

Instruction Act, passed in 1913, provided annual grants, over a ten-year period, to the provinces for the encouragement and assistance of agricultural education; the Entomological Branch and the Fruit Branch were established in 1914 and, in the same year following the outbreak of war, the Department was asked to take over the purchase of supplies for the British Government and a special organization was formed for that purpose. In 1918, those matters not concerning agriculture but still under the control of the Department were transferred elsewhere.

During the next two decades, marked progress was made in the improvement of agriculture and the development of production and marketing policies under various legislative enactments. Marquis wheat, then at its peak of popularity, was an outstanding example of plant improvement, contributing many millions of dollars in new wealth by its ability to ripen early and thus extend the area of profitable production. It, in turn, was superseded by other varieties, bred to overcome the menace of rust and other pests. Improved varieties of other crop plants, superior kinds of hardy fruits, and finer strains of farm animals and poultry were among the contributions to Canadian agriculture during this period.

The Period 1920 to 1939.—Many of the present-day policies covering the grading of farm products had their beginning in this period. Grading of dairy produce for export was provided by legislation in 1921. In 1922, egg-grading regulations, which had been set up in 1917 to cover export shipments, were made applicable to the domestic market. In the same year, regulations governing the grading of hogs were passed, launching a program that resulted eventually in the almost complete conversion of the industry from the production of lard-type to bacon-type hogs. This program was initiated in an effort to recapture a share of the United Kingdom market.

As a result of disastrous rust epidemics in Western Canada and the need for finding an answer to the problem, a new Rust Research Laboratory was opened in 1925 at Winnipeg, Man., to study the menace of wheat rust.

Challenged in the courts of Ontario in 1926, the egg-grading regulations were found to be beyond federal jurisdiction. Public opinion was solidly behind the regulations, however, and the difficulty was overcome by the passage of provincial enabling legislation. Similarly, other grading legislation, applicable initially to interprovincial and export trade, was extended to cover domestic trading by action of the various provincial governments.

Grade standards for dressed poultry were set up in 1928 and record-of-performance for poultry was inaugurated in 1929 at a time when average annual production per bird was around 80 to 90 eggs. In 1929, standards were adopted for beef and the Advanced Registry policy for purebred swine was introduced. Carcass grading of hogs on a voluntary basis was begun in 1934. Effective December 1940, live grading of hogs was discontinued and carcass grading has since been the only official system.

The various grading policies introduced by the Department served not only to create price differentials for quality products but resulted in substantial increases in consumption. The grading of hogs laid the foundation for a great expansion of the industry, improving the quality of bacon and pork products and stimulating domestic and export trade. Egg grading resulted in such an upsurge in demand that Canada soon outstripped all other countries in per capita consumption of eggs. Fruits and vegetables, dairy products, wool, beef, dressed poultry and canned goods afford other examples of the benefits accruing from marketing on a graded basis.