

kilograms at 49 days. The achievement has far-reaching implications for the broiler industry across Canada. A shorter time from hatching to market means better returns for the farmer and ultimately a lower cost to the consumer.

Stabilization payments were made during the year on 1976 prune plum, summer pear and sugar beet crops; for 1977 cow-calf production; and on 1977 crops of grain corn, white beans, sweet cherries, apricots in British Columbia, McIntosh apples in Quebec, and potatoes and winter wheat in Eastern Canada. Under the Agricultural Stabilization Act, certain commodities are supported at not less than 90% of the average market price for the previous five years, indexed to reflect changes in cash costs of production.

Twenty producer groups took advantage of the Advance Payments for Crops Act in 1978. Under the act, the federal government guarantees and pays interest on loans made to producer groups whose members require advance payments on their storable crops. Producer organizations participating represented growers of soybeans, apples, potatoes, onions, rutabagas, pears, grain corn, burley tobacco and wheat.

A total of 30 projects received financial support in 1978 from Agriculture Canada's new crop development fund. Its purpose is to encourage projects that help bring new crops, plant varieties and management techniques into practical use. The projects included studies to improve forage production in Alberta and blueberry production in Quebec's Eastern Townships region; a study of intensive production of winter wheat and grain corn in the Atlantic provinces; a study on the feasibility of establishing a fibre flax industry on the Prairies; and a project to develop improved varieties of rapeseed.

11.1.2 Agricultural regions

Climate, soil conditions and geography have combined to form several distinct farming regions in Canada. A harsh northern climate restricts most agriculture to the southern portion of the country and nearly all farms lie within 483 kilometres of the southern border. In the Atlantic provinces and Central Canada farming is limited to coastal regions and river valleys, and soils vary in depth and fertility. In the Prairie region soil is fertile but rain is light. Farming is limited to high plateaus and river valleys in the western mountainous region.

Farming is an important business in Canada. About 68.3 million hectares in 10 provinces are cultivated; 44.1 million hectares are improved land. In 1977, farm cash receipts exceeded \$10.1 billion and agricultural exports exceeded \$4.3 billion.

There are four main types of farms in Canada. Livestock farms include those specializing in feedlot finishing of cattle, large-scale feeding of hogs bought as weanlings, dairying, poultry production for meat and eggs, and breeding and raising livestock. Grain farms produce such crops as wheat, oats, flax and rapeseed. Special crop farms produce vegetables, fruits, potatoes or other root crops, tobacco or forest products. Other farms combine livestock and grain production. Although each region has its specialties, none is limited to one type of farming.

The Atlantic region. This area includes Newfoundland, Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and the Gaspé district of Quebec. It is hilly, with a general covering of relatively fertile soil developed under forest cover. The climate is modified by the sea, but also affected by cold currents from the coast of Labrador and winds from the north. Precipitation averages 760 to 1 400 mm (millimetres) annually. Mixed farming is general and forage crops support a healthy livestock industry. Some small farmers combine fishing or lumbering with farming.

Nova Scotia's main agricultural areas surround the Bay of Fundy and Northumberland Strait where they are protected from Atlantic gales. Dairying and poultry production are common and beef farming is increasing. The Annapolis Valley is famous for fruit, particularly apples. New Brunswick produces potatoes and livestock in the Saint John River Valley and there is mixed farming in the northwest. More than a third of the commercial farms in the province are dairy farms.

Farming is the principal occupation on Prince Edward Island. Potatoes are the leading crop but the fertile land also supports mixed grains, dairying and other livestock enterprises. Small fruits and vegetables are produced.