

A WHEAT QUOTA IN GREAT BRITAIN

What is at present under discussion in the U. K. is a quota for wheat produced in the U.K.

At this stage no plan is being considered for quotas for Overseas British or foreign wheats, but it is suggested that these may be considered at the next Imperial Conference.

The British Government is proposing that millers in the U. K. be required to use in their grist a certain proportion of domestic wheat, which is tentatively fixed at 15 per cent.

As purchase of domestic wheat of good milling quality will thus be compulsory, it is expected and intended that British farmers will not only have an assured market but can command a price above the competitive world level. The government will, however, fix a maximum beyond which the price cannot go.

The method under consideration is that millers desiring imported wheat must produce certificates to the Customs showing the amount of home-grown wheat they are using before they can clear imported wheat, which they will then be allowed to take out of bond up to the proportion of 85 per cent imported to 15 per cent domestic used.

The announcement of policy by Sir J. Gilmour in the House of Commons on December 3 was as follows:

"The Government has decided to apply the principle of a quota to home produced wheat and to introduce legislation in time to enable a scheme to become effective for next year's crop.

"The scheme will be designed to secure for producers a certain market and enable them to obtain an enhanced price subject to a statutory maximum for wheat of milling quality.

"No contribution from the Exchequer by way of subsidy will be involved and it is not intended to encourage the extension of the cultivation of wheat to land unsuitable for that purpose"

It is not quite clear from information made public whether the quota percentage will be calculated on the basis of total consumption of wheat and flour in the U.K., including imported flour as well as imported wheat, or whether flour imports will be disregarded in figuring the percentages.

Average yearly quantities of wheat and of flour produced, imported and exported during the last 5 years, 1926-27 to 1930-31 are as follows,-

1. Wheat produced in U.K., 5 year Average	49,710,000 bus.
2. Wheat imports " " "	197,896,000 "
3. Flour imports " (5,950,000 bbls.)	26,773,000 "
4. Gross imports, wheat and flour (2 plus 3)	224,669,000 "
5. Total supplies (1 plus 4)	274,379,000 "
6. Wheat and flour exports (mainly flour)	12,872,000 "