

To be Wrapped or Unwrapped?

Cost of Living Commissioner says selling of bread unwrapped is conducive to waste.

The Cost of Living Commissioner has issued his report for the month of January on the cost of bread produced in the larger cities of Canada.

An examination covering twenty-three cities and groups of cities shows thirteen cities with slight increases in cost of bread, six with decreases and four with the same figures as last month, while the total average for the Dominion is the slight increase of one-fiftieth of a cent per pound. Thus the cost of producing bread in January as compared with previous month was practically stationary.

The figures for Montreal are about the same, while Ottawa shows one-seventh of a cent per pound increase; Toronto, one-tenth of a cent per pound increase; Winnipeg, the same as December; Calgary, a very slight increase; Vancouver and other British Columbia points show one-third cent per pound lower cost.

Referring to the flour cost, the blend shows eight averages the same as December, the blend of from seven cents to twenty cents per barrel, and five slight decreases. The whole Dominion shows an average increase in cost of six cents per barrel.

FORMER QUALITY MAINTAINED.

As pointed out in former reports, the yield in pounds of bread from one barrel of flour is the basis adopted for working out the various costs shown.

The total quantity of bread produced by the firms investigated was 18,862,238 pounds, produced from 71,991 barrels of flour, showing a yield of nearly 260 pounds of bread to the barrel.

The reports show ingredients for December .471, and for January .471; flour for December 4.4 and for January 4.06, indicating that the bakers are keeping up the quality of their bread.

They purchased in the month of January 70,979 barrels of flour at an average cost of \$10.67. The total quantity used figures out 71,991 barrels at a cost of \$10.66, showing that stocks received just about equal the amount used, and at practically the same cost.

COST OF PRODUCTION.

The production cost of bread per pound, including costs per pound of flour, ingredients, baking, delivery, management and overhead costs was as follows in the different places reporting:

| Locality. | Cost of lb. of bread. |
|---|-----------------------------|
| Halifax, Amherst, New Glasgow and Sydney | |
| Mines | 6.342 |
| St. John, N.B. | 7.382 |
| Montreal and Westmount | 7.461 |
| Quebec | 6.408 |
| Sherbrooke and St. Hyacinthe | 6.808 |
| Ottawa | 6.324 |
| Toronto | 6.562 |
| Kingston and Belleville | 5.514 |
| Hamilton | 5.673 |
| Brantford | 6.051 |
| St. Catharines and Niagara Falls | 6.641 |
| London | 6.654 |
| Guelph, Stratford and Kitchener | 6.621 |
| St. Thomas | 6.779 |
| Chatham | 6.793 |
| Port Arthur | 6.872 |
| Winnipeg | 6.571 |
| Moose Jaw | 7.135 |
| Medicine Hat | 6.850 |
| Edmonton | 6.431 |
| Calgary | 6.610 |
| New Westminster, Victoria and Vancouver | 7.109 |
| Dominion Average | 6.806 |
| Total bread produced, 18,862,238 lbs. | |
| Total flour manufactured, 71,991 barrels. | |

COST OF FLOUR.

Invoices of flour purchased showing average cost per barrel:

| Locality. | Dec. | Jan. |
|--|---------|---------|
| Halifax, Amherst, New Glasgow and Sydney | | |
| Mines | \$11.55 | \$11.30 |
| St. John, N. B. | 11.39 | 10.39 |
| Montreal and Westmount | 10.23 | 10.84 |
| Quebec | | 11.59 |
| Sherbrooke and St. Hyacinthe | 11.00 | 11.34 |
| Ottawa | 10.78 | 10.79 |
| Toronto | 10.69 | 10.82 |
| Kingston and Belleville | 10.95 | 10.63 |
| Hamilton | 10.76 | 10.95 |
| Brantford | | 10.84 |
| London | 10.48 | 10.44 |

| | | |
|---|-------|-------|
| Port Arthur | 10.52 | 10.52 |
| Winnipeg | 10.33 | 10.40 |
| Medicine Hat | 10.01 | 10.04 |
| Edmonton | 9.82 | 9.82 |
| Calgary | 9.84 | 9.87 |
| New Westminster, Victoria and Vancouver | 10.35 | 10.39 |
| Total flour purchased, 70,979 barrels. | | |
| Average cost per barrel, \$10.67. | | |

BREAD SHOULD BE WRAPPED.

"Since I issued my last statement concerning Canadian bread conditions the Canada Food Board has put into force a regulation which prohibits the wrapping of bread. This regulation, whether or not sought by the bakers, was welcomed by them and they seem quite content therewith, but in my judgment (admittedly fallible) it conduces to waste and contributes to make higher yet the cost of living. I, therefore, respectfully suggest that it should be rescinded. If the object of its being made was the reduction of the cost of bread to the consumer (I was not consulted, so I do not know), that object has already signally failed. Some bakers have raised their prices. I know of none who has reduced them. If the objection was the prevention of waste, that objection has worse than failed, for the evil of waste has been accentuated. The wrapped loaf keeps fresh and sweet at least for eight hours longer than the

unwrapped loaf. All stale bread does not go to waste, but a very much larger percentage of stale bread than fresh does go to waste. As the unwrapped bread goes stale, much new fresh bread is bought replacing it. The baker does not object, but apart from the matter of conservation, which is not my business, all this costs the consumer more money.

Meanwhile, notwithstanding all our hard-earned provincial sanitary laws, the one article necessarily and universally used at our tables is delivered there under conditions which we have been taught to regard with disquietude, if not with disgust. I submit that sanitary precautions are worth paying for. The sanitary requirements which surround the supply of meat and milk add very materially to their cost, but these laws remain unimpaired. Why favor one or more species of bacteria. Let us have them all. Why clean meat or milk, but dirty bread? Why not dirty water as well? Thus could we save money and conserve supplies. Water systems receive anti-typhoid treatment at great expense, while a baker's driver, who happens to be a "typhoid carrier," may infect a thousand loaves of bread per day. I refrain from imagining various other possibilities (they come all too easily to one's mind), but in view of the fact that the house fly will soon be abroad in the land, I suggest that at least those who wish to purchase wrapped bread should be at liberty to do so, whether or not the wrapping of all breads is again made compulsory. I think, however, that wrapping should be made compulsory. I think so, as I may lawfully and properly think, and think in this open fashion, because wrapped bread costs less than unwrapped bread. With such matters I am directly concerned."

FISH OUTPUT OF U. S.

The United States now leads the world in its fish output, while the waters of Canada and the United States in combination supply over \$150,000,000 worth of fish per annum, out of a world recorded total of slightly less than \$500,000,000. This statement was made apropos of the settlement of long standing disputes between this country and Canada, on the subject of fisheries, at a lecture delivered before a class in the educational department of the National City Bank of New York. The term "recorded total," said the lecturer, is used advisedly, because of the fact that the actual records of world fisheries cover in fact only a comparatively small proportion of the globe or its population.

The total value of the United States fish crop, including Alaska and the insular possessions, is probably \$150,000,000 at the present time, though the latest official figures put the total at \$125,000,000. The fact, however, that a portion of these figures represents the output prior to the advance in prices resulting from the war seems to justify an estimate of approximately \$150,000,000 as the value of our own output at the present time. This total of \$150,000,000 compares with \$40,000,000 as the value of the fish crop of Canada; Great Britain, \$52,000,000; France, \$33,000,000; Russia (in 1911), \$50,000,000; Germany, \$12,000,000; the Scandinavian States, \$25,000,000, and Japan, \$50,000,000.

In Europe, as a whole, the recorded fish crop in the latest available year is \$225,000,000, for North America (United States, Canada and Newfoundland) \$175,000,000, and Japan \$50,000,000, making the total for the countries supplying official figures \$450,000,000. For the remainder of the world, Asia, Africa, South and Central America, Australia and the islands of the Pacific, there are only estimates, but these estimates bring the total of the world's fish crop at the place where taken from the seas above \$600,000,000, suggesting that the sums paid by consumers probably exceed \$1,000,000,000 per annum. The world's oyster crop, according to the lecturer, amounts to approximately \$25,000,000 a year in value, of which four-fifths are grown in the waters of the United States, most of them along the Atlantic frontage, the remainder chiefly in the waters of France, Belgium, the Netherlands and Great Britain.

Fish form a factor of considerable importance in the foreign trade of the United States, the total exported in 1917 amounting to \$25,000,000, and the imports about \$23,000,000. If we include the amount sent from Continental United States to its non-contiguous territories, fish and fish products passing through the ports of the United States in the calendar year 1917 would amount to approximately \$50,000,000. This trade in fish and fish products is steadily increasing, the imports having grown from \$12,000,000 in 1907 to \$23,000,000 in 1917, and the exports from \$6,000,000 in 1907 to approximately \$25,000,000 for the calendar year 1917. The value of

the fish imported into and exported from the United States since 1900 exceeds \$400,000,000.

The capital invested in the fisheries of the United States, including vessels and the establishments on land in which the fish are handled, is, according to the latest official figures, about \$75,000,000, the number of persons employed 220,000, and the value of the sea products turned out by the canneries of the country \$50,000,000, of which salmon alone amounts to about \$25,000,000, and sardines approximately \$7,000,000, the United States' output of canned sardines being greater in quantity than that of any other country of the world.

PREMIER OLIVER TELLS DEPUTATION MUST WORK OUT OWN SALVATION.

VICTORIA, B.C., March 19.

Hon. John Oliver, Premier, talked very plainly today to a deputation representing various British Columbia municipalities which waited upon him to ask that the proceeds of certain elements of taxation be shared with municipalities, pointing out the difficulties confronted in municipality financing.

"You have called the tune and now you will have to pay the piper," he said. "The men who compose the government are not possessed with the powers of the Almighty, and endowed with the ability to create something out of nothing! You are faced with the necessity this time of working out your own salvation. You must produce more, and you must spend less. I have to do it, and you will have to do it. You have bitten off a big chew, and you are all smarting under the inconvenience of an acute attack of indigestion. I ask you, are you going to repudiate your obligations? No. Then you are going to doff your hat and don your overalls! Study out your own individual responsibilities and weigh up your municipal obligations, and then come and show us where we can be of assistance.

The delegation included representatives of Victoria, Vancouver, Nanaimo, North Vancouver, Kamloops and Revelstoke.

HEAVY CROP OF OATS.

That Central British Columbia will, in the future, become famous as a seed producing territory is the opinion expressed here by experts, who have had an opportunity to watch the results of recent experiments.

Mr. W. C. Lampitt, on his farm south of the town of Vanderhoof, B.C., on the Grand Trunk Pacific line, sowed oats of the "New Industrial Variety" last year on about ten acres of new breaking. He obtained one hundred and twenty-seven bushels per acre after the oats had been cleaned, and the crop averaged 46 lbs. to the bushel. He also raised splendid barley, which ran 67 lbs. to the bushel, and his grain is in demand for seeding purposes.