

The spectacular increase in egg production was accompanied by a sharp rise in the volume of poultry meats available. Since poultry meats had been placed on the luxury list in the United Kingdom during the early months of the War, there was no export outlet to that market until later in the war period. While the United States on occasion provided an outlet for some of the surplus, the bulk of the poultry meat was consumed in Canada where the rationing of other meats and the higher purchasing power of the people contributed to the increased rate of domestic consumption.

Wheat and Feed Grains.—Large crops of wheat in 1939 and 1940, together with the cutting off of practically all of the Western European markets resulted in the accumulation of a large surplus in Canada. In order to encourage farmers to reduce their wheat acreage and grow more of the needed feed grains and forage crops, the Wheat Acreage Reduction Act provided for acreage payments on land taken out of wheat production. This had the desired effect of reducing wheat production and increasing the output of feed grains demanded by the rapidly expanding live-stock industry. As the War progressed, new outlets for Canadian wheat were opened up in the liberated countries; by 1944 the wheat acreage had increased sharply and a further increase occurred in 1945.

The conclusion of the War resulted in a tremendous increase in the demand for Canadian wheat. The country has been exporting wheat and flour at the maximum capacity of the elevator and milling facilities and there has been pressure to further increase the acreage sown to wheat in 1946. It has been recognized, however, that any increase in wheat production resulting from increased acreage could be secured only at the expense of coarse grains which are required by the live-stock industry. Consequently, the Dominion-Provincial agricultural conference which set the objectives for 1946 recommended no further increase in wheat acreage for this year.

Throughout the war period, over-all supplies of feed grains were ample but, because of deficiencies in Eastern Canada, it became necessary to move substantial quantities from the Prairies to the east. A policy of freight assistance adopted by the Government and administered under the Agricultural Supplies Board contributed to a record movement of feed grains during 1943-44, while improved crop yields in Eastern Canada in 1944 resulted in a reduced demand for western grain.

Fruit and Vegetables.—One of the outstanding casualties of the War, so far as Canadian agriculture was concerned, was the apply industry. A high proportion of the total crop was normally exported to the United Kingdom and the industry faced a serious situation when that market weakened in 1939 and disappeared entirely the following year. Because of the necessity of maintaining the industry until normal outlets could be regained, the Government undertook to guarantee reasonable returns to the growers from year to year throughout the War. This involved subsidies on the processing of large quantities of apples. Efforts were also made to stimulate domestic consumption during years of large crops. Substantial shipments of dehydrated apples, concentrated apple juice and other products were made to the British market by the Special Products Board which also handled the shipment of fresh apples when exports were resumed.

Food requirements in the United Kingdom and the shortage of shipping space resulted in the initiation of a program of vegetable dehydration in Canada in 1942. Financial and technical assistance was provided by the Dominion Government and a number of processing plants were established to handle the dehydration of such vegetables as cabbage, carrots, onions and potatoes.