

vegetables, both fresh and canned, but consumption of cereals and potatoes has declined. Thus Canadians appear to be enjoying a much better balanced diet and the Canadian housewife is spending more of her food budget on higher priced foods.

Increased per capita consumption of some products has also been accompanied by changes in consumer preference bringing adjustments in production, processing and marketing methods. In 1956, Canadians consumed 73.6 lb. of beef per capita which is approximately 29.5 lb. more than the amount consumed in 1952 and the highest consumption in 30 years. Also, beef consumed in recent years has been of higher quality. In 1938 the percentage of Red and Blue brand beef was about 21 p.c. of the total kill; in 1956 it was nearly 50 p.c. The increased demand has created a year-round market for these grades and this change in market requirements has resulted in a more efficient use of pasture because, with an assured outlet throughout the pasture season, there is not the necessity, as there was at one time, of trying to reach the early market before the seasonal break in prices.

In 1956 the per capita consumption of poultry was 31.6 lb., an increase of about 10 lb. since 1950. Until fairly recently, poultry production was something of a farm sideline but now it is rapidly becoming a highly specialized farm enterprise. Efficient laying flocks are replacing the old casual layer and the establishment of ultra-modern broiler plants is indicative of the transition in the production of poultry meat. Recent acceptance of turkeys as something more than a Thanksgiving and Christmas feast has been achieved by the introduction of small light-weight birds and by changes in merchandising and processing methods geared to accommodate large-scale production and distribution. Today the public is getting a higher quality product, packaged in more convenient and attractive form and available throughout the year.

Annual consumption of pork products has varied more than other meats during the postwar period. This is because, as farmers assess the potential market demand, they can cut-back or increase the supply of hogs much more rapidly than can be done with beef cattle. Today Canadians are eating about 58 lb. per capita annually compared with a prewar consumption of 39.8 lb. Few adjustments have been necessary to meet the demands of the domestic market. The Canadian hog industry was originally developed to meet the requirements of the United Kingdom market. Fortunately Canadian taste in bacon and hams is almost identical with that of the British consumer and so, as exports to the United Kingdom declined, the domestic market proved a suitable replacement. Recent consumer preference surveys indicate that the Canadian housewife is prepared to pay a premium for lean bacon.

Because of the number of products into which fluid milk can be processed and the speed with which a transition can be made from one to another, trends in the dairy industry are relatively flexible. For some years now the domestic market has been absorbing almost all the output of Canadian farms either as fluid milk and cream or as a processed product. Annual milk production has been around 17,300,000,000 lb. for the past three years. Per capita consumption of fluid milk and cream has been very stable for four years and that of creamery butter has shown little change in the same period. Consumption of cheddar cheese declined somewhat in 1956 but still remains about in line with recent years. Ice cream continues to be an important dairy product and the average consumption is about 16.5 pt. annually.

For a number of years domestic consumption of concentrated milks has been increasing. Dry skimmed milk has become popular in baby-feeding and for partially fat-free diets and consumption has almost doubled since 1945. If the recent trend in domestic sales and exports of evaporated milk is to be maintained the volume of production must be increased. But because fewer heifers are currently being kept for replacement of older cows in the herd, any increase in milk production in the immediate future will depend mainly on an increased production per cow.