

Ontario at the Food Fair

By M. Frances Hucks

ONTARIO FOODS were on display this year at the largest Food Trade Fair in the world. From September 25 to October 3 the huge exhibition halls on the banks of The Rhine in Cologne, Germany, were transformed into a colossal international food market where 2500 exhibitors from all over the world displayed the products of some 30 countries. Ten thousand buyers converged on this ancient city with its world-famous cathedral, and as a result new foods will be appearing in the markets and homes of the 40 or 50 countries which these buyers represent.

Ontario showed its products in a section of the Canadian exhibit which was beautifully located just opposite one of the main entrances to the hall. The first half of this Anuga Food Show was open to the trade only and representatives from the Ontario Department of Agriculture were hosts to visiting buyers who sampled tomato juice, or wax beans, fruit pie fillings or whole kernel corn. These and other Ontario products were served to them by vivacious young German girls who also acted as interpreters, since they all spoke English.

The last few days of the Fair were open to the public and it was during these days that I had the opportunity to go to Cologne en route home from the A.C.W.W. Conference in Dublin. It was a happy coincidence that the Irish display was just across an aisle from the Canadian exhibit, so I lost no time in visiting it and discussing Irish food with their representatives.

Although the greater part of three days was spent at the Fair it was impossible to see it all. And besides, it was intensely interesting to see the reaction of the German people who stopped at the Ontario counters to sample the foods. In one of the small reception areas, it was possible to sit behind a foliage decoration and watch the faces of the people without being noticed. From such a vantage point, and cut off from comments in an unfamiliar language, it was immediately apparent that people are alike the world over. They "queue up" for free samples just as we do at the CNE — a tiny paper cup of chilled apple juice, a few kernels of corn on a plastic spoon, a taste of cherry pie filling. At first there is a slightly self-conscious expression, then a moment of serious appraisal, nearly always followed by a nod and a smile and in many, many cases a decision to buy.

Deutschmarks were extracted from pocket or purse and exchanged for tins of Ontario

foods which were carried home in sturdy shopping bags of bright gold with KANADA in bold black letters on both sides. These bags were seen everywhere, in all the halls of the show, on the nearby bridge which crosses the busy Rhine, in the streets of the city and clutched in the hands of weary fair-goers as they stood waiting for buses. The bags alone were doing an excellent publicity job for Canada, to say nothing of the contents which would provide new taste experiences as well as conversation in countless German homes.

Not all the Ontario foods on display could be sampled. Products like powdered milk, frozen poultry, small onions, sample boxes of apples were on view and receiving interested attention. There was plenty of competition for most of the products Ontario had sent over, but the results in export orders for these and other products of our farms and processing plants were very good. The Ontario men in charge of the exhibit considered it a highly successful undertaking and this interested observer can compliment them wholeheartedly on producing an attractive setting and a friendly atmosphere for displaying and popularizing many varieties of quality foods which held their place with the best at the Fair.

Distributing Home & Country

Editor's Note: In our last issue we asked Women's Institute secretaries or others to let us know how they manage to see that Home and Country reaches every member; and if they receive any surplus copies how they make use of them. Here are some replies:

MRS. WILMER KEYES, who has been a part-time shut-in this summer wrote: "Today I received Home and Country. Due to the fact that I am again 'laid low' I could not attend our last meeting. So our Secretary mailed my copy to me. Praises be!" Mrs. Keyes went on to say that when she was an Institute secretary she used to put the name of each member on a copy of Home and Country — even members who lived elsewhere in the winter time. At the next meeting copies would be distributed to the members attending and any members who were not present would receive their copies by mail. If a few extra copies had come from headquarters Mrs. Keyes would take these to the meeting in case some new members joined that day.

In *St. George's* Reports of Meetings there is the comment: "We continue to mail Home and Country to our members and we find this increases interest in the copies."