

basic grades for wheat being changed as of the beginning of the next crop year from the former Canadian No. 1 Northern, No. 2 Northern and No. 1 Hard to the new grade, No. 1 Canada Western. This necessitated changes being made in the Act to allow the initial price for wheat to be set on the basis of the new grade instead of on the basis of the previous standard grade. In order to deal with the possibility that from year to year in the future modifications may have to be made to the grading, or a new grade introduced in response to customer requirements, the bill before us will allow more flexibility in determining which grade of a particular grain shall be used as the hallmark for the initial price in a particular crop year. In addition, the bill recognizes the changes in the grading system which are taking place.

In the last few months the Wheat Board has outlined to producers a new quota system under which the producers themselves may assign their eligible acres to the grain of their choice for sales purposes without relation to planting practices. This measure of additional flexibility is recognized in the small changes the bill proposes with regard to the quota system.

The bill also contains a proposal under which, in certain circumstances, the crop year could be extended for the purpose of receiving grain, principally to equalize delivery opportunities as between producers. Some difficulty has arisen in the past with regard to this. Though desirous of extending the crop year with respect to the delivery of certain amounts of grain we found our hands tied by the law as it now stands. In these circumstances, the price in the subsequent crop year had to be applied to the balance of the grain delivered. It will now be possible to extend the crop year under arrangements which would allow the current price to continue for the balance of the amount outstanding. This provision will, I am sure, be recognized by hon. members as introducing additional equity to the quota system.

The bill before us also proposes some improvement in regard to the penalties applicable under the Canadian Wheat Board Act. It is of interest to every producer that the rules which are set out in the act, and which are designed essentially to provide equity between producers, be adhered to. It is a disadvantage to any producer if these rules are broken at his expense, in the interests of some other person who is trying to obtain a greater share of the market or otherwise and who thus ignores the principle of orderly marketing. Producer organizations have generally requested this improvement, this strengthening of the act, in terms of enforcement, and we propose to do this in the bill.

At the same time, it is proposed to allow for some summary procedures to be used in those cases where, as so often will happen, the producer has no interest in disputing his liability or his breach of the regulations. In such cases, without the formality of court procedures it will be possible to complete the process of enforcing the appropriate penalty. To safeguard the rights of the producer and his interests in case he should protest his innocence or otherwise want to defend himself against allegations made against him, he will be able to transfer the case into one of the kind we have known before,

namely one where the full protection of the court and of due process will be available to him.

While I do not want to spend a great deal of time talking about the bill and the general changes that are made in it, perhaps I should say a few additional words about one further change in the bill, one that has received a good deal of attention. This is the proposal to permit at some later date, should it become desirable, an extension of the act to one or any of the crops of rapeseed, rye and flax.

When the Canadian Wheat Board Act was before Parliament some years ago, such extension was allowed for barley and oats, and later on the act was extended to them. In placing the power to so extend the act before Parliament, I do so recognizing that there are some fairly strong feelings on both sides of the issue throughout the prairie region. There are many who become much excited at the very suggestion of an extension. There are others, I must say including most of the major producer groups, who have asked for some years now for the extension of board marketing to these grains.

It is my view that a good deal of discussion and an increase in the amount of information available about the impact of the marketing systems is required before any final decision can be taken on this very important question. Once again, I want to emphasize the fact that these enabling provisions contained in the bill do not indicate any intention one way or the other in regard to changing the marketing system; they are simply in the bill in order that, if a decision is taken, one that has the full support of the producers, we will be in a position to act on it thereafter in orderly fashion.

Producers are concerned about a number of things in the existing marketing system. One problem that they have always had before them, I think, is price changes from day to day in the non-board marketed grains. Frequently, producers express the desire to have an average price or pooled price available to them. In discussion with the producers the question has arisen whether this can be obtained in any one way or whether in fact there are a number of ways of providing for a pooling solution to what they consider to be a problem.

The other serious problem that afflicts some of these non-board marketed grains is whether the price is set in a manner that is fair to the producers or whether some returns are retained elsewhere in the system at their expense. This is a further question that requires constant study and consideration.

Concerned about the marketing of oil seeds in particular, last year I appointed a committee to study the question and report back on an appropriate marketing system for oil seeds. The committee was composed of distinguished representatives of the rapeseed industry, including two well-known farmers who themselves were growers of rapeseed. This committee reported in June of 1970 and indicated that, in its view, not enough information was available to producers at the present time upon which a final or appropriate decision could be made about the kind of marketing system that should be applicable to these grains. The committee suggested that once sufficient