

place in this house and urge and beg the Minister of Agriculture to reconsider the closing of that farm.

Mr. NICHOLSON: I notice in the minister's report on the work of the experimental farm at Melfort, Saskatchewan, mention is made of considerable experimental work done in connection with the sugar beet industry. Can the minister tell us what success there has been in that particular field, where the seed is procured, and whether we are developing in Saskatchewan sugar beets suitable for making refined sugar?

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): Before the minister answers that question, surely he will have something to say to the hon. member for Rosthern (Mr. Tucker) who has just spoken. I have no information at all with regard to the merits of closing that farm, but I have a good deal of sympathy for the case which the hon. member has made. In the course of his remarks he made some serious reflections upon the deputy minister of agriculture and some of the higher officials of the department, and it seems to me—and I offer this with the utmost good-will—that the minister just cannot sit silent.

Mr. GARDINER: I had no intention of doing so. There may be five other speeches to make after I have the floor.

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): The minister will excuse me. I apologize for being a little premature. I thought he was not going to reply. Certainly we cannot let this item pass without the minister making some defence of his own officials who cannot be here to speak for themselves.

Mr. GARDINER: Another member over there rose to ask a question.

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): The minister did not rise.

Mr. GARDINER: I had not the opportunity. The hon. gentleman over there had the floor.

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): I am sorry; I did not see him.

Mr. GARDINER: To answer first the question that has just been asked, experiments are being carried on by all our farms having to do with sugar beets, the reason being that we are attempting to get records of the production and sugar content of sugar beets being raised in different sections where we operate farms. Experiments are being made at Melfort in common with our other farms that are operating.

To come down to the question that has been raised by the hon. member for Rosthern (Mr. Tucker), it will be noticed that this

[Mr. Tucker.]

item has been reduced by \$185,000. The Rosthern farm is not the only farm that is being closed.

Mr. BROOKS: I was going to ask the minister if he would tell us how many farms in each province have been closed.

Mr. GARDINER: There are none closed to date.

Mr. BROOKS: Or are proposed to be closed.

Mr. GARDINER: Take the farm at St. Joachim. The expenditure there last year was \$6,000. This year we are cutting that down to \$5,125, with the intention of closing the farm. At the Cap Rouge farm we spent last year \$27,851, and we are spending this year \$10,564, with the intention of closing it.

Mr. BROOKS: Where is that?

Mr. GARDINER: In Quebec. At the Farnham farm last year we spent \$20,502, and this year we propose to spend \$8,122, with the intention of closing the farm at the end of the season. The Rosthern farm has not been run for \$10,000.

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): He said net.

Mr. GARDINER: It cost \$27,812 last year.

Mr. TUCKER: What were the revenues there?

Mr. GARDINER: The revenue was \$4,323, leaving a net cost of \$23,000.

Mr. TUCKER: Does that include the cost of the construction of the conservatory, and the new piggery? They cost about \$12,000, I believe.

Mr. GARDINER: No, I understand it does not include the cost of buildings. At Windermere farm we spent \$14,518 last year; we are spending \$6,926 this year, with the intention of closing it. We expect to save \$9,000 by closing the farm at Tranquille.

Those are the six farms, and there are nineteen demonstration stations which are being closed in the different provinces across Canada. By this means we reduce the expenditure this year by \$185,430.

This is not the first time the department has indicated a desire to close the Rosthern farm, and at least some others which I have mentioned. It has been for some time the opinion of the department that the usefulness of the work which was started many years ago at some of those places has ceased. Certain work was done in those areas to demonstrate what could be accomplished under the soil conditions existing there, and the