

NEWS FOR THE FARMER

Agricultural Outlook For Canada, 1955

The annual Agricultural Conference was held in Ottawa, December 6 and 7, 1954. Representatives of Federal and Provincial Governments and delegates from farmers' organizations reviewed the agricultural situation and discussed the outlook for 1955. Some of the highlights of the outlook are presented as an aid to farmers in planning their operations for 1955.

General Outlook For 1955

The present international economic outlook is more reassuring in a number of respects than it was a year ago. Business activity in North America, although somewhat below the high level of 1953, is now stable or slightly rising and in the United Kingdom, most of Western Europe, and some Commonwealth countries, an expansion of employment and output is under way.

Over-all world trade continues at a high level, and in general, the foreign exchange position of overseas countries is stronger than at any time since the war. There seems little or no reason to expect a reversal in the substantial progress which has been made in the removal of import restrictions against dollar goods. The import of agricultural products is still restricted to some extent however, by controls remaining in effect in the important United Kingdom and United States markets. Large surplus disposal programs are also being initiated in the United States, and the manner in which these programs are carried out could influence the regular flow of agricultural trade.

World agricultural production has increased in recent years by nearly three per cent annually, compared with an increase in population of 1.5 per cent. The pressure for increased

production has thus become less pronounced, though the gains in production have not always been in the regions where requirements were greatest. Surpluses have emerged for some commodities, but in many areas the strong drive for national self-sufficiency is continuing.

Economic conditions in Canada have shown a slight improvement during the last half of 1954 over the first part of the year. This improvement is expected to continue in 1955. Combined government expenditures (Federal, Provincial and Municipal) are likely to remain about the same as in 1954. Capital investment is likely to remain high. Per capita income levels should be sustained. The declining trend in Canadian exports appears to have ended. Conditions now prevailing in the world wheat market suggest some increase in sales. New basic material development will make available for export increased volumes of iron ore and aluminum. Markets for base metals and forest products are expected to remain firm.

Prospects for the sales of agricultural products in 1955 are good. Sustained consumer incomes per capita should increase food consumption in Canada and the agricultural export situation should improve.

It is probable that farmers' cash receipts in 1955 may be somewhat higher than in 1954. A large part of the 1954-55 western wheat deliveries will likely take place during the first seven months of 1955. This, together with fall deliveries above the record low-level deliveries of the 1954 fall season, would raise the returns from this source next year. Present indications suggest there will be no significant change in livestock cash receipts during 1955. Increased marketings are like-

ly to offset any prospective price declines. Income from other products is expected to remain at or about the 1954 level.

In 1955, farm net income is expected to be about the same as that of 1954. Farm operating expenses are not likely to vary significantly from those of 1954. On the basis of an average crop, estimated higher deliveries and smaller carryover stocks at July 31, 1955, farm inventories of grain at the end of 1955 will be below the 1954 year-end levels. This continuing decrease in year-end farm inventories of grain would, however, be offset by the expected gain in cash income.

Farm Labour and Supplies
The requirements for farm workers in 1955 will probably be slightly higher than in 1954. It is expected, however, that a slightly larger number of workers will be available to agriculture next year so that the supply will bear about the same relationship to the demand as it did in 1954.

Grains and Feeds
World production of wheat in the 1954-55 crop year is estimated at about 6.8 billion bushels, six per cent below the 1953-54 level. Stocks available for export and carryover in the hands of the four major exporters in the fall of 1954 were running about one per cent higher than a year previously. Large wheat crops have again been harvested by some importing countries but quality is low in many areas and accumulated reserves in a number of importing countries have been largely depleted. On balance, it would appear that a fairly substantial export market exists, particularly for high quality wheat, during the current crop year.

Livestock
An increased output of meat animals is probable in 1954-55 (year ending Sept. 30th) with

production of hogs up about 19 per cent and smaller increases ranging from five to seven per cent in marketings of cattle, calves and sheep and lambs. It is unlikely that the domestic market will be able to absorb the supplies of hogs, cattle and calves that will be available and therefore Canadian prices will be very closely related to comparable United States prices.

With the exception of hogs, Canadian prices of livestock are expected to show little change in 1954-55 compared with 1953-54, although slight declines may occur under the pressure of larger supplies. Prices of hogs are likely to show the greatest change. In general, domestic prices will be largely dependent on the availability of satisfactory export outlets for surplus livestock and livestock products.

Dairy Products
Milk production in 1955 is provisionally estimated at 17 billion pounds, up slightly from the 1954 total. Only a small increase is foreseen, as milk cow numbers are expected to rise little between June 1, 1954 and June 1, 1955.

Eggs and Poultry
Little change is expected in the egg poultry market in 1955 compared with 1954. The egg market will not be stronger in 1955 than in 1954 until at least June, and then may strengthen only if the 1955 hatch is smaller than in 1954.

Fruits and Vegetables
The 1955 apple crop may approximate 15 million bushels, if weather conditions are favourable. Larger crops of tender and small fruits, particularly apricots, peaches, cherries and raspberries, are also expected.

Domestic stocks of potatoes supplemented with imports will probably ensure adequate supplies for the remainder of the 1954-55 season. Prices are well above those existing last year and it is expected that this firm market will prevail. Prices received by farmers for their last season's crop usually exert a considerable influence on their next season's plantings. If farmers plant about the same acreage as they did in

THE SPELLING BEE

By Dorothy Killian

It was about eight o'clock on New Year's Eve when Jane Walters turned to stare out the kitchen window into the wintry darkness. She didn't want Don to see the tears in her eyes, but she hadn't been quick enough.

"It's a raw deal all right, honey," he said from the chair where he sat with one leg, in a cast, propped up on a stool. I take you away from all your city friends and bring you back to Brantville to live, and then what do I do? Break my stupid leg during our first holidays together and leave you high and dry without an escort for the New Year's Eve party?"

"You couldn't help it, Don." She tried to sound bright, but the truth was it did matter. She had found herself more homesick than ever with the coming of the holidays. This little town to which Don had come back as operator of the grain elevator was like a foreign country to her. And, with the furnace acting up, here they were sitting in the kitchen of all places, on New Year's Eve.

Jane sighed and turned slowly away from the window. "What kind of a party will Grandma Jenner be having?" Don chuckled. "Oh, it'll be corny, all right—no blaring trumpets. And yet, Janie," Don leaned forward and went on earnestly, "I really think you'd enjoy these people if you'd, well, kind of let yourself go." "Maybe so, Don. But I just have the feeling that they consider me an outsider. I—did you hear that scuffling noise? Sounds like somebody's in our back yard."

"Lots of somebodies, I'd say," Don replied. There was a resounding thump on the back door. Jane opened it and stepped back, bewildered. "Surprise, surprise!" a chorus of voices shouted, as a couple of dozen people trooped in, Grandma Jenner in the lead, swinging a huge granite coffee



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CEDAR GROVE

There was standing room only and not too much of that at the Cedar Grove school concert this year. And the whole evening was worth standing to see. The children opened the concert very appropriately with a musical medley including everything from Santa Claus is Coming to Town, to Toyland. Their voices are sweet and true and it sounded lovely. Then there were recitations, a short play, a pretty dance, an Indian Tableau and an opera that included the entire school. Mary Barkey's hard work and patience were well rewarded and the best thing of all was the way the kids enjoyed it all.

Here are some interesting comparisons that have come to light since the White Gift Service last week. The executive worked very hard to make this service a special part of Christmas and their efforts were well rewarded. There was over \$55 donated, six bushels of gifts and food and a big box of clothing. Last year the collection was less than half the above amount and there were only 2 bushels of gifts collected. Add to this the participation of the children in this year's service and it looks like a most successful enterprise.

Every year the trustees of S.S. 20 spend a great deal of the ratepayers' money on school maintenance and improvements. The spending of this money is a big responsibility and almost always brings a certain amount of criticism. On Dec. 29th the annual meeting will be held in the school and members of the board would be very grateful if as many as possible would attend and hear their plans for the coming year. They hope, too, if you have any ideas on the spending of your money that you will take this opportunity to bring them up.

Parliament Opening Televised Jan. 7th

Television cameras for the first time in history will be used in the Senate chamber to record the opening of the next session of Parliament Jan. 7. The announcement was made by Senate Speaker Wishart Robertson, who said Governor-General Massey, who will read the speech from the throne at the formal opening, "has graciously given his approval." Senator Robertson said he has been assured by officials of the CBC that the televising can be done "with dignity and clarity and with a minimum of inconvenience to his excellency the governor-general and all in attendance."

Senator Robertson said he made the decision recognizing that the opening of Parliament is one of the most historic and important events concerning our traditional democratic system. "Moving pictures were taken of the opening of Parliament in 1949 and in 1952. With the development of the television, it seems to me appropriate that advantage should be taken of this latest medium to carry the significance of the event..."

Don grinned. "I was kind of hoping this would happen," he said. "But Jane hasn't gotten too well acquainted yet." "I know," Grandma said quickly. "And it's mostly our fault. To tell you the truth, honey," she turned to Jane—"We were kind of afraid of you, you seemed sort of distant. But when you phoned that you and Don couldn't make the party, I heard the tremble in your voice, I suddenly realized that you're just as human as the rest of us. So here we are. Now let's get on with the fun." It seemed no time at all before Grandma called out, "We have just time for a spelling bee before midnight and refreshments. Get yourselves lined up, folks, while I put the coffee on to boil." The crowd laughingly divided into two lines on either side of the big kitchen. As Jane hesitated, someone pulled her into position. "Speer the words, Mac," Grandma said to the school principal. "You're used to this kind of thing." Mr. MacRay began giving out words. Amid shouts of praise for the successful spellers and hoots of derision for those who stumbled over a word, the game progressed until only Jane and Mr. Nichols were left. The caller cleared his throat and, turning towards Jane, pronounced the word, "hospitable." Jane hesitated and looked slowly around the room. She saw Grandma Jenner hovering over the coffee pot at the stove, Mr. Appleton gently adjusting the cushion under Don's outstretched leg, and Mrs. Ames just coming in from the pantry with a tray of apple pies. "Yes, I can spell 'hospitable,'" she said, "B-R-A-N-T-V-I-L-L-E."

There was a moment of silence. "Bravo!" several voices called out, and just then the kitchen clock began to strike twelve. "Happy New Year!" Jane echoed with the rest as she looked around at her new friends and finally met the eyes of her beaming husband. It was indeed going to be a good year.

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