

year we have increased by about 50 per cent. the acreage that will be inspected and it will be necessary to have more inspectors. I believe that this is pre-eminently a work in which the government should take a leading part. It means a great deal to the farmers of the Maritime provinces and part of the province of Quebec to safeguard the seed potato industry. We can go over a tariff wall, which amounts to 35 cents per bushel, into the United States market and sell our product and make the American grower pay the duty. And potatoes are about the only thing that we can grow in eastern Canada on which we can make the Americans pay their own duty. For that reason the seed potato industry is valuable from the national standpoint as well as to those who are engaged in the industry, and hon. members who advocate cutting down the work of inspection are advocating something which is decidedly not in the best interests of agriculture in this country and especially in the Maritime provinces.

Mr. CALDWELL: I do not want to disagree with my hon. friend (Mr. Sinclair) in regard to the percentage of potatoes entered for inspection in New Brunswick as compared with the quantity inspected in Prince Edward Island. There was, however, another reason besides the one he gave. Last year potatoes that were 5 per cent diseased were passed as certified seed. The regulations were changed last year, and this year potatoes would pass with only 2 per cent of disease. They had to be 98 per cent pure, whereas last year they passed if they were 95 per cent pure. Before the potato growers of New Brunswick realized that the regulations had been changed, a large number of them had purchased their seed. In fact, there was no way of knowing whether the potatoes that were certified were 5, 4, 3 or 2 per cent diseased, because they were certified if they were 95 per cent pure. I got caught myself in that way. Last year I bought some seed, and I learned afterwards that it was a little more than 4 per cent diseased. Had I known that this regulation had been passed—I did not know until it was too late—I would not have purchased that seed. In the same way large numbers of farmers last year planted potatoes that were 3 or 4 per cent diseased. I know the hon. member for Queen's (Mr. Sinclair) would not want to leave the impression that we have more disease amongst our potatoes, so I would like to correct him. The reason why a smaller part of our crop passed inspection last year was on account of the change in the regulations which the farmers were not aware of when they planted their seed, and

[Mr. Sinclair.]

they planted seed that, had they known of the change in the regulations, they would not have planted.

Mr. SINCLAIR (Queen's P.E.I.): I did not intend making that reference in any way to reflect upon the percentage of disease prevalent in New Brunswick. As regards the percentage of disease in certified potatoes, the important matter is what kind of disease it is. If there are certain diseases like mosaic found in the growing crop, we cannot get it certified. If the disease is wilt or blackleg or rhizoctonia, we allow 3 per cent. There are other diseases which I need not enumerate, but it all depends on what kind of disease is found, what percentage is allowed for certification. If the disease is powdery scab, we do not allow any of those potatoes to be certified. I can assure the hon. gentleman that I was not making any reflection on the province of New Brunswick. I was showing the committee the necessity of having rigid inspection in order to keep disease in check and not to allow it to spread any more in the eastern provinces. I was citing New Brunswick on account of the longer time people there have been engaged in growing potatoes on a large scale. When the American duty was taken off potatoes a few years ago, the development in potato growing was very great, especially amongst those who were near the line and who grew table stock for shipment to the New England market. During the time when inspection was not so rigid for table stock, the disease spread rapidly, in fact, more rapidly than we hoped to allow it to spread, through other parts of the Maritime provinces.

Mr. FANSHER: This discussion has dealt with pests in western Canada, and pests in eastern Canada. As, however, has been mentioned by the hon. member for South Oxford (Mr. Sutherland), there is a pest that has invaded Ontario lately, namely, the European corn borer. I should like to know of the minister how many have been employed during the last year in combating this pest, with what success their efforts have been rewarded, and what was the cost during the last year of fighting this pest.

Mr. MOTHERWELL: I think ten inspectors are engaged in this work. The infection is spreading from the west of Ontario to the eastern part of Ontario. Just from memory, I think there are thirty or possibly thirty-two counties affected. The remedies that have been applied in the Welland and Essex counties, where the infection started principally, because those are the