

(C.W.B. March 5, 1958)

instruments, with the result that Canada is considered a leader in the field of mapping of extensive areas. Along with the aerial camera, the Federal Department of Mines and Technical Surveys helped to develop instruments for electronic measurement of distances and making ground profiles from the air, all of which have contributed to faster, more accurate mapping.

As many as 50 large-scale, detailed maps of Saskatchewan alone are prepared each year and made available from the Surveys Branch, Department of Natural Resources in Regina, or from the Department of Natural Resources map library, Provincial Government Building, in Prince Albert.

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### RAILWAY TRACK MILEAGE

Railway track mileage in operation in Canada at the end of 1956 totalled 59,829.8 route miles, an increase of 514.2 miles over the 59,315.6 reported at the end of 1955. Mileage of first main track, or "single track" increased to 43,652.1 from 43,444.3 route miles. In all, an addition of some 233 miles of first main track occurred during 1956, but abandonments and reclassifications reduced the net gain to 208 miles.

Grand Falls Central Railway, reporting for the first time in 1956, contributed 23.1 miles, all of which are in the province of Newfoundland. Opening of a new line between North Vancouver and Squamish Junction added 39.1 miles to Pacific Great Eastern lines in British Columbia, while 21.4 miles opened between Bracket and Drywood, Alberta added to the Canadian Pacific Railway total.

Mileage of "second track" declined to 2,475.9 from 2,486.2 at the end of 1955, but "industrial track" mileage rose to 2,383.9 from 2,242.8 and "yard track and sidings" to 11,317.9 from 11,142.3.

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### SUGAR BEET INDUSTRY

The 1957 sugar beet crop, estimated at 987,000 tons from 83,911 acres, is the fourth largest in the history of the industry. It is expected to supply between 15 and 20 per cent of the refined sugar used by Canadians in 1958 according to F. Dimmock, Forage Crops Division, Central Experimental Farm, Ottawa. The highest production was achieved in 1950, when 1,115,854 tons of beet were harvested from 101,496 acres.

The seven sugar beet factories in Canada, three in Alberta, one in Manitoba, two in Ontario and one in Quebec, can process roughly one-and-one-half million tons of beets each year. Production, therefore, is obviously much below the capacity of processing facilities. This is largely due to low acreages in Ontario and Quebec where for many years production has amounted to only about half that which the

factories could handle. On the other hand, the factories in Manitoba and Alberta have consistently operated at full capacity.

Much labour is required to grow sugar beets, almost all of it done, until recently, by hand. In an attempt to reduce labour requirements, and production costs, much research has been done in the past few years to increase mechanization. From this has come mechanical thinners and weeders, mechanical harvesters which top, lift, clean and load the beets, and mechanical unloaders. Other research has resulted in, first, the decortication of seed to reduce the multiple seed ball to one containing a single seed, uniform in size and, second, monogerm seed varieties.

With greater mechanization of production, it is hoped to stimulate more interest among growers in areas where production has either fallen off or never reached the levels required by the factories, particularly in Ontario and Quebec.

### AGRICULTURAL STABILIZATION ACT

Mr. Douglas S. Harkness, Minister of Agriculture, has announced that the Agricultural Stabilization Act was proclaimed and went into effect on March 3, 1958.

This Act will establish a system of flexible guaranteed prices for agricultural commodities based on a ten year moving average formula. There is an ultimate security clause in the Act to ensure that for nine key commodities, no matter how drastic a decline prices may take, farmers are guaranteed a minimum of 80 per cent of the base price, that is of the average price during the preceding ten years. These nine key commodities are cattle, hogs, sheep, butter, cheese, eggs, and wheat, oats and barley except in the Canadian Wheat Board areas.

In addition to the mandatory floor price of 80 per cent, the Act provides that, with the approval of the Governor in Council, support prices at a higher level than 80 per cent of the base price may be established, and this undoubtedly will be the case with some commodities.

For these nine key commodities the mandatory floor price or a support price higher than the mandatory floor price will be in effect at all times.

The guaranteed yearly prices for the nine mandatory commodities and for other commodities for which price support is required will normally be set during the first three months of each year and will be in effect for twelve months in each case after being set.

It is expected that most, if not all of the minimum prices for the nine mandatory commodities will soon be announced. Also, several other commodities not on the mandatory list will be named and their prices set in the near future.