

Cultural improvements have led to an almost completely new approach to the economics and practice of dryland farming. Techniques in soil management and methods of making more efficient use of limited supplies of available soil moisture have been developed and are in common use, helping materially to minimize the drought problem in drier areas. The development of assured farm water supplies throughout the drought region for domestic, stockwatering and irrigation purposes has also contributed greatly to a more stable agriculture over a wide area. In particular, the development of assured feed supplies through irrigation for the winter feeding of livestock and the provision of reserves of feed to carry livestock over periodic dry periods has given much greater stability to the livestock industry and has been a major factor in encouraging agricultural diversification in the plains region.

Finally, the permanent removal from cultivation of lands that have proven sub-marginal for cereal crop production, the fencing, regrassing and other improvement of such areas for community pasture purposes, and the resettlement and rehabilitation of farmers operating such lands, principally to irrigation projects, have been major factors in bringing about necessary adjustments in the pattern of land use on the prairies.

Where these adjustments have been of considerable benefit to the agricultural economy, new and growing demands for water required by larger municipal and urban centres for domestic and industrial purposes, as well as to support large-scale irrigation, have made necessary the development of larger and more comprehensive water storage and irrigation schemes where more dependable and plentiful water supplies can be obtained. PFRA in more recent years has devoted an increasing amount of its attention to this type of development.

Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Act

Under the terms of the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Act, an initial appropriation of \$4,750,000 was made to cover the cost of rehabilitation activities for a period of five years, and an Advisory Committee was established to give leadership to the program. Rather than establish new services, existing agricultural services were given assistance to expand their operations to handle the work, particularly the Experimental Farms Service. As the PFRA program developed, a separate administration was set up in Regina (in 1936) to direct water development, while the cultural improvement program continued under the direction of the Experimental Farms Service. Then, by amendment to the Act in 1937, the PFRA was extended to include land utilization and resettlement. It was realized, however, that for the development of a sound agricultural economy on the prairies, more long-term measures for rehabilitation would be necessary. In 1939 therefore, additional financial allocations were made and the five-year limitation to the PFRA was removed.

Water Development.—Projects constructed under the water development program and carried out under the supervision of the Water Development Division of the Agricultural Services Branch are divided into two main categories according to size of project, number of people benefiting, and cost of construction: (1) individual and neighbour projects and (2) community projects.

Individual and neighbour projects are works serving the needs of one or two farmers. They are generally in the form of small dams and dug-outs that supply water for stockwatering and domestic use and/or for irrigation purposes. PFRA provides all engineering services required to plan and design such projects and a portion of the construction costs. The rate of assistance paid on individual projects is based on yardage of earth moved and amounts to seven cents per cubic yard up to a maximum of \$250 for dug-outs, \$300 for stockwatering dams and \$600 for irrigation projects. Where two or more farmers pool their water resources to build neighbour projects, assistance is paid up to a maximum of \$1,000. Responsibility for the actual construction is left to the farmer who either contracts the work out or builds the project himself.