

The conservation of soil and water resources for agricultural purposes, the third major objective of the legislation, is not new. For years, activities under the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Act and the Maritime Marshland Rehabilitation Act have been directed toward this end but these were regional undertakings. Under the Agricultural Rehabilitation and Development Act, soil and water conservation as an aid to agriculture will be extended to cover the whole country so that it will be possible for agriculture throughout Canada to enjoy the benefits of resource conservation.

Subsection 1.—Services of the Department of Agriculture

Broadly speaking, the activities of the Department of Agriculture may be grouped under three headings: research, promotional and regulatory services, and assistance programs. Research work is aimed at the solution of practical farm problems through the application of fundamental scientific research to all aspects of soil management and crop and animal production. Promotional and regulatory services are directed toward the prevention or eradication of crop and livestock pests, the inspection and grading of agricultural products and the establishment of sound policies for crop and livestock improvement. Assistance programs cover the sphere of soil and water conservation, price stability, provision of credit, and a degree of crop insurance and income security in the event of crop failure. The Department employs a staff of more than 9,000 persons.

The organization of the Department comprises three branches—Research, Production and Marketing, and Administration. Other activities closely allied with the Department and responsible to the Minister of Agriculture are those of the Farm Credit Corporation, the Board of Grain Commissioners and the Canadian Wheat Board (see pp. 400-401 and Index).

Research Branch.—The Research Branch is the principal research agency of the Department. It conducts a broad program of scientific investigation covering both basic studies and practical attacks on agricultural problems. There are seven Research Institutes at Ottawa; three Research Institutes, nine Regional Research Stations, six Research Laboratories, 26 Experimental Farms, two Forest Nursery Stations, and 21 Substations are located throughout the ten provinces and the Yukon and Northwest Territories.

The Research Branch serves all principal agricultural areas in Canada and co-ordinates its efforts with those of the National Research Council, universities and kindred agencies. One staff group is charged with the planning and co-ordination of the program and another with the administration required to carry it out. Four directors, representing divisions of animals, crops, soils, entomology and plant pathology, assist the programming of the work. Three research services—statistics, engineering, and analytical chemistry, located with the administrative and executive group at Ottawa—provide research groups across the country with specialized leadership and service and undertake critical researches or other creative work as required.

The Institutes.—The Institutes are organized on a scientific rather than a problem basis and are engaged primarily on basic research of wide application to agriculture. They also carry out related national work such as the identification of plants, insects and pathogens. There are seven Institutes at Ottawa and one each at London, Belleville and Sault Ste. Marie, all in Ontario.

The Animal Research Institute covers the fields of genetics and breeding, nutrition, physiology, biochemistry and management, and tackles problems in the production of milk, beef, lamb, pork, poultry, eggs and fur.

Plant studies are carried out at the Plant Research Institute and the Genetics and Plant Breeding Research Institute in taxonomy, physiology, biochemistry, pathology, agrometeorology, weeds, and fruit and vegetable processing and storage. Cytological and genetic studies on cereal, forage, tobacco and horticultural plants are made by the Genetics and Plant Breeding Research Institute with special reference to problems encountered in the breeding programs and the assessment of quality characteristics.