

## SOME DROUGHT AREAS ON PRAIRIES

**CROP REPORT:** Cooler weather and rains have maintained and even improved crop prospects in some parts of the West, but there remain large areas in Saskatchewan and Alberta where serious deterioration is continuing. The outlook in Manitoba and most of eastern Saskatchewan is generally good to excellent, while crops in southern sections of Alberta have responded to recent rains. In south-western Saskatchewan particularly, and to a somewhat lesser extent in central and west-central areas of that Province, rains are urgently needed. Similar conditions prevail over most of central Alberta from the Calgary-Edmonton line eastward to the Saskatchewan border. Drought is causing rapid deterioration in this large area and frost has caused local damage. Grasshopper infestations appear to be well under control in all three provinces, although the possibility of severe damage still exists, particularly in the most seriously affected districts of central Saskatchewan.

Rains and cool weather during the past week in Manitoba have further improved the crop outlook in that Province. Prospects are now considered very promising and stands of grain are generally heavy and pastures much improved, especially in areas where moisture reserves were particularly low. Spraying for both weeds and grasshoppers is in full swing in the more seriously affected areas. No serious damage from grasshoppers is indicated as yet.

Although general crop prospects have improved in Saskatchewan during the past month, poor conditions still exist in the greater part of south-central and south-western districts. During the past week the weather has been generally cool, with scattered showers falling in many areas. Moisture conditions are reasonably satisfactory in the eastern part of the Province but further rains are urgently required in most of the south-western districts.

From 10 to 50 per cent of the wheat throughout the Province is in the shot blade stage. There is considerable grasshopper activity in the central part of the Province with indications of it spreading into west-central and south-central areas. Losses have been held at a minimum but there still remains the potential danger of heavy damage in the most seriously infested districts.

Crop prospects are extremely variable in Alberta. Growth is still only poor to fair in a large area to the north and east of Calgary. Parts of southern Alberta received rain during the past week ranging from one-half to one inch. Although cool weather has helped to maintain conditions in some areas, crops are deteriorating rapidly in much of central Alberta. Pastures here are poor and hay crops short. General rains are needed immediately if crops are to make a comeback.

**THREE NEW WAR VESSELS:** The first contract in the naval anti-submarine escort shipbuilding program was announced on June 22 by the Minister of National Defence, Mr. Claxton, who stated that Canadian Vickers Limited, of Montreal, would commence work immediately on the preparation of detailed working drawings of the hull structure for the first three ships from the basic design provided by the Royal Canadian Navy.

Every effort will be made to advance the work without delay and it is hoped that the first keels will be laid down at the end of the year or early in 1950.

"As soon as the working drawings are complete, contracts will be awarded to three different Canadian yards, thus maintaining the employment of skilled engineers and workmen in many different industries," Mr. Claxton stated.

"These will be classed as major war vessels and, as such, are the first to be designed completely in Canada," the Minister continued. "Although much assistance has been received from the Royal Navy and United States Navy, the ships will, in fact, be entirely of Canadian design throughout and their manufacture will be carried out in Canada with Canadian personnel and resources."

It is also the first instance, Mr. Claxton added, in which the R.C.N. and the Canadian shipbuilding industry have worked as a team to produce a good, practicable warship of Canadian design.

While specific details of the ships cannot be disclosed for reasons of security, they are designed primarily for the detection and destruction of modern fast submarines. They will be the first to be built anywhere to meet the new requirements.

In function they replace the frigates and corvettes of the Second World War. Like the latter vessels, their design has been worked out so that in the event of an emergency they can be produced rapidly and in quantity.

There the comparison ends. In speed, manoeuvrability, weapons and habitability the new ships of the R.C.N. will fulfill all the requirements of their class for modern sea warfare.

The escort vessels will have steel hulls and aluminum superstructures and bridges. Steam turbines driving twin screws will provide a speed considerably in excess of that of the frigate.

Accommodation will be provided for a ship's company of more than 250.