

# Chapter 11

## Agriculture

### 11.1 Trends and highlights, 1972

The year began on an encouraging note with the announcement by the federal government of record-breaking agricultural sales in 1971. Exports totalled \$1,984 million, with wheat, rapeseed and barley the leading commodities.

On January 1, the United States eliminated tariffs against a number of agricultural products including fresh apples, maple syrup and sugar, turnips, cattle hides, sheep and lambs, and fruit-tree seedlings, allowing about 30% of Canada's agricultural exports into that country duty free compared with 20% under previous regulations.

The first permits for the import of cattle from Australia were issued to 75 applicants, and 246 cattle – Murray Grays and Australian Shorthorns – arrived at Edmonton International Airport on August 2 where they remained in quarantine until mid-October. Permits were also granted to 613 applicants to import 911 cattle from Europe.

The Minister of Agriculture pledged Canada to a contribution of \$34 million to the World Food Programme. The pledge, \$4 million higher than the previous commitment, was for two years; since the program started in 1962, Canada has ranked second among contributing countries.

The National Farm Products Marketing Council was appointed in March to oversee the establishment and operation of national marketing agencies for various farm commodities. Public hearings into the establishment of a national egg marketing agency were held in Ottawa, Moncton and Calgary in September.

Project 75, a new federal approach to agricultural co-ordination and development based on a market-oriented concept, began early in the year. The project concentrated on beef, oilseeds and high-energy grains and involved consultation, analysis and co-ordination of the various segments of the commodity systems. Before the end of the year, Project 75 had evolved into a new branch within the Department, known officially as the Food Systems Branch.

New regulations for labelling pesticides came into effect November 25 under the Pest Control Products Act, providing authority to classify pest control products as either domestic or commercial so that they can be more easily channelled through the marketplace to qualified users. In addition to being thoroughly tested before they can be registered, pesticides will now be classified according to standards of safety to humans and to potential effects on wildlife and the environment. The sale of potent products may be restricted to authorized persons to ensure safe use.

In mid-February, the Minister of Agriculture announced the implementation of the Small Farm Development Program on a national scale and by the end of 1972 six provinces – Alberta, Ontario, British Columbia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island and Nova Scotia – had signed agreements with the federal government. Under these agreements the Department, jointly with provincial departments of agriculture, provides farm management and counselling services to participating farmers, and extends credit to small farm operators to purchase the land required to develop a profitable business.

Bill C-5, amending the Farm Credit Corporation Act, received Royal Assent July 11. The most significant changes were an increase in the loan ceiling for individual operators, removal of the minimum age of 21 years as a qualification for a loan and restriction of loans to Canadian citizens and landed immigrants.

Federal assistance was given to farmers in Ontario and Quebec whose crops were damaged by flooding. The assistance included \$400 cash grants to individual farmers in wet-damaged areas, and loans, fodder subsidies and subsidies on cattle feeds.

About 11,000 wheat producers in eastern Canada received cheques in September to cover benefits under the federal government's two-price wheat payment system. Total payments exceeded \$5 million, individual payments averaging \$350.

Five new wheat grades were introduced on August 1. The new grades of bread wheat varieties are No. 2 Western Red Spring Wheat, which replaces No. 3 Northern and a small part of No. 4 Northern; and No. 3 Western Red Spring Wheat, which replaces the bulk of No. 4 Northern, No. 5 wheat and all Garnet grades. The new utility grades are No. 1 Canada Utility