

The general index number fell from 1924 to 1928, especially from 1926 to 1928, and recovered strongly in 1929 but declined rapidly to reach the record low, for the period under review, of 46.9 in 1931. The commodities responsible for the decline from 1927 to 1928 were the cereals and potatoes. The root and forage crops held fairly steady and there were increases in peas, beans and buckwheat.

The severe decline of 1930 was accentuated in 1931 and marked by reductions in the prices obtained for all the agricultural commodities listed with the exception of oats, rye and barley. Reductions in the prices of wheat, flaxseed, corn and potatoes were again drastic; wheat, which has the greatest weight in the index, was mainly responsible for the decline of 55.4 points in the general index between 1924 and 1931, as well as for the temporary recovery in 1929.

Subsection 10.—Agricultural Statistics of the Census.

A selection of the more important agricultural statistics of the census of 1921 was published at pp. 269-271 of the 1929 edition of the Year Book. Further, certain agricultural statistics of the Prairie Provinces collected at their quinquennial census of 1926 were published at pp. 271-273 of the same volume. The complete agricultural statistics of the census of 1921 are published in Volume V of the publications of the census of that year, while the detailed agricultural statistics of the census of the Prairie Provinces of 1926 will be found in the reports of the census of that year, issued separately for the provinces of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta.

Area Suitable for Agriculture.—Various estimates of the areas of agricultural land in Canada have been made. Such estimates must necessarily be of a very tentative character, especially in view of the fact that every advance in the art of evolving more frost-resistant and drought-resistant species of cultivated grains, etc., increases the area of potential agricultural land, while the same result follows from the introduction of improved methods of tilling the soil, as in dry-farming. Of the grand total land area of Canada, estimated at 2,246,405,120 acres, 1,309,724,800 acres are within the nine provinces, and Table 45, based partly upon the census of 1931, is presented as a fair estimate of the possible farm land in these provinces under present conditions.

45.—Total Land Area of the Provinces of Canada, 1931, with Estimated Possible Farm Land and Farm Land Occupied, 1931.¹

Province.	Total Land Area.	Estimated Possible Farm Land.		Occupied as Farm Land 1931.		Percent of Possible Farm Land Occupied.		
						1931.	1921.	1911.
	acres.	acres.	p.c. of total.	acres.	p.c. of total.	p.c.	p.c.	p.c.
Prince Edward Island.	1,397,760	1,258,190	90.0	1,191,000	85.2	94.6	96.7	95.6
Nova Scotia.....	13,275,520	8,092,000	61.0	4,302,000	32.4	53.1	58.4	65.0
New Brunswick.....	17,734,400	10,718,000	60.4	4,153,000	23.4	38.7	39.8	42.3
Quebec.....	365,442,560	43,745,000	12.1	17,758,000	4.8	40.5	39.4	35.7
Ontario.....	232,500,480	66,866,000	28.7	21,978,000	9.4	32.9	40.1	39.3
Manitoba.....	143,857,280	24,700,000	17.2	15,135,000	10.5	60.9	59.2	49.3
Saskatchewan.....	152,304,000	93,458,000	61.4	55,565,000	36.5	59.6	47.1	30.1
Alberta.....	159,232,000	97,123,000	61.0	33,973,000	24.6	40.1	30.2	17.9
British Columbia.....	223,980,800	22,608,000	10.0	3,350,000	1.5	14.9	12.6	11.2
Canada.....	1,309,724,800	368,568,190	28.1	162,516,000	12.4	44.1	39.3	30.4

¹Figures based upon the 1931 census are preliminary.