

Subsection 7.—Horticulture

A survey of the floriculture and nursery stock industry was conducted annually until 1943 when, as a wartime measure, it was discontinued.

Fruit Production.—The production of fruit in Canada on a commercial scale is confined to well defined areas in five provinces. In Nova Scotia production is mainly centred in the counties of the Annapolis Valley and to a lesser extent in Hants County; in New Brunswick, the counties of the St. John River Valley and Westmorland County. The fruit districts in Quebec include the Montreal area, North Shore area, the Eastern Townships and Quebec City district: in Ontario, all the counties adjacent to the St. Lawrence River and Great Lakes as far as Georgian Bay—the most famous sections being in the Niagara district: and in British Columbia the four well defined fruit areas are the Okanagan Valley, Fraser Valley, the Kootenay and Arrow Lakes section and Vancouver Island.

These areas yield large quantities of plums, peaches, apricots, cherries, strawberries, raspberries and other small fruits. A short article is given below on the production of apples; this will be followed in succeeding editions of the Year Book by short synopses of other fruits.

Apples.—Apples are the most important fruit grown in Canada, both from the standpoint of quantity and value. Apple orchards are more widely distributed than any other tree fruit because the trees are better able to withstand the extremes of temperature common in the Dominion. According to the 1941 Census there were 132,993 acres of apple trees out of a total of 177,952 acres of fruit trees of all types. Apple trees are reported in all provinces according to the Census, but production on a commercial scale is confined to Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Quebec, Ontario and British Columbia. As is to be expected, apple orcharding had its beginnings in Eastern Canada in what was then known as New France, and recorded plantings were made in the vicinity of Quebec City about the year 1608. It was not until 1698, however, that the earliest orchards were set out. These were located near Port Royal in what is now the Province of Nova Scotia. French settlers carried trees westward as civilization spread in that direction and the first apple trees were planted about 1790 in Ontario along the Detroit River. Not until 1850 were orchards set out in British Columbia. Orchards thrived in all but the Prairie Provinces where climatic conditions were too severe. In recent years, vigorous varieties have been developed which are adaptable to conditions on the Prairies and some plantings have been made, but as yet the orchards have not reached commercial size.

According to Volume VIII of the 1941 Census, the number of apple trees in Canada was highest in 1911. In that year 16,217,176 trees were reported, and of this number 10,617,372 trees were of bearing age. The tree population has declined with each successive census until, in 1941, there were only 4,248,405 trees of bearing age and 2,316,950 others.

Production of apples has not shown the same downward trend. This is accounted for by the fact that in the earlier years many of the trees were of unprofitable varieties and were planted too close together. As the orchards grew older and more crowded they were neglected and yields fell off accordingly. With the gradual removal of these older trees and the introduction of better varieties and improved cultural practices, the production per tree has been increased. Another factor affecting the increased yield per tree is the shift of the producing areas; while the