

Section 1.—Federal Government in Relation to Agriculture*

The federal Department of Agriculture dates from Confederation. It was established in 1867 as an outgrowth of a Bureau of Agriculture set up in 1852 by an Act of the Legislature of the Province of Canada. The Department derives its authority from the British North America Act, 1867, which states in part that "in each province, the legislature may make laws in relation to agriculture in the province" and that "the Parliament of Canada may from time to time make laws in relation to agriculture in all or any of the provinces; and any law of the legislature of a province relative to agriculture, shall have effect in and for the province as long and as far as it is not repugnant to any Act of the Parliament of Canada".

A Department of Agriculture with a Minister of Agriculture at its head was accordingly established as part of the Government of Canada. Departments of Agriculture headed by provincial Ministers of Agriculture were also set up by the provincial governments, except in the Province of Newfoundland where agricultural affairs are dealt with by the Agricultural Division of the Department of Mines, Agriculture and Resources. The agricultural affairs of the Yukon and Northwest Territories are administered for the Federal Government by the Territorial Division, Northern Administration Branch, Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources.

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, rural rehabilitation and development and a degree of crop insurance and income security in the event of crop failure. The Department employs a staff of more than 10,000 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 p. 384 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; two Research Institutes, nine Regional Research Stations, six Research Laboratories, 23 Experimental Farms, two Forest Nursery Stations and 20 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.

* Prepared under the direction of S. C. Barry, Deputy Minister of Agriculture, Ottawa.