

Additional hopper cars to move Canada's grain

Transport and Wheat Board Minister Otto Lang recently announced details of three contracts, worth a total of nearly \$80 million, for the purchase of 2,000 additional hopper cars for the movement of Canadian grain.

Mr. Lang said: "The purchase of these new cars at this time will benefit the prairie grains economy, while also assisting the Canadian rail-car manufacturing industry and easing regional unemployment problems.

"We are bringing our fleet of Government of Canada grain hopper cars up to a total of 8,000. These cars, which will assist in replacing the deteriorating fleet of grain box cars, are of great importance in expediting the movement of prairie grain to take best advantage of marketing opportunities."

Distribution of the new cars between the two major railways will be based upon each railway's share of total grain movement. About 52.5 per cent is handled by CP Rail, while Canadian National moves some 47.7 per cent. CP Rail will take its share of cars entirely in the 100-ton steel variety. Canadian National requested most of its allotment to be of the 70-ton aluminum size with the remainder to be 100 Ton Steel.

Delivery of the steel hoppers is due to begin in July with the full order to be completed by late autumn. The aluminum hoppers are expected to start rolling off the line in mid-August and to be fully in service by next January.

Trade in automotive products.

Canada's trade in automotive products with the United States continued to grow in the third quarter of 1976, although the rate decelerated during the year. As the gain in exports was stronger than that of imports, the deficit decreased in successive quarters.

Canadian exports of motor vehicles and parts (as measured by U.S. imports) in the January-to-September period totalled \$5,727 million, 37.5 percent above the total of \$4,164 million in the first nine months of 1975. This

increase was split evenly between vehicles and parts.

Exports of passenger automobiles and trucks rose, respectively, 23 per cent to \$2,528 million and 46 per cent to \$964 million. The value of automotive parts shipments increased 50 per cent to \$2,114 million and that of tires 175 per cent to \$121 million, because of the lengthy disruption in production of the U.S. rubber industry. Except for cars, the nine-month totals in 1976 of each product category exceeded the full-year values for 1975. Owing to the differing rates of growth, the proportion of cars in the total exports fell 5 points to 44 per cent while the proportion of parts increased from 34 per cent to 37 per cent.

Canadian imports of automotive products from the U.S. increased 16.5 per cent from \$5,549 million in the first nine months of 1975 to \$6,464 million in 1976. Nearly all of this rise was due to imports of automotive parts, which increased more than 24 per cent to \$4,055 million. Smaller increases were recorded in imports of automobiles and trucks but imports of tires fell 34.5 per cent.

At \$737 million, the automotive trade deficit with the U.S. for the nine months of 1976 was 47 percent below the deficit of \$1,385 million for the comparable period of 1975. As only the balance in parts trade deteriorated, by 5 per cent, significant improvements occurred in the balances for cars, trucks and tires, with the latter two shifting from deficit to surplus positions.

Overseas trade

In sharp contrast to the contraction in the deficit with the U.S., Canada's automotive trade balance with overseas countries deteriorated. Imports rose 27 per cent to \$646 million while exports declined 5 per cent to \$410 million. The deficit more than tripled to \$236 million in 1976 from the unusually low level of \$76 million for the first nine months of 1975.

Declines of some 15 per cent each in exports of trucks to \$156 million and automotive parts to \$116 million were partly offset by a 24 percent increase in shipments of passenger cars to \$124 million, principally to Venezuela and Iran.

Nearly 80 per cent of the increase in

imports was due to the jump of 42.5 per cent to \$366 million in passenger car arrivals, mainly from Japan. A 24 percent increase to \$181 million in automotive parts imports was recorded from such countries as Brazil, Mexico, Japan, Sweden and the European Economic Community.

Car imports

Just over half of the 15 percent expansion in passenger car imports to 542,200 units was from Japan, and a further 40 per cent from the U.S. The U.S. proportion of Canadian car imports declined from about 80.5 per cent in the first nine months of 1975 to a little over 75 per cent in 1976, while the Japanese share expanded from under 11 per cent to 16 per cent.

With an increase of 6,900 vehicles, the West German share of the import market rose nearly one percentage point to 4.5 per cent. Smaller and offsetting changes occurred in car imports from other countries.

Fried paper makes good potato chips

The chef checks the temperature of the oil. Then he lowers it in the basket to begin frying the culinary concoction to perfection.

Although this sounds a bit like an exclusive restaurant the scene is the Agriculture Canada Research Station in Moncton, Manitoba, and the chef is usually a white-coated technician. The culinary concoction is nothing more than filter paper discs soaked in potato juice.

"People still laugh when they hear about us frying up little bits of paper," says Andy Russell, head of the station's potato breeding program, who finds this cooking method valuable for his work.

"We're actually saving a lot of time and expense by doing this," he says. "Last year, we fried more than 30,000 filter discs."

The system is a shortcut to determine the potential of new potato varieties to suit the chipping industry's demands. More than 70 per cent of the 60,000 acres of potatoes grown on the prairies are destined for processing. Many of these are used in the manufacture of potato chips.

"The texture, size and shape of