meet emergency conditions, are administered by Agriculture Canada or by the agencies responsible to the agriculture minister, except for programs carried out under the Prairie Grain Advance Payments Act, administered by the wheat board, and the Agriculture and Rural Development Act (ARDA) and the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Act, both administered by the regional economic expansion department.

The Farm Improvement Loans Act administered by Agriculture Canada came into force in March 1945 for an initial period of three years and was subsequently amended to remain in effect for additional lending periods. Under this legislation the government may guarantee loans by chartered banks and other designated lenders to farmers for a wide range of purposes. The maximum which a borrower may have outstanding is $75,000. Loans may be repayable over a period up to 10 years for all purposes, except land purchase for which a 15-year term is permitted.

Farm improvement loans must be secured and borrowers are required to provide a certain portion of the cost of a purchase or a project from their own resources. The maximum rate of interest on loans is based on the prime lending rate of the chartered banks, plus 1%.

From inception of the program to December 31, 1978, there were 1,806,537 farm improvement loans made amounting to over $3,888 million. During the same period, payments were made to lenders under the guarantee provision in respect of 6,055 claims amounting to $7.6 million and recoveries amounted to $1.8 million.

The Agricultural Products Board was established in 1951 to administer contracts with other countries for purchase or sale of agricultural products and to perform other commodity operations as Canadian needs may dictate. The board's activities have included purchasing surplus Canadian commodities with resulting improvement in producer prices. Some of these commodities have been processed, packaged and delivered to the world food program as part of Canada's commitment to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.

The Agricultural Stabilization Board, established in 1958 by the Agricultural Stabilization Act and amended in July 1975, is empowered to stabilize prices of agricultural products to help the industry get fair returns for labour and investment, and to maintain a fair relationship between prices received by farmers and their costs of goods and services.

The act provides that the board shall take action to stabilize prices of agricultural commodities at prescribed levels. Included are slaughter cattle, hogs, sheep, industrial milk, industrial cream, corn, soybeans, and oats and barley produced outside designated areas defined in the Canadian Wheat Board Act. The prescribed price of a named commodity is calculated at 90% of the five-year average of market price, or at such higher percentage as the Governor-in-Council may determine, indexed to reflect cash cost of production in that year as compared to the preceding five years. The Governor-in-Council may similarly designate other commodities for support. The board may stabilize the price of any product by offer to purchase, or by making deficiency payments or other authorized payments for the benefit of producers. Stabilizing prices by means of assistance payments has helped balance production and demand.

Since the inception of the act the cost of stabilization programs has totalled over $2 billion. The board maintains a revolving fund of $250 million; losses are made up by parliamentary appropriations. An advisory committee, named by the agriculture minister and composed of farmers or representatives of farm organizations, advises the board and the minister on matters relating to stabilization.

The Crop Insurance Act passed in 1959 (RSC 1970, c.C-36), permits the federal government to help the provinces in making all-risk crop insurance available to farmers on a shared-cost basis under federal-provincial agreements. Crop insurance can protect the farmer against unforeseen losses by spreading their impact over a number of years. The initiative for establishing crop insurance rests with the provinces and programs are developed to meet provincial requirements.

The federal government contributes a portion of premium costs or administration costs and shares the risk by providing loans or reinsurance when indemnities greatly