

Island Holds Outstanding Record In Agriculture

Well Merits The Name Of Canada's Garden Province

By WALTER R. SEAW
Deputy Minister of Agriculture

Nature has not endowed Prince Edward Island with a great variety of natural resources. Mineral deposits are non-existent. Forest preserves are negligible, and while the island is well watered by beautiful blue, clear rivers and streams, power for commercial purposes is insignificant. The Province is thus denied secondary industrial development through which employment, markets and economic strength may be secured.

To compensate for these deficiencies, however, the Island throughout almost its one and one-quarter million acres of land provides an example of one of the finest agricultural areas on the Continent of North America. This great natural resource, unhampered by rock obstructions, easily tilled, for the most part naturally drained, and quickly and impressively manured, is embellished by a soothingly and picturesque pastoral beauty, and many other natural characteristics that provide satisfying living conditions for both permanent and itinerant citizenry.

In addition this small bit of land nesting in the blue waters of the Gulf of St. Lawrence, close to the maritime barriers of adjacent Provinces, enjoys comparative immunity and protection from severe storms and wind, which follow more northerly and southerly trails, eventually leaving breezes of only good sailing velocity invading its shores.

At Canada's Gateway
Situating at the gateway of Canada, and having regard to modern air transportation developments, the Island holds fine opportunities to reach markets in various points in Canada, the United States and in lands beyond the rim of the ocean. During the present year ample evidence of things to come has been indicated in the marketing of twenty plane loads of strawberries amounting to 100,000 boxes in Montreal, Boston, Newfoundland and other centres.

Air transport of milk, cream and live stock has also been initiated. The quick transfer of our fruits, dairy products and other commodities by air to distant markets opens possibilities of a most important nature.

In turn access to our great sand beaches and safe surfing beaches, our unexcelled foods fresh from the farm and the sea, and the cool sleep-provoking nights under quiet, serene conditions should all combine to contribute to the economic advantage of the Province.

Well-Planned Program
The stability of Island agriculture is based on a well planned farm program, involving four main cornerstones: dairying, hog and poultry raising, and the important cash crop—potatoes. The extensive sheep raising, small fruits and vegetables, provide interesting and profitable side occupations. Comfortable homes, and well-planned farms have been established. These farm estates, very many located and constructed with artistic consideration, represent constructive planning, long hours of labor, and a love of home building, rather than large and easy available annual farm revenues. The term, "a land of homes," is abundantly applicable.

Because of the dependence of Prince Edward Island on agriculture and its large percentage of exports to distant markets, a policy of high quality in all phases of farm production has been the basis of agricultural activity. It has been recognized that in keenly competitive markets our main dependence and economic strength must be placed on food products that are even better than those of our keenest competitors.

Important Factors
It would be well to assess the status of our products at the present period and to point out some of the natural advantages as well as the promotional programs that have brought these products to their present high state of development.

A factor of great importance, which receives little recognition, is that concerning the outstanding natural health of Prince Edward Island livestock. It is questionable if any area in the world possesses a livestock population that is more vigorous and free from disease. At the present moment a general test for Bovine Tuberculosis is going on. This is the fifth general test for the Province. In the original test which took place in 1925 only 5.9% of the cattle reacted to this disease. In the last general test in 1942, from over 100,000 cattle tested, only eleven reactors were located. In the test now being conducted an almost complete freedom from the disease has been unofficially reported. This is truly a remarkable record.

It is generally conceded that the Province is in an equally favourable position with regard to Bangs Disease (Brucellosis). Fear of Unpleasant Fever, which is directly related to Bangs infected cattle, is therefore practically eliminated. The problem of Mastitis is also now receiving careful attention through the services provided in the Agricultural Laboratory, one of the finest of its kind in Canada. The same favourable disease situation is found in hogs and other farm herds and flocks. No Hog Cholera, or Rhinitis has ever been located in our swine.

gistry dams qualifying with a slaughter test score of 85 or over, placed for breeding purposes.

5. Only Advanced Registry Yorkshires showing at our Provincial Exhibition.

6. The highest record of any Province in Canada—over 50% of commercial hogs grading selects at inspected abatolts.

7. A greater number of animals qualifying in the upper brackets of Advanced Registry than from all other Provinces combined.

8. Supplying of foundation breed stock to every Province in Canada and to a number of the United States.

These outstanding achievements have been attained through a comprehensive and expert program of expansion and improvement. The results have directed the eyes of discriminating hog breeders throughout the areas of this Province as a source of supply of highly superior breeding stock. The three hundred odd registered Yorkshire breeders in the Province, all members of Advanced Registry Clubs, and with foundation quality sows only, are not capable of filling the orders that are being presented over a wide field. During the past two-month period over 350 registered animals have been exported and the demand continues to expand.

Poultry Development
The development in the poultry industry has been equally favourable. A large investment has been made in this industry and improved housing, brooding and rearing of chicks have received intensive investigation. Over six million dozens of eggs are produced annually and approximately four million pounds of poultry meats. The exportable surplus is shipped to Maritime, Newfoundland, Upper Canadian and to some extent United States markets. The number of laying hens in 1948 was 750,000 as compared to 395,000 in 1939. Income in the former year amounted to \$1,640,000.

A highly effective basic poultry inspection service and the use of a splendid new Agricultural Laboratory technique have gone far to eliminate weakness, disease, and undesirable factors in the industry. A spectacular development has taken place in Island chick hatching and within the past few years the great bulk of day-old chicks distributed to Prince Edward Island farms has originated in these hatcheries.

During the season of 1949 the distribution amounted to 764,000. Importation supplies the balance of the demand to a grand total of approximately one million chicks. It is a compliment to the vigor and quality of our approved stock production that considerable trade in hatching eggs has developed in United States Centres.

Potatoes For Excellence
An outstanding record in agriculture has been in the field of potato production. The potato re-

formation commenced about the early '20s as a result of experimenting with new varieties and the favourably resulted secured from Island grown seed. The United States potato producers, as well as Canadian, were quick to grasp the significance of the startling vigor, quality and disease immunity in this product, produced in a soil favourable to its production.

During the intervening years trade has expanded until our seed stock is now used in thirty States of the Union, and the Provinces of South America, the Caribbean area and elsewhere. The million bushels, placed by the British Ministry of Food in 1946, the fine disease-free record of our potatoes was influential in securing this contract.

The fine reputation of Island seed has not been developed without unusual effort. Building on the natural qualities of our soils, the consistent and highly rigid and effective grading and inspection techniques carried into effect. Hoe techniques and packaging involving field, bin and packing under stiff grade regulations, has achieved desired recognition. Certified seed production in Canada, for many years, was almost the sole property of Island potato producers and even in 1948 over 38,000 acres out of a total acreage of 50,000 grown in the Province, or about 75% of the total potato production in Canada, was produced.

To further protect and improve the potato industry, an Act, recently passed by the Provincial Legislature requiring that all potatoes planted in the Province, whether for seed or table stock purposes, shall be certified, produced, or foundation A, and providing for complete inspection for disease in all potatoes produced, has been highly instrumental in controlling disease and providing for the protection of an industry of outstanding qualifications.

Further Improvements
During the past two-year period, as a result of intensive inspection, not one single case of Ringrot, considered a disease of high economic implications, has been discovered. The industry has voluntarily levied itself the extent of 1c per 100 lbs. on export which provides a fund, utilized for the benefit, protection and marketing of the Island crop. The Provincial industry committee under the chairmanship of the Minister of Agriculture directs this program. An improved system of packaging is already in evidence and from the time forward Prince Edward Island potatoes will appear on the various markets in a package with one uniform design.

Further improvements which will be initiated shortly requires that all potatoes leaving Prince Edward Island will be exported in new sacks only. The export from the Province is from six to almost ten million bushels annually. The present provincial program calls for aggressive co-operation from all sources in the industry in production, grading, packaging and marketing techniques.

An Annual Marvel
The rapidity of growth of farm products in Prince Edward Island is an annual marvel even to the oldest citizens. Crop failures are unknown. Rainfall is usually adequate and during occasional periods of dry weather, growth and vividness of colouring is preserved. The cool, moist night air, wafting in from the sea, help to dissipate any ill effects that may result from the heat of the day, and invigorate production. Under such conditions vegetables and fruit possess an unequalled crispness and flavor.

The delicacy of taste of Island wild and tame fruits, such as strawberries, raspberries, blueberries and currants, have frequently received special mention from visitors, and provides substantial ground for the belief that development, particularly in our native cranberry areas, could under an extension program, produce results even greater than that of the far-famed Cape Cod and other important areas.

The expansion of our trade, the delivery of our products to distant markets, and the development of a demand, will depend to a great extent on the expansion and improvement in transportation services and a greater measure of publicity, so that the good things we have to offer may be profitably shared and enjoyed with the large consumer clientele who appreciate good things. Our progress in this respect has been entirely too modest and conservative.

Prince Edward Island is the source of natural resources of outstanding attractiveness and value. Her future under wise and constructive direction should continue to expand and consolidate the sentiment of the native Islander abroad, who frequently queries, "What the heck other Island is there, anyway?"

DATES OF INTEREST

Continued from page 19

with aid of Carnegie Corporation grant—1939—Cartier quadracentennial celebrated in Charlottetown—New P. E. I. Hospital and reconstructed wing at Falconwood opened.

1935—White Commission recommends additional \$150,000 provincial subsidy.

1936—M. V. "Fairview" replaces last old sidewheeler "Hillsboro" on Rocky Point service—Geddie Memorial church observes centennial.

1938—Camp Buchan opened for Boy Scouts—Rustico celebrates 175th anniversary of settlement and centenary of opening of first parish church.

1939—Visit of Their Majesties King George VI and Queen Elizabeth—National Park opened during week-long celebration of 75th anniversary of Confederation Conference.

1940—Air training schools established at Charlottetown, Summerside and Mt. Pleasant, playing an important part in Island's contribution to war effort—First Sanatorium annex completed.

1941—S. S. "Charlottetown" sunk off east coast of Nova Scotia, June 19—Wood Islands-Cariboo ferry service inaugurated—Maritime Central Airways established.

1942—"Queen Charlotte" commissioned as naval training centre—Island included in areas designated as being "subject to definite risk and considered to be in greatest and most imminent danger from hostile attacks."

1943—Island made separate area command within Military District No. 6—Nurses Home at Falconwood erected.

1944—E. I. Co-operative Union organized—Work on second Sanatorium annex started—Navy League reorganized.

Legislature adopts Lady's Slipper as Island's floral emblem.

1948—World's first commercial microwave telephone service inaugurated between Island and mainland—Prohibition law repealed following Province-wide plebiscite.

—New school and convent opened at Lennox Island—Lucy Maud Montgomery memorial unveiled at Cavendish—Governor General and family enjoy extended holiday on Island.

1949—Public health and welfare activities widely extended under Federal grants—Opening of Air Navigation School at Summerside.

—P. E. I. Newfoundland service established by Crown Corporation motor vessel "Eskimo"—New Y. M.C.A. building opened in Charlottetown.

The colon and semi-colon were first used in English punctuation in the 16th century.

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Old Adam Spence,
Rebellion year,
Bought his land, began to clear,
And settled down to raise his house
Beyond the view of neighbor's
Land-ridge possessed old Adam
Spence.
The ceilings, lathed and plastered,
rose
Ten feet above the hand-hewn
floors;
American carved oak the doors
Four inches thick, seven foot two
Let Adam and his sons stomp
through.
To brick the fireplace sandstone
rocks;
Were hauled inshore in massy
blocks;
And black ash shelves contained
the glass
That William got from Cooper's
last,
The one who stumbled off the
cliff.
The windows opened small, as if
Old Adam and his sons, once in
Had more to do that sit and grin
wide an every passer-by. The stairs,
Not to be taken unaware,
Some nights could not be climbed
at all
After a ceilidh, when the men
Would sleep awhile and drink
again
Until the horses, tied outside,
Nagged for their share of what
was piled.
Inside and out the house was done
And faced across the green fields
where
No field (but fallow) stood crop-
less
Winter blows planed the northern
wall,
And once or twice made chimney
fall,
And in the Yankee Storm the
stones
Trembled to their scaly bones!
But stood.

When Adam Spence was dead,
And all his sons had followed
And left their sons, at last of all
Only old Joe was left to call
The twelve cows up while young
Joe made
The bread, and found what app-