

FARM BUSINESS IN QUEBEC

A SECOND AGRICULTURAL FARM SURVEY IN SIX COUNTIES

In order to secure information representing the true situation of farm business in Quebec, in so far as possible, a preliminary agricultural farm survey was carried out by the writer during 1919, for the Animal Husbandry Division, Central Experimental Farm, Ottawa. This farm survey was made in six representative districts of six counties in the province of Quebec. The information obtained, and embodied in bulletin number 96 of the regular Experimental Farm series, was such as to indicate the necessity of continuance, covering more ground, if possible, another year. Definite plans were made, therefore, and the writer arranged to conduct, during 1920, a survey along the same lines as that of 1919 with double the number of farms.

METHODS OF SURVEY

The methods used in obtaining the information were very much the same as those of the previous survey. In order to make results comparable, in a measure, with those of similar lines of work conducted in other provinces of Canada and in the United States, very similar methods were employed, excepting occasional necessary modifications due to local conditions.

In 1919, the survey was carried on in one representative district in six counties, where Illustration Stations already existed, 25 to 30 representative farms being surveyed in each district chosen, in a radius of five miles around each Illustration Station. As the survey to be carried out in 1920 could not, for various reasons, be made on a comparative basis, it was thought that more information could be obtained by choosing farms for survey in a greater number of districts or parishes in each county. So, instead of using the same centres as in 1919, some fifty farms were surveyed from all the parishes surrounding the parish chosen in 1919. Following this method, 10 or 12 representative farms were surveyed in each four or five parishes surrounding the district surveyed last year. The number of farms surveyed varied with the importance of the parishes of that particular section. However, in this report as concisely as possible and, at the same time, to determine findings in all the parishes surveyed in each county would concur with those obtained last year, all the parishes surveyed in one county are treated as one group. Thus, when the reader subsequently peruses results obtained in, for example, L'Assomption district, it will be understood, unless otherwise stated, that these results are the average of figures obtained on 50 farms surveyed in L'Epiphanie, Repentigny, St. Paul and St. Sulpice parishes, each parish supplying a proportionate number of farms. Again, when studying the tables, comparing the results obtained by the best and poorest farms, in this case each parish supplied its quota of best and poorest farms in making the totals for the averages shown in these cases; otherwise, had the best and poorest farms been selected irrespective of their source, different, but less representative averages would be shown. The above explanations are necessary in order that the reader be afforded a proper interpretation of results.

The desired information was collected by using forms specially prepared for the purpose. Most of the farmers realized the reason and importance of this survey and were quite eager to supply the information sought.

DETERMINATION OF THE LABOUR INCOME

The receipts from all sources were itemized and when totalled together constitute the gross revenue of the farms.