

a decline in the relative importance of food, which now takes a smaller portion of the consumer dollar spent for goods and services. On the other hand, there has been an increase in the relative importance of a variety of other commodities and services, particularly the purchase and operation of passenger cars. There has also been a marked shift in the relative positions of coal and fuel oil in family purchases. In addition, some 38 items are being added to the sample of commodities and services priced, while only five will be dropped. Additions will include such items as frozen foods, restaurant meals, electric frying pans and television sets.

\* \* \* \*

### HOG PRICE SUPPORTS

Hog prices during the calendar year 1961 will be stabilized by a deficiency-payment programme similar to that in effect last year, Agriculture Minister Alvin Hamilton told the House of Commons recently.

The support price to producers has been established at \$22.65 a hundredweight, national basis, which is about 83.5 per cent of the base or 10-year average price of \$27.11 a hundredweight.

Mr. Hamilton said the action taken by the Government in placing hog support on a deficiency-payment basis had had the anticipated effect of eliminating the previous surplus production and greatly improving hog prices.

Over the past year, prices to producers have averaged about \$1.00 a hundredweight more than the national support price. A year ago, the price of Grade A hogs at Toronto was \$23.65. It is now \$29.00 and it has been at or above that level for some time.

### WARNING AGAINST OVER-PRODUCTION

"There is a very real danger that present prices may encourage a level of hog production which could lead to heavy supplies and much lower prices later this year," Mr. Hamilton said. "While some expansion in production can be accommodated, a warning must be sounded to producers against over-expansion at this time. This situation is widely recognized and provincial departments of agriculture and others are calling attention to it." The Minister pointed out that, for these reasons, the Government had decided to retain the national support price for 1961 at the same level as last year.

Under the deficiency-payment method of support, the Agricultural Stabilization Board will determine at the end of 1961 the national average price to producers at which Grade A hogs were sold. If this average price is less than the support price of \$22.65 a hundredweight, then a deficiency payment equal to the difference will be made to each registered producer on a maximum 100 Grade A or Grade B hogs.

### CANADA'S DOMESTIC TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE (Continued from P. 3)

"Now you may ask what practical purpose has been served by this lengthy process? After all, almost at the outset the patient was treated and his health restored. Well there are a number of important objectives achieved. The Laboratory of Hygiene has been given information that, when added to that provided from similar cases in other parts of the country, enables it to study and keep track of epidemics. The data from all such cases are compiled and published monthly so that the provinces also are kept abreast of the situation. Aside from tracking epidemics, which fortunately, in the case of typhoid, are now very rare, the process serves another useful function. It helps identify and track down carriers of typhoid who, of course, can still be a great menace to any community.

"I might add that many other types of disease, including virus infections, are dealt with in a similar fashion but this one example will, I think, give you a general idea of how the Laboratory of Hygiene functions in its capacity as a national reference centre. Another area in which it provides valuable technical assistance is in the expansion and improvement of provincial and hospital laboratory services.

"Right at the moment, for instance, the director of the Laboratory and other staff members are about to undertake, in co-operation with Ontario authorities, a comprehensive study of the province's public health and laboratory services....

"Besides such special projects, the Laboratory of Hygiene, as I have said, provides testing materials for the use of its provincial counterparts and also, on occasion, conducts refresher courses to instruct provincial staff on the latest techniques and to help them standardize their procedures in line with those of other provinces. As far as hospital laboratories are concerned, these have been improved by the provision of detailed manuals of testing procedures, by the provision of standard tests for such things as haemoglobin, and by the sending out of test specimens to allow hospitals to rate their own procedures by comparison with national standards.

These latter activities may sound rather trivial but taken together they have had a very definite effect on raising the level of laboratory services available throughout the country. One final point might be mentioned in this regard. The Laboratory of Hygiene also serves in a consultant capacity for all national health grants related to laboratory services. Prior to the introduction of the Hospital Insurance Programme, the health grants were used extensively to extend provincial and hospital laboratory services. Now, of course, hospital laboratory services are covered under the insurance plan...."