

Subsection 3.—Agricultural Co-operation in Canada in 1936.*

Farmers' co-operative business organizations occupy an important position in the marketing of Canadian agricultural products. The activities of the larger organizations such as the wheat pools, live stock, and fruit co-operatives have reached a high stage of development, and have received world-wide recognition. In addition to these, there are hundreds of comparatively small organizations working effectively to serve local areas.

Available statistics show 1024 co-operative associations actively engaged in business in 1936. The 1024 associations have 2,963 branches which, combined, make a total of 3,987 places of business engaged in the marketing of farm products and the purchase of supplies for farmers. The shareholders and members financially interested number 396,918 and patrons reported total 451,231. Combined assets total \$87,938,453 with plant and equipment valued at \$36,338,952. The members' equity amounts to \$51,252,828, consisting of paid-up share capital \$9,265,747 and reserves and surplus of \$41,987,081. Sales of farm products for the year under review amounted to \$157,031,405. The sales value of supplies handled totalled \$16,363,966 and other revenue \$531,746, which, combined, make a total business of \$173,927,117.

Available records indicate that the most important early activity of farmers in the field of co-operation in Canada was directed toward the marketing of farm products. In comparing the volume of business, marketing associations transact 12 times the business handled by purchasing agencies. Membership in the co-operative marketing associations is given as 357,798 persons compared with 38,167 members in purchasing organizations.

Within the marketing group the grain and seed co-operatives, which include the wheat pools of Western Canada, have the largest membership and investment, and exceed all other commodity groups in volume of business, which is estimated at \$110,826,433 for the year under review. A membership of 190,576 grain growers contributed to this business through 2,156 co-operative marketing agencies. Mainly through deductions from the selling price of their grain, these members have invested a sum of \$37,109,909 in their business and in addition have paid up \$3,467,754 in share capital. Combined assets total \$68,456,819.

One hundred and forty-six dairy co-operatives with 428 depots in Canada reported a membership of 49,796 with assets valued at \$5,077,441. Paid-up share capital amounted to \$1,962,202 with reserves of \$948,634. Sales of dairy products totalled \$16,328,900 for the year under review.

The records for 115 live-stock shipping and marketing associations showed a combined membership of 46,719. Financing of these associations is mainly by membership fees and commissions. Assets were comparatively low with value of plant and equipment amounting to \$560,053. This accommodated a business of \$15,713,236. The live-stock co-operatives undertake very little processing of their product. Their main activity is the assembling of live stock in cars at producing points for shipment to central markets.

*Statistics contained in this review are based on records received by the Economics Branch, Department of Agriculture, in 1937, covering the business year of 1936.