

Cheap food at farmers' expense

By Henry J. Stanley, Agricultural Representative

Have food prices really increased lately? A new publication by the Ontario Food Council gives an insight into this question.

Recent publicity over rising food prices may have left some consumers confused and concerned. The frequency of food purchases makes consumers more aware of food prices than prices of other consumer goods and services. Consumers may wonder why food costs should increase in a country where food is so plentiful and agricultural surpluses a frequent occurrence. There's no doubt that food prices have been increasing. A dollar will not buy as much food as it did 10 years ago. However, since 1961 the cost of virtually all Canadian consumer goods and services such as transportation, housing and clothing has increased.

The Consumer Price Index is a measure of change in the cost of consumer goods and services. Since 1961, all items have increased by 29.4 per cent. Food has increased by 28.4 per cent, housing by 23.5 per cent and clothing by 31.4 per cent. Housing has not increased as rapidly as food over the last 10 years.

However, when we look at the change from 1969 to 1971, all items have increased in price by 4.3 per cent, with housing up by 4.7 per cent, clothing 2.9 per cent and food by only 1.8 per cent. This would indicate that food prices are not out of line with other prices, and in fact, were lagging other sections.

This can easily be seen by the farmer—the disastrous prices for hogs and eggs during the past two years and the reduced price for turms in 1971 over the previous year. Recent increases in the price of beef, pork, eggs and broilers will bring the Consumer Price Index on food products more in line with other goods and services.

The percentage of take-home pay the average Canadian spends on food is declining each year. While the percentage of take-home pay spent on food was 23.4 per cent in 1961, by 1969 this percentage dropped to 18.8 per cent.

All these comparisons have led Canadian farmers to the conclusion that Canada has a "cheap food" policy at the expense of the farmer. The farmer sees the cost of his inputs—labor, machinery, taxes, etc. jumping rapidly in recent years with relatively similar prices for his produce. He feels that he should be sharing in a little higher portion of the consumer's dollar.

The consumer often fails to realize that the farmer receives only about 40 per cent of the price paid for the food in the store. Sixty per cent of the cost is for the services provided to that food after it leaves the farm or the marketing costs. These services have increased greatly in the past few years.

How has the Canadian farmer been able to survive with lower prices for his produce than in most other developed countries? He is more efficient than farmers in these countries. He is able to produce more per hour of work. Our technology is more advanced and the management of our farms gives us an advantage over others.

Thus, to continue to compete in a country with a "cheap food" policy, our farmers must continue to become even more efficient. Those who stand still will not be able to compete. They will lose the race.

Marketing quota for egg producers

By Henry J. Stanley

A very important document has been sent to all commercial egg producers in Ontario. This document known as an information return will serve as the basis on which these producers will be granted a marketing quota for their product. Since a system of marketing quotas for eggs will very shortly be introduced in Ontario and all egg producers with 500 hens or more will require a marketing quota, the importance of this document is evident. The information returns are being sent out by the Egg Quota Allocation Commission, under the chairmanship of Ted Hoover, Burlington.

Submit information
Producers of started pullets are also requested to submit information on their operations. This includes those producers of started pullets who also produce eggs for sale. Producers with flocks of less than 500 hens need not complete the information return at this time.
It is important that producers complete the information return

accurately and mail it as soon as possible, and not later than August 4, to the Egg Quota Allocation Commission, Queen's Park, Toronto 182, Ontario. If egg producers or started pullet producers do not receive information returns in the mail, they are asked to obtain them from the office of the agricultural representative.

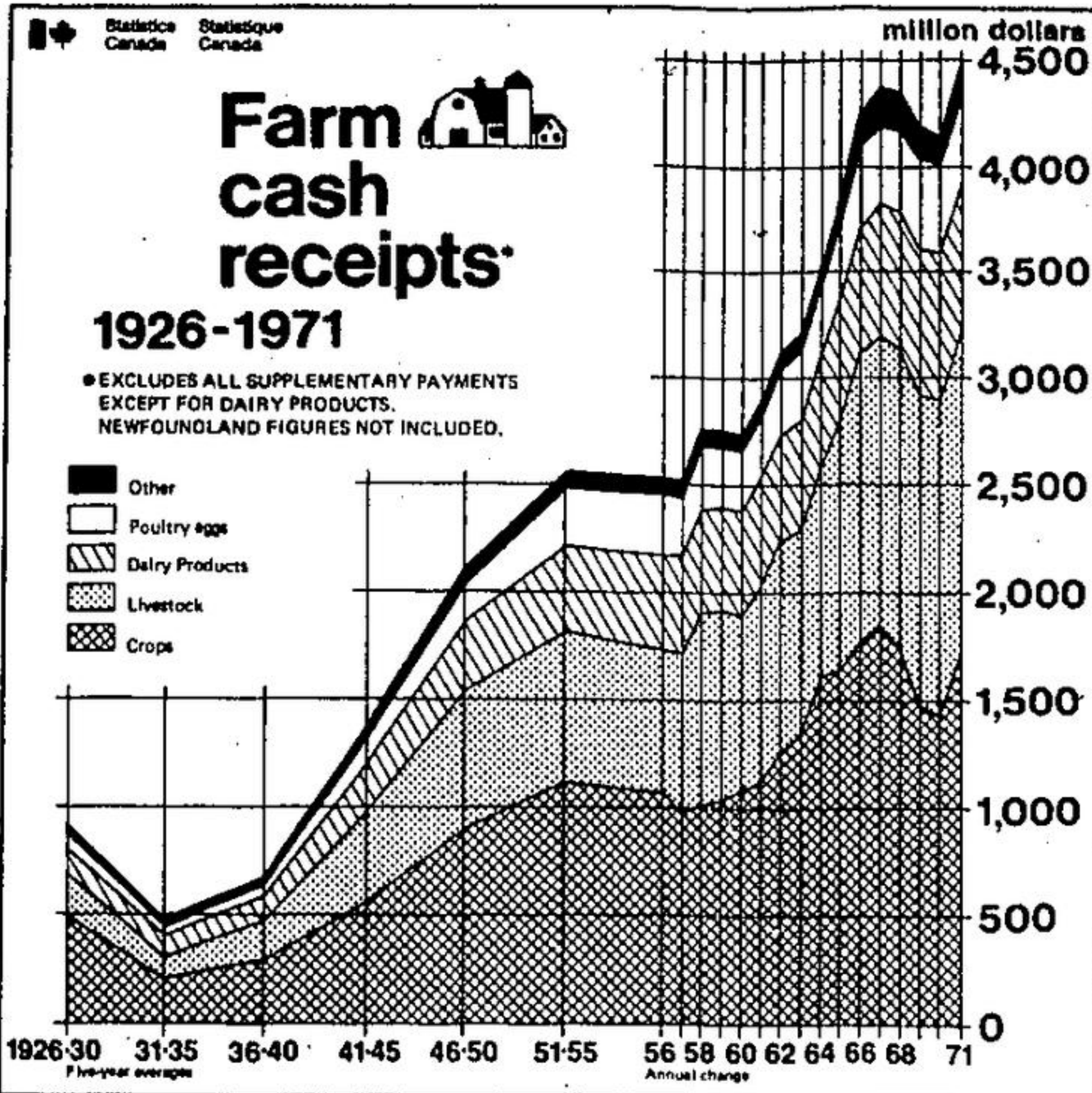
Nassagaweya Council Briefs

During a regular meeting recently, Nassagaweya Council:

—Decided not to create a good housekeeping by-law. During an earlier meeting of council a ratepayer had suggested such a law to control untidy properties. Building inspector S. W. Savage made a study on other municipalities good housekeeping by-laws and learned there were severe problems enforcing them.

—Firmly rejected the creation of a fire training school in the township. A representative of Sheridan College's Heavy Equipment School appeared at the June meeting of Council with the proposal.

—Learned the operators of a pig farm on Appleby Line north of Steeles Ave. had ceased operations. The farm was the source of several complaints from nearby residents who claimed the farm's operation gave off obnoxious odors.



STATISTICS CANADA reports that Canadian farm cash receipts, which had been declining slightly each year since 1967, turned upward again last year and reached a new record high of \$4,495 million. Chart above traces farm cash receipts over a 45-year period and shows how the revenue was divided.

Cash receipts were almost 10 times as high in 1971 as they were during the depression years of 1931-35, lowest point on the chart. Receipts for crops increased eight times in the same period, dairy products seven and a half times, poultry and eggs 10

times and livestock 14.7 times. The big increase in livestock receipts accounted for the major change in product "mix". Livestock brought in only 21.9 per cent of cash receipts in those depression years, as compared with 33.6 per cent in 1971. Crops accounted for 43.7 per cent of farm revenues in 1931-35 and only 38 per cent last year. Dairy products provided 20.5 per cent of cash receipts in the 1930s and 15.6 per cent last year. Poultry and eggs held about the same proportion of the market—8.9 per cent in 1931-35 and 9.1 per cent in 1971. "Other" receipts represented 4.9 per cent of the total in the 1930s and 3.7 per cent last year.

Pond owners alarmed by weeds

Many pond owners have become alarmed this year due to heavy infestations of aquatic weeds and algae in their ponds. No one can really explain why this occurred other than the fact that there was a delayed spring which was accompanied with below normal temperatures. Snow melt and runoff due to rain was quite high and there may have been an increase of soil erosion which provides the bulk of the nutrients for algae growth. When the warmer weather and sunshine hours increased, conditions were such that aquatic plants and algae seemed to grow overnight. Perhaps nature made up for lost time.

In any case, there are pros and cons of aquatic vegetation. Higher aquatic plants and algae are important for maintaining an oxygen balance essential to fish life, and they also contribute to keeping water temperatures at the low levels essential to certain species of fish. Water plants provide a suitable environment for the production of aquatic invertebrate organisms which

serve as food for fish. Numerous aquatic plants are utilized for food and or protection by many species of waterfowl.

Cons too
On the other hand, ponds and lakes may become unsightly because of the presence of dense mats of decomposing surface-type algae. Recreational uses such as fishing, swimming or boating may be impaired by accumulations of algae or growths of aquatic plants. Winter-kills of fish may result from oxygen depletion in the water caused by a decomposition of plants under the ice during certain winter seasons.

Control of aquatic plants may be achieved by either mechanical

or chemical means. Simple raking and chain-dragging operations may produce temporary results but the plants soon re-establish themselves. More elaborate methods such as underwater mowing and dredging machines can be useful but a considerable expense is involved.

Chemical methods of control are the most practical considering the ease with which they can be applied. At the present time, there is no one chemical which will adequately control all species of algae and aquatic plants. Chemicals currently available generally provide control for only a single season.

Former deputy says will sue

Gordon E. Agnew, a former Deputy Reeve of Nassagaweya Township is attempting to sue the township for negligence. Agnew sent a letter to Nassagaweya Council claiming the municipality's weed spraying operations were responsible for injuries to his wife.

The letter, which was read at the Tuesday, July 11 meeting of council, stated that recently chemical insecticide from township weed spraying had deposited in Agnew's mailbox. The Agnews live near Campbellville.

Mailbox
"The mailbox," Agnew claimed in his letter, "became a chemical boobytrap." Agnew stated that when his wife Margaret opened the mailbox the chemical substance entered her system causing serious enough injuries to require hospitalization.

In his letter Agnew said a municipality was responsible for the actions of its agent and as such he was seeking financial compensation for his wife's injuries from the Township.

Let's talk
(Continued from Page B1)

She finally figured out the panic snap and spent most of her nights wandering up and down behind the other angry mares. We gave up.
It wasn't as if she was in need of exercise—she was out all day every day. She just liked a challenge.
However, she will be foaled next winter. The horses will be loose-housed on our new place. No more mess and wrecked stalls, no more stepped-on pails and broken halters.
Maybe.

While the letter was read Mr. Agnew sat in the audience portion of Nassagaweya Council Chambers. He added nothing to what he said in his letter and council didn't question him. No words and hardly even a glance was exchanged between him or any of the Nassagaweya Councilors.
Once the letter was read Councillor Cal McIntyre introduced a motion to turn the matter over to the township's solicitor—Reeve Anne MacArthur said "It's too bad there was this negligence." But no other comment from the councillors was voiced on the subject.

GOODLET'S

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NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING

SELECT COMMITTEE ON LAND DRAINAGE

By resolution of the Legislature of Ontario a select committee was appointed on June 30, 1972 to examine, study and inquire into the following matters regarding land drainage in Ontario:

- (1) The objectives of land drainage as an agricultural practice and the benefits to be derived from such practice.
- (2) The associated problems of competing land use in the urban fringe and in wetlands, as influenced by land drainage projects.
- (3) The problem of public interest in land use over the drainage of private lands by individuals.
- (4) The prior evaluation of the benefits and costs of a drainage project.
- (5) An evaluation of the petition procedure for initiating a drainage project.
- (6) A review of the construction improvement and maintenance procedures under "The Drainage Act" in achieving the objectives.
- (7) A review of the appeal procedures under "The Drainage Act".
- (8) A review of the financial procedures and assistance under "The Drainage Act" and other drainage programs.
- (9) A study of the costs of land drainage and what influences such costs and how they may be reduced, i.e. engineering costs, etc.
- (10) An evaluation of construction practices in general and erosion and weed control of drainage ditches in detail.
- (11) A review of the administrative practices and methods in carrying out responsibility under "The Drainage Act".

After due study and consideration to recommend such changes in the laws, procedures and processes as in the opinion of the Committee may be necessary and desirable.

The Committee has the intention of visiting all areas in the Province and to hold public hearings on the questions associated with the above terms of reference.

This therefore, is to invite all interested parties, individual or otherwise, to indicate to the Committee, by (AUGUST 15, 1972) their intention to submit written briefs or their desire to attend the hearings and make oral representations.

The response to this invitation will determine the times and places of hearings. A written notice setting out the time and place of the public hearings will be given as soon as possible to all persons who have filed notice of intention to make written or oral submissions.

Lorne Henderson, M.P.P.
Chairman,
Select Committee on Land Drainage
Box 201
Parliament Buildings
Toronto, Ontario

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