

Supply—Agriculture

sections, rural and urban. I should like to call to the minister's attention the fact that the good work he has done in applying support prices to agricultural commodities has enabled farmers and those who are interested in producing food for people to buy to feel that they have made a good investment and that they should continue to make an investment in agriculture. This policy assures the farmers that a temporary situation which may arise, such as the foot-and-mouth disease or anything else, which disturbs the economy of agriculture, will not break them.

By doing this you not only give stability to the agricultural industry; you give stability to the market. I am referring to the market in which urban people buy. If we have no floor price under an agricultural product, then because of that lack of floor price the return to the farmer drops so low that it is no longer profitable for a farmer to produce that commodity, then it is obvious that as time progresses there will be a shortage of that commodity. When that shortage occurs we have these very high prices to which the urban people object.

Referring back to the situation which has been brought to the minister's attention so clearly by the debates in this house within the last week, I would say it is most important that he not allow the rural areas to become depopulated, thus causing our agricultural production to drop off. If that happened the people who live in the cities would have to pay exorbitant prices for food in the years to come. I think the members of the department who have done so well in disposing of the surplus beef should look with pleasure on their performance, but should keep in mind the fact that they must give stability to the members of the agricultural community in this country if the urban people are going to have goods to buy at reasonable prices. I would commend the minister for his efforts in the past.

Mr. Gardiner: I should like to correct the statement I made a moment ago that there were no losses on eggs. There was a loss of \$1,866.24 a year ago.

Mr. White (Middlesex East): I wanted to ask the minister what other farm products, if any, are being supported by the Agricultural Prices Support Act at the moment?

Mr. Gardiner: Butter, eggs, pork and beef. I gave the figures a little while ago. I put them on *Hansard*.

Mr. White (Middlesex East): Yes.

The Deputy Chairman: Shall the item carry?

[Mr. Hosking.]

Mr. Charlton: No. It is rather unfortunate that the minister is getting a little bit touchy these days. The statement I made a few moments ago was that I doubted whether a dressed grade A or grade B-1 hog having the bone and fat removed would take 50 per cent of that carcass. I still say that. I am glad to hear that both the members for Wellington are so well satisfied with conditions as they exist today. After hearing the hon. member for Wellington North, I make the suggestion that with the head, hocks and fat cut off and the bone taken out, it probably would be 50 per cent. What do you do? Do you give that head and the hocks to the packer? I mean, do they get that for nothing? It is understandable, of course, if they do not count the weight of the head and do not count the weight of the hocks. But the head and the hocks are valuable products.

Mr. Gardiner: They are sold, and that is all figured in: the dressing percentage, the cost of preparation and all credits. The credits, of course, take in the payment we get for the head that goes into head cheese and for the feet that go into feet, hocks and so on. But the actual position is that the canned pork amounts to from 78 to 82 pounds. There is a little bit of variation, but it is about half. The average hog will dress out at 155 pounds. Some will dress a little bit more than that and some a little bit less in the top grade. But the canned pork coming out of that average of 155 pounds runs from 78 to 82 pounds. The amount that goes into Wiltshires is 120 pounds and the amount that goes into cuts would be 90. But the canned pork is what we are talking about and that is 78 to 82 pounds out of 155 pounds, which is not very far from half of it. It will depend somewhat on the amount that is trimmed off with the head, with the feet, the amount trimmed off with the fat and the amount taken out in bone.

Mr. Charlton: That is the amount that goes into the can?

Mr. Gardiner: Yes, the amount that goes into the can.

Mr. Charlton: What happens to the money that is collected for the feet and hocks?

Mr. Gardiner: In figuring the cost of the canned pork, the other is credited to the cost.

Mr. Charlton: When the minister made his statement, or when he answered the question I asked him with regard to the value at 26 cents a pound he said you could double that figure to get the price.

Mr. Gardiner: That is approximately correct.