

of farmers organized Consumers Co-operative Refineries Ltd. in 1935 and built the first co-operative oil-refinery in the world. This was the beginning of an upsurge in co-operative purchasing in Canada, which continues to this day.

### Marketing and Purchasing Co-operatives

The total volume of business of 1,495 marketing and purchasing co-operatives amounted to \$1,775 million in 1965, the second highest on record.<sup>(1)</sup> Although most items showed an increase over 1964, the record year, the total was down slightly owing to a reduction in export sales of wheat from the unusually high level reached in 1964. The volume of business in 1965 represented a twelvefold increase over 1932, the first year co-operative statistics were tabulated. However, the number of co-operatives in 1965, while almost double the 1932 figure, has been steadily declining since the peak year 1950, reflecting the trend of consolidation into larger units. Marketing of farm products accounted for 68 per cent of total volume in 1965, distribution of farm supplies and consumer goods (purchasing) 31 per cent and service revenue and miscellaneous income 1 per cent.

Grain and seeds is the largest category of commodities marketed by co-operatives in Canada and represented 48 per cent of total marketings in 1965, followed by dairy products, 25 per cent, and livestock and livestock products, 18 per cent.<sup>(2)</sup> Grains and seeds and livestock and livestock products are marketed chiefly in the Prairie Provinces.

Dairy products are handled in all provinces except Newfoundland, with the heaviest concentration in Ontario and Quebec, which together accounted for 54 per cent of the total in 1965.

Farm supplies accounted for the greater part of Canadian co-operative purchases of \$549 million in 1965. The co-operative purchasing of feed is particularly important in Ontario, Quebec and British Columbia, as much of it is shipped in from the Prairies. Petroleum products are the main commodities purchased co-operatively in the Prairie Provinces because so much power machinery is used.<sup>(3)</sup>

Co-operative purchasing of some consumer items, especially food, is also large. Even these items are sold mainly to rural people, though in Western Canada co-operative supermarkets now serve large numbers of urban people. A number of these city co-operatives were organized by farmers and gradually gained urban support.

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(1) See Table 1.

(2) See Table 2.

(3) See Table 3.