

In co-operation with various branches of the provincial Department of Agriculture and under the auspices of the University Extension Department, the Faculty of Agriculture also offers a number of short courses which vary in length from one or two days to several weeks.

Section 3.—Agricultural Irrigation and Land Conservation

Subsection 1.—Federal Projects*

PRAIRIE FARM REHABILITATION ACT

The Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Act is a rehabilitation program conceived by Parliament in 1935 to meet the problems of drought and soil drifting adversely affecting agriculture on the Canadian prairies. Existing agencies of the Government of Canada were assisted, with PFRA funds, to expand their activities in providing leadership in the immediate drought problems. In particular, cultural investigations were carried out by the Experimental Farms Service to ensure the most economic use of the limited supply of soil moisture for crop production and the prevention of soil drifting farm lands that were a menace to surrounding good land. A program of water conservation to meet immediate needs was also initiated in 1935. Other services, such as the Economics Division, were assisted where special knowledge was required for rehabilitation measures.

The major activities of the PFRA Administration, with Headquarters at Regina, Sask., include the construction, for the Government of Canada, of all projects concerned with water conservation and land utilization in the Prairie Provinces. The five principal phases of investigational study in the field of engineering include surveys (exploration), soil mechanics, drainage, hydrology and design. These studies are undertaken by PFRA to gather the fundamental groundwork of technical and other basic information that is required before construction of any project is undertaken.

Water Conservation

Individual and Community Projects.—PFRA provides engineering and financial assistance to farmers in the construction of water conservation works within drought areas of the three Prairie Provinces as a rehabilitation measure. The amount of financial assistance awarded is largely dependent upon the type and size of the project contemplated. At all times PFRA policy, with respect to assistance provided, is to assist farmers to rehabilitate themselves. Authority to proceed with construction is first secured through the respective provincial water rights departments. Water conservation projects in this category are classified either as "individual farm projects" or as "community projects" undertaken by a group of farmers.

Individual Farm Projects.—During 19 years of operation, PFRA has provided assistance to farmers to construct 50,277 individual farm projects in the form of dugouts and small dams, many of which are suitable for irrigation. The objective is to provide adequate water-storage facilities where water shortages exist, and to assure dependable water supplies through irrigation for domestic requirements, for stock-watering and for the production of live-stock feed.

* Prepared under the direction of Dr. J. G. Taggart, C.B.E., Deputy Minister of Agriculture, by G. J. Matte, Associate Director of Rehabilitation.