

Agricultural Production in the Province in 1916

Encouraging growth in home production is steadily decreasing imports of food products to feed our own people. Valuable Bulletin issued by department of Agriculture, Victoria.

Notwithstanding the fact that many land-tillers, owing to enlistment, were absent from the farms in 1916, and the unfavourable climatic conditions in many sections prevented any marked increase in quantity of production, yet the total value, due to enhanced prices, showed an increase of 3.39 per cent. over 1915. Although total imports into British Columbia increased 4.65 per cent., yet, as in the case of home production, this is attributed to increased prices rather than to quantities.

Exports of British Columbia products in 1916, as far as could be ascertained, totalled nearly \$4,000,000, or an increase of 30 to 35 per cent. over 1915. There were marked increases in shipments of horses, fruits, and vegetables.

Apples and other tree-fruits produced well, whilst returns were generally satisfactory. The production of apples alone was 41.1 per cent. greater than 1915, while the total of apples and other tree-fruits was 34.6 per cent. greater. These increases were due to the large percentage of young orchards reaching bearing age.

Small fruits were 52 per cent. greater in acreage than in 1913, according to complete surveys, but in 1916 in the larger producing sections excessive rainfall during picking reduced an otherwise increased harvest, as the setting of fruit, especially raspberries, in the Lower Mainland section was exceptionally heavy. The total value of the large and small fruit crop was \$2,176,662, or an increase of 32.5 per cent. over 1915. Notwithstanding this increased production and the decrease in population, this Province imported nearly \$300,000 worth of raw deciduous fruits and over \$200,000 worth of canned fruits. Over \$1,400,000 worth of fruit was shipped out of the Province.

The acreage of potatoes shows a decrease of 13.5 per cent. from the previous year, whilst the yield was 5.9 per cent. less, yet prices ruling nearly 20 per cent. higher resulted in a total value 12.3 per cent. greater.

Field roots show an increase in acreage of 8 per cent. over 1915, while the total yield was 31 per cent. greater. Other vegetables show a falling-off in production of 27.6 per cent.; the greatest decreases occurring in the Vancouver Island, Lower Mainland, and Central sections of the Province. The total value of these crops decreased 8 per cent. from 1915.

Tomatoes show an increase in yield of 9.6 per cent., and which would have been greater had not early frosts shortened the harvest in the Okanagan, where a very large percentage of the acreage was grown in 1916.

The area of grain for threshing in 1916 decreased 6.6 per cent. from the previous year. Yields were 15.6 per cent. less in wheat and 27.8 per cent. less in oats. Owing to the drought, marked decreases occurred on Vancouver Island and to a greater degree in Central British Columbia and the Peace River sections, where these crops in some localities might be termed a failure from the late frosts as well as drought. Prices ruled 30.8 per cent. for wheat and 22.9 per cent. for oats higher than in 1915, still the total value of all grains was 9.2 per cent. less than 1915.

The increase in the acreage of White Navy beans in 1916 is worthy of note, there being 1,809 acres, as against 698 the previous year. Prices realized by growers averaged 6½ cents per pound, as against 4 cents in 1915. This crop was almost entirely grown in the Kamloops section.

The hay-crop shows a decrease in area of 2.3 per cent. in 1916. Average yields show marked decrease, owing to the cold, backward spring in all districts and drought over

Vancouver Island and Central sections. The total value was 6.7 per cent. less than 1915.

The increase in the acreage of alfalfa in recent years has been quite rapid, there being 5,591 acres in 1916.

Fodder corn, while still comprising a small percentage of the total acreage of fodders, is rapidly increasing also. There were 2,434 acres in 1916, as against 1,705 in 1915, an increase of 42.3% and 164% since 1914. Silos in connection with this and other soiling crops, are rapidly increasing in number, there being not less than 300 in the Province at the end of 1916, representing an approximate investment of \$50,000.

Horses increased only 1.2 per cent. in value over 1915. There was quite a strong demand for heavier stock for local farming purposes, whilst over 1,500 head of various grades were shipped out of the Province during the year.

Beef cattle increased in number 3 per cent. Prices were slightly lower. There was a marked decrease in the number of British Columbia cattle slaughtered for consumption in 1916, as compared with 1915, when excellent grazing resulted in very prime stock, thus creating a strong demand on local markets.

Dairy cattle increased in nearly all sections of the Province, and especially in those where dairying has heretofore commanded little attention. Even in the more established dairy sections small herds were found on an increased number of small farms. In the Chilliwick Municipality, where a complete census was taken in 1916, there were 9,351 dairy cattle of all ages, as against 6,910 in 1913, or an increase of 35 per cent.

Sheep in 1916 increased in number 25 per cent. over 1915. During the past two years there has been a conspicuous absence of ewes on the market, indicating a greater desire to increase the flocks on the farms. The number of local sheep marketed in 1916 decreased 78 per cent.

Hogs increased in number 7 per cent. in 1916, having recovered from the falling-off in 1915, when owing to the high cost of feed large numbers were disposed of.

Poultry and eggs show a very satisfactory increase in both quantity and value, the latter being 58.7 per cent. over 1915.

Dairy products, in quantity, did not reach the increase anticipated, considering a 10 per cent. increase in the number of dairy cows in the Province. The spring was wet and cold, while drought prevailing over Vancouver Island during most of the outdoor feeding season, and along the Lower Fraser valley during the autumn months, and the decreased feeding value of hay in the latter district, were all contributing factors in reducing the milk flow.

A synopsis of the value of production in the three years of 1916, 1915 and 1914 is given below:

	1916	1915	1914
Live Stock	\$ 8,703,136	\$ 8,797,875	\$ 8,123,359
Meats	1,405,872	1,864,673	1,211,600
Poultry and Eggs	2,324,307	1,464,720	2,410,022
Dairy products	3,251,856	3,034,340	3,012,000
Fruits	2,176,662	1,642,300	996,071
Vegetables	3,374,517	3,063,092	3,233,542
Fodders	5,741,979	5,899,283	6,578,039
Grains	3,294,013	3,626,330	2,770,985
Miscellaneous	356,492	232,208	389,278
By Indians	1,554,081	1,502,980	1,459,204
Total	\$32,182,915	\$31,127,801	\$30,184,100

Agricultural production compared with imports from other points in Canada and foreign countries for the three years were valued as follows:

	Home	Canada	Import Foreign
1916	\$32,182,915	\$14,399,965	\$2,799,697
1915	31,127,801	13,493,807	2,941,163
1914	30,184,100	19,908,455	5,290,670