

Pack of British Columbia Salmon, Season 1916

Result Is Notable for Small Pack of Sockeyes and Large Pack of Pinks and Chums—Great Uncertainty as to 1917—the Big Year of the Four-year-cycle.

The B. C. Salmon Cannery Association has issued the annual statement of the salmon pack of the Province for 1916. It is a complete and finished tabulation, giving by districts the detail of the pack by species, made by each canning concern in the Province. We again have to congratulate Mr. W. D. Burdis, the secretary of the association on the work. Lack of space prevents our reproducing more than the summary.

of the most satisfactory features of the recent development in the salmon canning industry. Considering the prime quality of both Pinks and Chum salmon, when taken in salt water, it is remarkable that a demand for these was so slow in developing. The present demand is due to a more general recognition of the food value of canned salmon and the demand for a cheaper grade than the high priced Sockeye. Offers for next season's pack of Pinks are at present being made at prices which two decades ago would have been deemed satisfactory for Sockeye.

Notwithstanding that the total salmon pack of the entire coast is the largest recorded the demand is so great

Summary of the Pack of British Columbia Salmon, Season of 1916, Issued by the B. C. Salmon Cannery Association.

Districts—	Sockeyes	Red Springs	White Springs	Chums	Pinks	Cohoos	Blue-blacks and Steelheads	Totals
Fraser River District.....	27,394	11,096	9,217	30,184	840	24,580	3,129	106,440
Skeena River District.....	60,923	18,372	2,561	17,121	73,029	47,409	3,743	223,158
Rivers Inlet District.....	44,936	1,033	389	20,144	3,567	15,314	85,383
Naas River District.....	31,411	3,061	784	11,200	59,593	19,139	1,498	126,686
Vancouver Island District.....	13,975	11,302	2,336	47,918	34,993	35,239	145,763
Outlying Districts	36,150	6,367	208	113,634	108,622	41,942	712	307,635
Grand Totals	214,789	51,231	15,495	240,201	280,644	183,623	9,082	995,065

The grand total for the year is 995,065 cases, a decline from the average of each of the last three years—one of which was a big year—of only 200,000 cases. Compared with the total packs up to 1909 it shows an increase, but it is to be noted that only half of the pack of 1916 consists of Pinks and Chums.

The most marked feature of the statement is the falling off in the pack of Sockeye. With the exception of the pack on the Naas River there is a decided loss in every district. The Sockeye pack of the Skeena was but 60,923 cases as against 116,533 cases in 1915, and 130,166 cases in 1914. The Sockeye pack at Rivers Inlet is even more disappointing. The total for 1916 is but 44,936 cases, as against 130,350 in 1915 and 89,890 cases in 1914. Usually poor packs on both the Skeena and at Rivers Inlet are accompanied by statements that weather conditions were most unfavorable, but no such reason is assigned this past season. The poor catch is attributed to a poor run.

The Sockeye pack of the Fraser was 27,394 cases. Very much the lowest ever recorded there. The Sockeye pack of the Fraser in 1915 was 91,130; in 1914, 198,183 cases; and in 1912, 123,879 cases, and they are all classed as "poor years." In the last "big year"—1913—the Fraser pack of Sockeye totalled 719,796 cases, and the Puget Sound pack that year totalled 1,665,728 cases, a total for the district of 2,385,524 cases.

No statement has yet been issued giving the salmon pack on Puget Sound for 1916, but we are advised that the total Sockeye pack is less than 80,000 cases. If that is approximately correct the total pack of Sockeye is but 107,000 for the year.

Even to one familiar with the history of the fishing industry on the Fraser this is a remarkable showing. Such statements certainly furnish ground for the oft-repeated assertion that the salmon fishery of the Fraser is doomed to extermination unless conservation measures are adopted.

The Provincial pack of Red and White Spring salmon totals 66,726 cases, a notable increase over that of recent years, and is due to the fact that the catch this year was canned and not tierced. Since the war there has been no market for tierced salmon.

The pack of 280,644 cases of Pinks is satisfactory, considering that 1916 was not a Pink year, i.e., the Pinks run in abundance in most waters only every other year.

The pack of Chums of 240,201 cases is also notable, and indicates the development of a market for this grade. The market demand for both Pinks and Chums is one

that it is believed that all stocks will be exhausted well in advance of next season.

There is much speculation as to the 1917 salmon pack, especially that on the Fraser. It is a year for the big run to that river. Heretofore there has never been a doubt as to the size of the run to that stream in a big year. Orders have always been given and preparations made for a capacity pack. Such orders are not being issued for 1917. The catch of Sockeye in the Fraser River district in 1913—the last big year—was the largest recorded, and vast numbers of fish are known to have passed the fishing limits, but owing to a rock slide in the canyon of the Fraser, above Yale, many of them were unable to pass through the canyon and gain access to suitable spawning beds. The Provincial Fisheries Department's report for 1913 dealt fully with this feature. Its investigations were thorough. Its conclusions are the basis of the present doubt as to the size of the 1917 run.

The December issue of that excellent trade journal, "The Pacific Fisherman," Seattle, has a leading article on the run to the Fraser district in 1917. It gives a digest of the reports for 1913, and is worthy of the attention of every concern interested in the salmon industry. It is both thorough and timely, and we regret that space will not permit us to reproduce it.

VALUE OF DOMINION GRAIN CROPS IN 1916.

The December issue of the monthly commercial letter of The Canadian Bank of Commerce presents a comparison of the value of the cereals, wheat, oats and barley produced in the four chief grain provinces of Manitoba, Alberta, Saskatchewan and Ontario as follows:

	1914	1915	1916
Manitoba	\$ 58,407,000	\$113,085,000	\$ 80,310,620
Saskatchewan	139,421,000	206,757,000	224,400,590
Alberta	52,826,000	72,105,000	121,778,350
	250,654,000	391,947,000	426,489,550
Ontario	76,709,000	84,719,000	79,566,330
	327,363,00	476,666,000	506,055,880

For the years 1914 and 1915 the values given above are those published by the Census and Statistics Department, those for 1916 are based upon the prices of Western grain at Fort William, and of Ontario grain at Toronto, on November 25.