to a rock slide in the canyon of the Fraser in 1913, the run of sockeye of that year did not reach the major portion of the spawning beds. The beds were virtually unseeded. In summarizing conditions on the beds of the Fraser in 1913, the Assistant Commissioner of the Province wrote, "These facts in my opinion, warrant the conclusion that the number of sockeye which spawned in the Fraser watershed this year was not sufficient to make the run four years hence (1917) even approximate the runs for the former big years, 1905, 1909, or 1913."

The pack on the Fraser this year confirms the forecast of Assistant Commissioner Babcock made in 1913, as does the pack on Puget Sound. The sockeye taken on Puget Sound are Fraser River bred fish. That has long been re-

cognized. The sockeye pack on the Sound in 1917 is approximately 300,000 cases as against 1,664,837 cases in 1913, a loss of about 1,364,000 cases on the Sound, or total loss for the season in British Columbia and Puget Sound of 1,960,000 cases or over 85 per cent.

The failure of the sockeye to run to the Fraser as abundantly in 1917 as in former big years is estimated to have caused a loss of twenty-five millions of dollars to British Columbia and Puget Sound cannery. Furthermore, it is stated, that the loss will not be confined to 1917. It will be repeated every fourth year, until such time as the Governments of Canada and the United States by united efforts succeed in repopulating the spawning beds of the Fraser with the equal of the millions of sockeye that spawned there every fourth year up to 1913.

The pack of pinks on the Fraser in 1917 totaled 134,442 cases or 4,000 cases less than in the previous pink year, 1915. The pack of Fraser chums totaled 59,973 as against 30,000 cases in 1916 and 74,000 in 1914.

From the above it will be noted that the season on the Fraser was a very poor one for a "big year."

The 1917 pack on the Skeena totaled 292,219 cases, which is the high record, and a gain over that of 1916 of 69,061 cases. The sockeye pack totaled 65,760 cases, and an increase of 5,500 over 1916, but a decline of 50,700 cases from the pack of 1915.

The pack of pinks and chums totaled 169,835, or 88,800 cases more than in 1916.

The 1917 pack on Rivers Inlet totaled 95,302 cases or 10,000 over that of 1916. There was a gain of 16,259 cases in sockeye. The catch of pinks and chums is never large at Rivers Inlet.

There was a great increase in the pack in the Island district owing to the operations of new plants. The pack totaled 377,884 cases, only a few cases less than on the Fraser. The principal catch was of pinks and chums.

The Naas River 1917 pack totaled 119,495 cases, a decline from 1916 of 7,800 cases.

Notwithstanding the serious loss on the pack of sockeye on the Fraser, the value of the entire pack of the Province will equal that of any former year. The entire pack has been used. The bulk of it was shipped to England and France. The prices paid of all varieties were records. Sockeyes sold as high as \$16.00 per case and some pinks were sold at \$9.00. The increase was due to the demand and the high cost of fish and materials.

Summary of the Pack of British Columbia Salmon, Season of 1917. Issued by the B. C. Salmon Cannery Association.

District	Sockeye	Red Springs	White Springs	Chums	Pinks	Cohoos	Blue-Blacks and Steelheads	Totals
Fraser River District	123,614	10,197	18,916	59,273	134,442	25,895	4,951	377,988
Skeena River District	65,760	13,586	2,699	21,516	148,319	38,456	1,883	292,219
Rivers Inlet District	61,195	715	102	16,101	8,065	9,124	.....	95,302
Naas River District	22,188	3,170	1,326	24,938	44,568	22,180	1,125	119,495
Vancouver Island District	34,189	15,714	3,795	240,381	49,156	31,733	2,916	377,884
Outlying Districts	32,902	5,248	808	112,364	112,209	30,201	865	294,597
Grand Totals	339,848	48,630	27,646	475,273	496,759	157,589	11,740	1,557,485

Packed by Districts from 1905 to 1916 Inclusive.

	1916	1915	1914	1913	1912	1911	1910	1909	1908	1907	1906	1905
Fraser River	106,440	289,199	328,390	732,059	173,921	301,344	223,148	567,203	89,184	163,116	240,486	877,136
Skeena R.	223,158	279,161	237,634	164,055	254,258	254,410	222,035	140,739	209,177	159,255	162,420	114,085
Naas River	85,383	146,838	94,890	68,096	137,697	65,684	39,720	40,990	46,908	31,832	32,534	32,725
Rivers Inlet	126,686	104,289	109,052	53,423	71,162	101,066	129,398	91,014	75,090	94,064	122,878	83,122
Outlying	307,635	313,894	341,073	336,268	359,538	226,461	147,900	127,974	122,330	99,192	71,142	60,392
Vancouver Is.	145,763	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
	995,065	1,133,381	1,111,039	1,353,901	996,576	948,965	762,201	967,920	542,689	547,459	629,460	1,167,460