

Section 2.—Statistics of Agriculture.*

Census Statistics.—In addition to the statistics collected annually, which are the subject of this section, valuable information is published following each decennial census. The total number of farms, their tenure, acreage, value, mortgage debt, farm population, farm machinery and facilities, etc., were treated at pp. 295–301 of the 1934-35 Year Book. In this volume a summary presentation of agricultural development since 1871 is given in Subsection 9, pp. 270-273.

Crop-Reporting Service.—The voluntary crop-reporting service of the Dominion Government, which has been in operation since 1908, has for its object the issue of accurate, timely and independent reports on crop conditions throughout the Dominion; first, in the interests of the general body of Canadian farmers; secondly, for the information and guidance of other interests allied to and dependent upon agriculture (interests represented by statesmen, economists, bankers, grain dealers, transportation agents and others); and thirdly, for reporting to the Institute of Agriculture at Rome (to which Canada is an adhering country), in return for reports on the production of other countries and of world totals which influence prices and consequently affect the interests of Canada. Supplementing the monthly reports from crop correspondents, the Bureau issues telegraphic crop reports utilizing the services of agriculturists throughout the Dominion. For the Prairie Provinces, these are issued every week from the latter part of May to the end of August, while the reports on a Dominion-wide basis are issued every two weeks during the same period. The program of reports for 1937-38 is given in the Monthly Bulletin of Agricultural Statistics, January, 1937, pp. 49–51, and is also issued as a special leaflet.

Annual Statistics.—In addition to the crop-reporting service, statistics of the areas under field crops and of the numbers of farm live stock are collected. These arrangements have been in force since 1918, and are carried out by the Dominion Bureau of Statistics in co-operation with the Provincial Governments. The statistics are secured by simple schedules which are at present returned by about one-fifth of the farmers of Canada. They form the basis of the estimates for the whole of Canada. The results for wheat, oats, barley, rye, and flaxseed in the three Prairie Provinces are ready for publication in August, while the results for the remaining crops and for the numbers of farm live stock are published in November and December. The areas, thus determined, when multiplied by the average yields per acre as reported by crop correspondents, form the basis of the total estimated production for each crop.

The June schedule covers the areas sown to field crops, the numbers of live stock and poultry on hand, and breeding and marketing intentions with regard to live stock and poultry. The December schedule contains practically the same items with the exception of field-crop areas.

The schedules are distributed and collected through the agency of the rural schools in New Brunswick, Quebec, Ontario, Manitoba, and Saskatchewan, while in Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, Alberta, and British Columbia the schedules are sent direct to the farmer through the mail.

* Revised under the direction of Dr. T. W. Grindley, Chief of the Agricultural Branch, Dominion Bureau of Statistics. This Branch is concerned with both primary and secondary statistics of agriculture, including statistics of the production and distribution of agricultural commodities. The primary statistics relate mainly to the reporting of crop conditions, crop and live-stock estimates, values of farm lands, wages of farm labour, and monthly and annual prices received by farmers for their products. The secondary statistics relate to the marketing of grain and live stock, and reports on the milling and sugar industries and cold-storage holdings. A list of the publications of this Branch is given in Chapter XXIX, Section I, under "Production".