

Unique P.E.I. machinery operation provides competition for imports

By NEIL A. MATHESON

A unique operation in this province is the effort to build certain types of farm machinery. Bedoune that will sell competitively with imported stock.



HAROLD CAMPBELL

On this interesting and potentially important development in the provincial economy.

10 YEARS OLD

Bedoune operation started about 10 years ago "on a shoestring" in a way that is interesting in itself. Mr. Burns is not active in the company now, but he perhaps more than anyone else was responsible for the canning idea at first.

"We were growing perhaps 1,500 cabbages on the farm in Chelton", Mr. Campbell recalled and Mr. Burns was also buying poultry on a fairly large scale.

Mr. Campbell was raising a first to evacuate and pack poultry in polyethylene bags. They were selling the lower grade poultry elsewhere, and at times were dissatisfied with the price received.

So Burns suggested they take some canning equipment that he had and start to can themselves.

"You have heard it said", he observed for example "that modern cars are not made in this country, but the operation on the Island. Well we feel that local industry, though it is small, could probably change certain parts of machines to better suit conditions here."

They have six people working in the machinery plant now and are "searching for something that can be made here successfully and that may be competitive," he suggests.

"We need some of this equipment in our own farm operation so we are probing what can be done," observed Mr. Campbell who is modest about what the plant is doing, and was reluctant to talk for publication.

200 of beans. The product is grown in a radiator on wet mires on rented land, and there is a reason.

"We have a one-horse, or a one-man operation pretty well and our volume is not large enough to have the fieldman service we would need to keep in touch with the more than 50 farmers we would need to grow 20 acres each for us", he explained. It would be a job in itself to supervise planting, etc.

SPRAYING PROGRAM

"We have a strict spraying program and our weed control is effective. We employ a more or less permanent staff from May 1 to the early winter. Otherwise we would have peaks of employment and it would be difficult to get help.

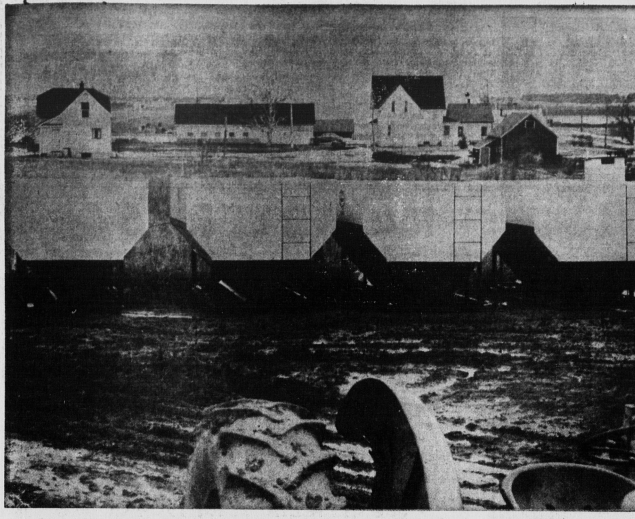
In the peak season there are 150 people on the payroll with two shifts running. We had 16 persons employed last week, he said.

One of the efficient phases of their operation is that they have the peas running through the processing equipment in their factory within one hour from the time they are harvested in the field.

And an advantage of producing the crop themselves is that "we can pass up a poor patch of peas, for example, if we think it won't measure up to our required quality standard," we don't have to explain to anyone why we did it," Mr. Campbell observed.

"I can think of a good many things that we should be able to manufacture here successfully though the freight cost is a problem. What we need is something that is light enough so the shipping charges will be small and is expensive enough to the contrast between value and transportation cost will be economically such as to allow it to compete on the market," he observed. It's something nobody has discovered yet he observed with a smile.

The problem of freight cost is an obstacle, but it's not so big that it cannot be overcome. Mr. Campbell added, "A Canadian lady—she is now Mrs. Howard Schurman, Central Bedoune—probably started me off on the canning trend when I was a small boy, she gave a tin can



BULK FERTILIZER BOXES IS MAIN PROJECT OF PLANT AT MOMENT

Dept. set to aid farmers

Not enough Prince Edward Island farmers take full advantage of the wealth of information and the assistance available to them from the provincial department of agriculture, says the department minister Hon. Andrew B. Macrae.

And with public meetings staged by the department, the main problem is that inevitably "the ones that attend are the most progressive farmers and the ones we'd like to help most are those staying at home", he adds.

The department of agriculture located mainly in the "provincial Building annex", the Richmond Street building which also houses the P.E.I. Travel Bureau, has a large staff, whose task it is to help Island farmers in advisory and more practical capacities.

STAFF OF 17

Besides Mr. Macrae and his deputy minister Stewart C. Wright, the department has a staff of at least 17.

This includes an agricultural representative for each county, a horticulturalist, an agronomist, an assistant fieldman, a director of 44 activities, a soil analyst, a poultry specialist, a director of livestock, a dairy superintendent, an assistant dairy fieldman, and a director of Women's Institutes, who has a staff of three.

Such related organizations as the Farm Establishment Board, the Housing Commission, and Farm Improvement Services also come under Mr. Macrae's jurisdiction.

POLICY COORDINATION

"The fieldmen are responsible for the coordination and implementation of policies within their respective county areas," Mr. Macrae says.

Farmers can get the help of the department of agriculture by contacting their county representatives.

These "ag reps" are David Pearce, Queens County; David Smith, Kings County; and Graeme Linkletter, Prince County.

MACRAE

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1A able to every farmer to show that certain practices produce better quality and that these factors produce higher prices on the market and hence more income.

"Working cooperatively with industry we have been able to set up programs by which a hog producer can increase his income by at least ten dollars per hog. At the same time he is getting a premium product."

This is no longer a matter of guess work. It is a proven fact. "In potato marketing, of which we hear much lately, the solution to the problem begins at the source of production. Higher yields of better quality potatoes are a real possibility. But here again the determining factor is the collection of production factors that are put together—seed, fertilizer, cultivation practices and proper handling and shipping."

On the cream side of the operation, "On the cream side of the cans come in along an automatic conveyor belt, go onto the scale for weighing, pass through a rotary washer and are then conveyed to the outside.

The milk is dumped into the pasteurizing vial where it is heated to 120 degrees, then goes through a plate cooler and is referred to 54 degrees before being piped into the holding tank of 20,000 pound capacity.

The cheese after being manufactured goes through a vacuum of 28 pounds w h i c h compact it, and "takes the holes out of it."

The business office at the front of the building has there, income glass on two sides and also provides a safe floor for certain items. The manager's office is alongside.

The plant handles dairy products from all over Kings County and a large area of

CONVEYER BELT

One man can receive, sample, drain the milk cans and place them on the straight-line can washer on the cheese side of the operation.

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PREXY SPURNS INVITATION

ST. JOHN'S, Nfld. (CP)—President Dr. Raymond Guine of Memorial University said Monday the institution has turned down an invitation to join the Association of Atlantic Universities. He said Memorial may join the association formed Sunday in Fredericton later.

Dr. Hugh J. Somers, president of St. Francis Xavier University in Antigonish, N.S., was appointed executive director of the association which aims to co-ordinate higher education in the Atlantic area.

OFFICIAL KNIFE

TAIPEI (AP)—Lin Ten-Shih, speaker of the Taipei village council in central Formosa, was attacked by five men and stabbed seven times, police reported Sunday. They describe his condition as critical. Police said one of the assailants was arrested.

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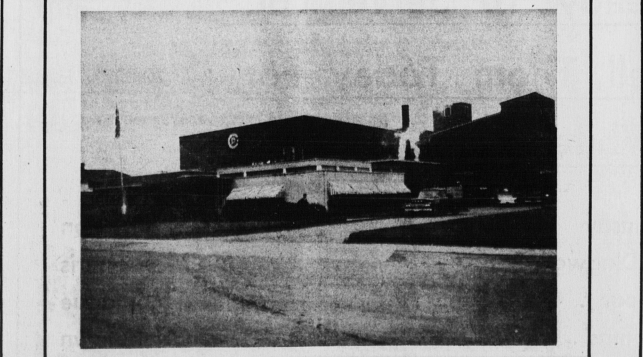
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