

THE POTATO SITUATION.

Cost of Production Estimates in Eastern Canada

In order to protect the public against speculation in the potato trade all wholesale dealers will be registered at the office of the Food Controller and will have to take out a license to do business. Licenses will be issued only to bona fide dealers and the latter will be required to file semi-monthly statements showing their purchases, sales and profits. Legitimate dealers and wholesalers will have nothing to fear from the regulations, but the taking of unreasonable profits between producer and consumer will not be permitted.

Representatives of the Departments of Agriculture of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, Quebec and Ontario, acting as an advisory sub-committee of the Fruit and Vegetable Committee of the Food Controller's office, were in session in Ottawa last week considering the potato situation. They reported their findings to the main committee.

They estimated the surplus of potatoes in Nova Scotia at two million bushels; in New Brunswick, two millions six hundred thousand bushels; in Prince Edward Island, three million bushels; in Ontario, a normal crop; in Quebec, a shortage of two million bushels. The surplus is not due to a heavy crop per acre, but to a largely increased acreage. As a matter of fact, the yield per acre is small, and consequently the cost of production is comparatively large:

The cost to the farmer of producing a 90-pound bag of potatoes was estimated as follows for the several provinces represented:

Nova Scotia	\$ 1 05
New Brunswick	1 50
Prince Edward Island	0 90
Ontario	1 30
Quebec	1 50

or an average for the five provinces of \$1.25.

The Fruit and Vegetable Committee, in a statement to the newspapers, said in this connection:

"In view of these figures, which may be taken as approximately correct, it would seem that at a price of \$1.25 per bag to the consumer, the producer would, at least, only realize the actual cost of production and in many cases may have to sell below that.

"Careful estimates indicate that there will be a considerable surplus in excess

of normal consumption, which if borne out by later developments, should result in bringing potatoes within easy reach of the consumer, irrespective of the high cost of production."

No storage difficulties are anticipated in any of the eastern provinces. Arrangements are being made by the Fruit and Vegetable Committee, co-operating with the Canadian Press, to supply the newspapers with a semi-weekly service, giving quotations at producing centres and in the principal markets of the Dominion. This information will also be available by mail to producers, wholesalers and retailers.

Hon. Mr. Hanna, Food Controller, discussed the situation with the committee and stated that after considering this question from every point of view he had definitely decided not to fix an arbitrary price on potatoes to the producer.

Those present during the discussions were: Messrs. J. R. Hastings, D. Johnson, C. W. Baxter, Geo. McIntosh, Geo. Spencer, and F. H. Grindley, of the Fruit and Vegetable Committee, and Mr. P. W. Hodgetts, representing Ontario; Prof. T. G. Bunting, from Quebec; Mr. F. N. Savoie, of the Department of Agriculture, Quebec, Mr. A. Grenier, Deputy Minister of Agriculture for Quebec; Mr. A. G. Turney, and Mr. G. C. Cunningham from New Brunswick; Mr. A. H. Cutten, from Nova Scotia; and Mr. A. E. Dewar, from Prince Edward Island.

ANOTHER TRAWLER NEEDED.

To Help in the Atlantic Fishing Industry.

Two of the three largest fish distributing firms doing business on the Canadian Atlantic coast own and operate steam trawlers. When fog, bad weather, or the presence of dogfish interferes with the catch of smaller fishing vessels, the trawlers are able to continue work. Hence they play a very important part in maintaining a steady volume of catch. A third trawler is much needed by the remaining firm. As it is impossible to have one built on this side of the Atlantic the only present opportunity of purchasing a suitable steam trawler depends upon the willingness of the British Admiralty to release one from its service. The Food Controller for Canada has requested the assistance of the British Ministry of Food in this urgent matter.