

WORLD WHEAT SUPPLIES HIGHER

OVER-ALL GRAIN PICTURE: The combined wheat supply of the world's four major wheat-exporting countries -- the United States, Canada, Argentina and Australia -- amounted at January 1, 1949, to 1,617 million bushels, some 30 million above the supply level at the beginning of 1948.

While wheat stocks are up only moderately from a year ago, the total supply of all grains at 158 million short tons is 29 per cent greater than the stocks a year earlier and 14 per cent above the average of the past five years.

According to a recent grain bulletin by the Food and Agriculture Organization, the world export supply of grain, in contrast with recent years, appears to be about equal to the import demand for which means of financing and procurement are available.

A year ago, according to the bulletin, stated import requirements for all grain exceeded the export supply by nearly 50 per cent, and in 1946-47 requirements for food purposes alone were placed at around 38 million tons, against which there was a total export availability of 28 million tons, including 20 million tons of wheat.

The improved supply and requirement position in 1948-49, states FAO, results largely from the better harvest in western Europe -- the principal import area -- and from good harvests in the exporting countries of North America and also of eastern Europe, partic-

ARCTIC QUARANTINE: In a joint statement issued on March 4 the Minister of Mines and Resources, Mr. MacKinnon, and the Minister of National Health and Welfare, Mr. Martin, warned all persons who may wish to travel to or in the 3,000-square mile area, extending from north of Eskimo Point to and including Chesterfield and westward to Baker Lake, that a strict quarantine is in force in the area and will be continued for at least another two weeks.

The Royal Canadian Mounted Police is co-operating in the enforcement of the quarantine that has been ordered.

ularly in the Danube Basin and parts of the Soviet Union. Production of wheat alone in Europe last year exceeds the small 1947 harvest by 52 per cent, or 12.5 million tons, and total grain production is greater by nine per cent, or 22.8 million tons, than in 1947. Despite this improvement, demand for wheat imports has continued active in the current season.

The FAO bulletin points out that the estimated export availability of all grains at around 39 million tons is much above average. If this figure is reached, total grain exports will approach the record movement of some 39 million tons averaged in the period of the late 20's and early 30's.

CANADIAN REPORT: With a revised carry-over of 77.7 million bushels of wheat at July 31, 1948, Canada's total wheat supply for the 1948-49 crop year stands at 471.3 million bushels, according to the Monthly Review of the Wheat Situation issued by the Bureau of Statistics.

Out of the current crop-year total, the quantity available for export or carry-over is estimated at 321.3 million bushels, of which 102.6 million bushels had been exported as wheat and wheat flour during the six months, August to January. The latter figure compares with exports of 97.0 million bushels in the first half of the preceding crop year. Wheat exported as grain during August-January of the present crop year amounted to 74.0 million bushels, an increase of 10.6 million bushels over exports for the corresponding period of the previous crop year, while exports of wheat flour in terms of wheat are five million bushels less at 28.6 million bushels.

The balance remaining for export or carry-over at February 1 was 218.7 million bushels as compared with 175.0 million on the same date last year.

CARLOADINGS: Carloadings on Canadian railways for the week ended February 26 increased to 73,224 cars from 70,591 cars in the previous week, but were down from the loadings of 76,422 cars in the corresponding week last year. Grain products declined from 2,914 cars in 1948 to 2,188 cars, live stock from 1,895 to 1,462 cars; sand, stone, gravel, etc., from 3,030 to 2,812 cars; pulpwood from 8,030 to 6,766 cars; lumber from 3,647 to 2,951 cars; wood pulp and paper from 4,873 to 4,461 cars; miscellaneous freight from 5,452 cars to 4,723; and l.c. 1. merchandise from 18,154 to 17,747 cars. Grain increased from 4,931 to 5,236 cars; coal from 5,798 to 6,925 cars; and gasoline and oils from 3,676 to 4,244 cars.

COST OF LIVING INDEX DOWN SLIGHTLY

EASED ONE TENTH POINT: With lower food prices slightly overbalancing increases for fuel and light, homefurnishings and services, and miscellaneous items, Canada's official cost-of-living index, as compiled by the Bureau of Statistics, eased one-tenth of a point from 159.6 at the beginning of January to 159.5 at February 1. The latest standing compares with 150.1 a year earlier and is 58.2 per cent above the August, 1939 level.

The food index declined from 202.2 at the beginning of January to 200.4. At the February 1 level it was five points down from the maximum of 205.4 reached at October 1, but 14.3 points above a year earlier. As compared

with January, egg prices again moved sharply lower, while meats and shortening were also down. Citrus fruits advanced, with other foods showing little change.

Firmness in coal and coke moved the fuel and light series up from 130.0 at the beginning of January to 130.8. Homefurnishings and services also gained 0.8 to 167.8. There was a rise in miscellaneous items from 126.6 to 128.1 as tobacco, cigars, and theatre admissions showed some increases.

The clothing index dropped fractionally from 181.9 to 181.8. There was no February recalculation of the rent index which remained at 121.7.

COST-OF-LIVING INDEXES (1935-39=100)

Table with 8 columns: Combined Index, Food, Rent, Fuel and Light, Clothing, Home Furnishings and Services, Miscellaneous. Rows for February 1, 1949; January 3, 1949; and February 2, 1948.

EXPLORE ARCTIC ISLANDS: One of the most important discoveries that has come out of recent work in the Canadian Arctic is the presence in Foxe Basin, west of Baffin Island, of some large islands which have never yet appeared on any published map.

The Minister of Mines and Resources, Mr. MacKinnon, announced on March 4 that during the coming summer a party organized by the Geographical Bureau of the Department will explore these islands.

The party will be under the charge of Mr. T.H. Manning, noted for previous exploratory work in the Arctic; in addition, it will contain two geographers, a botanist and a geologist. It will proceed north from Moosonee at the end of steel in James Bay in a specially constructed 45-ft. boat.

ON BOARD "MAGNIFICENT": As Canadian Task Group 215.8, comprising the aircraft carrier "Magnificent" and the destroyers "Haida" and "Nootka", steamed into the warmer waters of the Gulf Stream off Bermuda on Monday, pilots of the 19th Carrier Air Group and 826 Firefly Squadron of the 18th CAG were up at dawn to commence a rigid schedule of air exercises.

First off the flight deck of the big carrier

was a Sea Fury fighter piloted by Lt. Cdr. (P) H.J. Hunter, of Montreal, commander of the 19th CAG, who led two other Furies on a fighter direction exercise.

Other pilots then began intensive deck landing training under conditions ideal for flying. Both the fast Sea Furies and Firefly's were used.

For some of the aircrew this was the first experience in landing the Sea Fury aircraft on the flight deck of a carrier. Each man must have eight deck landings to his credit before carrying on with further exercises. In preparation for the actual training at sea, R.C.N. pilots are required to complete from 100 to 120 dummy deck landings on the airdrome at H.M.C.S. "Shearwater", Dartmouth.

IRON AND STEEL: Canadian production of iron and steel continued at a high level in January, exceeding the tonnages for the same month last year by a considerable margin. Totals also were well above the monthly averages for 1948.

According to the Bureau of Statistics, combined output of steel ingots and castings amounted to 284,707 tons in January as compared with 280,425 in December and 256,726 a year earlier. Ingot output in January was 275,987 tons and castings 8,720 tons. This year's January total was the highest since May 1948, when output was 289,567 tons.