

Supply—Agriculture

Mr. Gardiner: There are eleven stations in Alberta, there are seventeen in British Columbia and fifteen in Saskatchewan. Those are all apart from the experimental farms. Very few if any of those experimental stations are on land that we own; they are generally on land rented from the farmers.

With regard to the work carried on, Lethbridge has to do with the type of agriculture carried on in that district and, as hon. members know, the Lethbridge area is an irrigation area. Another type of work carried on has to do with the large stock farms and ranches in that area. There is a considerable amount of work being done to promote the production of the best type of stock for those ranches.

Mixed farming is carried on in the central part of the province and the farm there is to assist in the carrying on of agriculture in that area. Persons engaged in agriculture have access to the farm and the farm officials go out on extension work, particularly to the illustration stations that are established here and there.

The work carried on at Beaverlodge has to do with the utilization of two types of land which fortunately are to be found on that farm. The farm is situated on the edge of two large areas and experimental work is carried on in order to assist farmers going onto those lands.

The Fort Vermilion farm is 500 miles north of Edmonton and one can understand the type of work that would be done there. We endeavour to indicate to people going into the far north the manner in which they can best set themselves up in agriculture in that area.

Mr. Shaw: Approximately a year ago considerable publicity was given to a government announcement that a special station would be established in Alberta to operate either out of Lacombe or Beaverlodge in order to study the grey wooded soils. Has that station been established and, if so, where has it been established and what progress has been made in this work?

Mr. Gardiner: As I mentioned, some eleven stations of this type have been established. There is one at Rocky Mountain House which contains some of that soil. There are two types of soil there and experimental work is being done. It is intimated that at an earlier session it was suggested that we might be establishing other stations to take care of that work. We are giving consideration to these matters at all times. I have no definite information, but I have no doubt that the

[Mr. Harkness.]

matter is still being considered. If not, I shall inquire into it and see that it is.

Mr. Applewhaite: It may be a surprise to hon. members to know that the representative of Skeena should take an interest in agriculture, but I would assure hon. members that agriculture is only one of our primary industries. I think the minister will bear me out when I say that he has been approached by the Terrace board of trade and other organizations in the Skeena valley on more than one occasion requesting the establishment of a small illustration station in order to ascertain the value of the soil there for the production of small fruits and vegetables.

I regret that I cannot agree with the hon. member for Fraser Valley, who suggests that as his district has demonstrated its ability to produce more fruits and vegetables it should now have an illustration station in order to prove that they can so do. I suggest in all seriousness that the location of Terrace coupled with the tremendous development that is going on in the north-central area of British Columbia justifies the government in establishing a station there so that farmers may be advised what type of produce they should grow in order to take advantage of the markets which are now right at their doors at Prince Rupert and Prince George.

It may be said that there is already a station at Smithers, but Smithers is 141 miles from Terrace and as between the two locations there is a tremendous difference in the terrain. The type of farming carried on at Smithers is largely grain and stock raising whereas the type of farming carried on at Terrace is the growing of fruits and vegetables. Terrace is the growing area possibly closest to the Pacific coast and it can readily supply the market at Prince Rupert. I request that the minister give consideration to this matter.

Mr. Gardiner: Representations were made to the experimental farms branch of the Department of Agriculture to have such a station established at Terrace and that branch has agreed that one should be established. At the present time they are looking over the area with the idea of selecting the farm upon which it ought to be established, and I can assure the hon. member that we will press on with that work as rapidly as possible.

The Deputy Chairman: Shall the item carry?

Some hon. Members: No, stand.

Item stands.

Progress reported.