

reported significant decreases in farm areas. Only Newfoundland, Alberta and British Columbia showed an increase, the increase in Newfoundland due to the establishment of new community pastures. For Canada as a whole, the 108,148,877 acres (43 766 293 ha) of improved land for 1971 was virtually unchanged from the area recorded in 1966. The area of unimproved land decreased 6.8% to 61,519,737 acres (24 896 152 ha) in 1971 from 65,970,451 acres (26 697 291 ha) in 1966. Woodland, decreasing by 18.8%, accounted for the majority of this loss, while other improved land decreased 3.4%.

Economic classification of census-farms. Census-farms were divided into 12 economic classes according to the total value of products sold during the past calendar year (Table 11.29). Such a classification serves as a measure of the productive size of census-farms in Canada. The former division of census-farms into "commercial" and "small-scale" farms has been dropped, since what may be felt to be a commercial farm in one region might be considered small-scale in another. The group classified as "institutional farms, etc." includes experimental farms, community pastures and institutional-type farms regardless of the amount of sales of agricultural products.

Type of farm. Table 11.30 shows that, with the exception of farms classified as "institutional farms, etc.", all census-farms with sales of \$2,500 or more were classified as one of 10 major product types. A criterion of 51% or more of total sales was used for this classification. For example, a census-farm was typed as a poultry farm if 51% or more of the total agricultural sales for the farm was obtained from the sale of poultry products. However, it was classed as a dairy-type farm if 40% to 50% of total sales was obtained from dairy products, provided the sale of dairy products together with the sale of cattle and calves amounted to 51% or more of the total sales. Under these criteria, it was possible for a farm to qualify for more than one product type. To prevent this possibility, the 10 product types were given a priority rating in the order listed.

Agricultural products for marketing

11.6

The Prairie grain trade

11.6.1

The bulk of the Canadian grains and oilseeds (excluding corn) is grown in the three Prairie provinces and the Peace River Block of British Columbia. Wheat is the most important product and is produced largely for human consumption. Oats and barley are grown primarily for use as livestock feed. Of the oilseeds, rapeseed yields edible oil and flaxseed is crushed to produce linseed oil for industry; both these crops also produce meal for livestock feed.

Prairie production of wheat usually amounts to about three times domestic consumption so this is an export-oriented industry. The same may be said of rapeseed and flaxseed. The coarse grains on the other hand do not enter into international trade to the same extent but large quantities do leave the Prairie provinces to be used as feed in central and eastern Canada and British Columbia.

Production varies from year to year due both to the decisions by individual farmers on what to plant and to variations in weather conditions which affect yields. Market demand is also variable largely as a result of changes in crop production throughout the world so that sales prospects and price, for wheat and oilseeds particularly, are functions of world supplies and demand. However, Canadian producers are in the position to supply high quality wheat which enjoys certain market preferences over the production of some competitors.

The grain trade encompasses the functions of assembling, storing, transporting and marketing these crops. The trade and government institutions involved are described in more detail in Section 11.7.

There are approximately 160,000 grain producers in western Canada (Canadian Wheat Board permit holders, 1976) and the crop is sold on world