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ACROSS THE ISLAND

Potato parley is impressive

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I HAVE been attending meetings for more years than I care to think about it but the O'Leary potato parley topped anything I had ever seen for sheer good humor despite the sad tale the participants had to tell.

Tales were told of heavy losses - that was the purpose of the meet - and some of them were unusually heavy but there was never a whisper of blame for anyone as one after another grower, and a few shippers, related some of the worst things that have happened to them since Fusarium rot was first detected in their spuds late in October.

There was appreciation for government men, federal and provincial, who came and spoke to the crowd which filled the public hall to more than its seating capacity.

MORE THAN a dozen told of experiences but I'm going to tell you what two of them said.

Bert Rix, Minimegash said he planted 20 acres at a total cost of about \$2,000. His yield was low at barely 125 bushels to the acre. His first shipment had looked good when he made it early in the fall to get money for the fertilizer and harvesting bill. But a recent grading of what remains indicated 35 per cent rot.

GEORGE SHAW, O'Leary RR humorously told of his experience. He used all the right measures, he thought, as he planted his spuds and cultivated them carefully. He even planted them by hand.

"I did everything for them but water them" he said as the crowd laughed with him goodnaturedly, although practically everyone present had been hard hit.

His crop was light at "scarcely 100 bags to the acre" and now he finds as high as 46 percent rot in his worst bin.

Mr. Shaw struck a new note when he suggested that under emergency conditions such as existed in this crop year the buyer at the other end of the line should carefully regrade the potatoes before selling them to the eventual consumers.

Dealer - Grower Relations Are Good

I HAVE seen some stormy debates between the growers and dealers in this province but there was no evidence of conflict. The dealers got their chance to tell of their difficulties. Donald A MacDonald, for example, told of the tremendous losses he had to take at Summerside on a 35,000-bag cargo. Other dealers related some of their experiences.

Sitting in the hall I could feel a common bond of sympathy pervading the entire parley. Never have I seen a group of people conduct themselves in a more praiseworthy manner.

I HAVE no inside dope on what may come by way of assistance, but I can say that everyone to whom I talk here is hopeful. Certainly there will be strong backing from our provincial department of agriculture. Andrew MacRae, the minister, is convinced that "generous" federal aid should be given to compensate growers for their unusual loss.

Stewart Wright, the deputy minister, and just about everyone else, seem to have similar ideas.

I know that C.W.Farstad, chief of the plant protection division at Ottawa, received a most favorable impression from the meeting. How could he get anything else? Mr. Farstad heads the inspection service. He has nothing to do with compensation. But he will report what he found during his visit here. And his own words were, "I think I have a good picture."

New Mink Ranch Drops From The Sky

A BIG MCA Cargo plane dropped out of the skies here yesterday afternoon with a new mink ranch aboard. The 800 breeding females and 160 males will start what is the province's largest mink ranch.

George MacNeill and his undertaking are getting the best wishes of just about everyone here. The province needs more industry and that is what the big ranch will give it. Mink ranching is not new here but this is the first ranch of that size, and it is welcome.

The new ranch is beautifully situated on the Morell river. It is close to the Morell butter factory and Mr. MacNeill is happy that he is so close to a constant supply of buttermilk.