

whether the drug can be released in Canada.

The importance of using Rifampin in combination with another drug was stressed by Dr. Leslie Eidus, head of the National Reference Centre for Tuberculosis. When Rifampin is administered alone, nearly one third of patients become resistant. However, when used in combination with other drugs, the results are much more satisfactory. In a study reported by Professor Nitti, Rifampin, when used with isoniazid, was successful in converting all of 43 patients from sputum positive to negative by the sixth month. Bacterial resistance had not developed in any of these patients by that time. When Rifampin was used in combination with ethambutol, conversion was also 100 per cent for 44 patients; with streptomycin, 92 per cent conversion (35 of 38 patients) was attained.

Rifampin will offer new hope to a number of chronic patients. These patients have become resistant to primary antituberculous drugs and have remained sputum positive despite extensive treatment. This means that for years they have been unable to live normal lives or to work regularly. It is hoped that during this introductory clinical study of Rifampin, a large number of these patients will be converted from sputum positive to negative.

VIEW OF AGRICULTURAL POLICY

A recent issue of *Business Review*, published by the Bank of Montreal, expressed the view that the serious decline in Canadian wheat sales and the resulting damage to the Prairie economy indicate that far-reaching changes in agricultural policy are necessary.

But the *Review* warns that there are "major hurdles to overcome in shifting resources from the highly-specialized field of growing wheat into other equally specialized areas....The next few years will be no easy time for Canadian agriculture and for the policy-makers who shape its destiny".

At present, export sales are falling, world wheat markets are glutted, and it is estimated that, by the end of the 1969-70 crop year (July 31), Canada's stocks of wheat will amount to 950 million bushels, almost double the estimated annual domestic con-

sumption and expected export sales. This is a reversal of the situation in the mid-Sixties, when there was concern over Canada's ability to fill contracts for the sale of huge quantities to the Soviet Union and China. According to the Bank of Montreal, improved technology - better equipment, hardier crop varieties, increased use of pesticides - has expanded Canadian wheat production. However, it has also brought increased crops in other countries that can now use locally-produced grain in baking and milling instead of depending on Canada's high quality wheat.

PRAIRIE ECONOMY AFFECTED

The drop in wheat sales, says the *Review*, has had serious repercussions on the Prairie economy. Since 1967, there has been a 19 percent drop in total farm cash receipts on the Prairies. In 1969, while retail sales rose 6 per cent in the country as a whole, the gain in Manitoba and Saskatchewan was only 1.5 per cent; in Saskatchewan there was a 2 percent decrease.

The *Review* contends that the wheat-acreage reduction plan for 1970 recently announced by the Federal Government is an important but short-term step toward changing Canada's agricultural policy.

Under this scheme, farmers who reduce wheat acreage below 1969 levels and increase the amount of fallow and forage land will receive compensation payments. A maximum of 1,000 acres for any individual producer will be eligible. Also wheat delivery quotas for the 1970-71 crop year will be based not on wheat acreage planted but on the amount of land left in summerfallow and perennial forage.

The *Review* says that, if the Government's scheme has maximum impact, as many as 22 million acres will be taken out of wheat production this year and almost no wheat will be grown. "While this will alleviate the immediate problem by helping to reduce stocks, it will provide only a short breathing space for longer-term policies to be formulated."

"Clearly," the bank concludes, "Canada's agricultural product mix will be changing markedly in coming years and, while wheat will no doubt continue to be a very important crop, it will no longer be so overwhelmingly dominant on the Prairies as it used to be."