

MARITIMES

Strawberries - Reports prepared during the latter part of June forecast a strawberry crop in Prince Edward Island of 1.1 million quarts, 25 per cent above 1955. This prospective increase in output was attributed to larger acreages for harvest this year. It was also reported that new plantings for production next year were increased. With cool, wet weather having prevailed so far this season, sunshine and warmth were needed for crop development. Bloom varied from fair to better than average. Some frost damage occurred on June 8. It was expected that, with favourable weather conditions, the first fruit would be harvested about July 7 and the peak movement would occur about one week later.

A strawberry crop of 875,000 quarts was expected in Nova Scotia this year. This is about 6 per cent above that of last year. Frost during the early part of June destroyed some of the blossoms but it was felt that later bloom would overcome this setback. Some early berries were probably lost. Plants were developing rapidly during the latter part of the month and, with warm weather, it was expected that fruit would be on the market during the first week of July with the peak harvest season expected during the second week of that month. This is somewhat later than in previous years.

The first forecast placed the 1956 New Brunswick strawberry crop at 850,000 quarts, the same as last year. Strawberry plantations developed rapidly about the middle of the month when there was some warm, dry weather. By about June 21, however, the weather turned cool with night temperatures not much above freezing. The blossom was about one week later than usual this year especially in the early areas which will mean picking will be proportionately late. An increased acreage of new plantings was reported.

Raspberries - Reports indicated a raspberry crop of 40,000 quarts in Nova Scotia, the same as in 1955. There was some breakage in raspberry canes from heavy snowfalls during the past winter. This year's growth, however, was satisfactory and crop prospects are better than average. In New Brunswick, where a 40,000 quart crop, down 11 per cent from last year, was expected, canes have wintered well and were showing reasonable growth in view of the backward weather prevailing in the spring.

Apples - In the Annapolis Valley of Nova Scotia the apple orchards were at full bloom during the first week of June and the weather was fairly satisfactory for bee flight and pollination. Well cared for commercial orchards had a better than average bloom but well below that of last year. The trees were showing a good growth of foliage and an average crop was in prospect. In New Brunswick the full bloom lasted from June 9th to the 14th with the central and upper St. John River Valley being slightly earlier than the lower part of the valley or the eastern section of the province. For the province as a whole, blossom was below average but in the lower St. John River Valley it was average or somewhat better. The only frost damage reported was to early varieties in the eastern sections. Cool weather and almost continuous rains during the blossom period may have adversely affected pollination in some areas. Foliage growth and development have been rapid.

Other Tree Fruits - Nova Scotia pear orchards showed a fair to heavy bloom varying with the different areas. Prospects were favourable. Plum blossom was light to average on clean trees with prospects for a fair to average crop.

QUEBEC

Strawberries - Strawberry crop prospects during the latter part of June for the Province of Quebec were good. Although picking was not underway by June 26 it was expected that berries would be being harvested within a few days. In the Montreal area it is expected that the crop will be medium to heavy. No estimates were available as it was felt the crop had not yet advanced sufficiently to permit the compilation of such data.

Raspberries - The outlook for raspberries was good with the berries starting to show during the latter part of June.

Apples - The set of apples was much lighter than was indicated by the blossom. This was attributed in part to frost damage on May 24, however, it was also felt that low temperatures last December may have had an adverse effect on the buds. The set was described as patchy with some sections having very little fruit while elsewhere a fair set was reported. McIntosh, the principal variety in Quebec, did not set very heavily, the fruits being six inches to one foot apart. This, however, will be advantageous from the point of view of sizing and colouring. The June drop was not over by the latter part of the month and this may, of course, reduce the crop further. The general outlook at this time is for an apple crop somewhat below last year's larger than average output.

ONTARIO

The weather throughout Ontario during May and early June was cold and backward, delaying crop development. Frost damaged fruit crops in Eastern Ontario on the night of May 17 and in the western section of the province on May 23 and 24. During the week of June 11, however, the fruit growing areas experienced some very warm days which brought about rapid growth, but by the middle of the month crop development and prospective harvest dates were still retarded. In Eastern Ontario there had been only local showers during the first two weeks of June and by the middle of the month rain was needed. Conditions at mid-June generally pointed to smaller fruit crops this year than last. However, 1955 was a year of very heavy or even record production and thus the 1956 outlook is in part a return to more nearly normal levels of production.

Strawberries - Indications at June 15 were for a strawberry crop of 6.9 million quarts, down by 19 per cent from 1955. In Western Ontario considerable frost damage to the early bloom, particularly in Norfolk County, and the somewhat reduced plant population due to drought last summer were responsible for the drop in anticipated production. Reports indicate that where frost damage to the first bloom was severe, an ample reserve of bloom followed and the set of fruit was adequate although some reduction in size of berries may be anticipated if there are insufficient rains. In the Niagara District and Essex County the first berries were picked on June 12 while first pickings in Eastern Ontario reached the market on the weekend of June 27. In Eastern Ontario the effects of the 1955 drought were less severe and plantations have made good growth this year. However, the middle of June reports stated that unless rain was received the picking season would be short. Production in Eastern Ontario was expected to be above that of last year by 10 per cent.

Raspberries - Mid-June indications pointed to a raspberry crop of 2.9 million quarts, 13 per cent above 1955. Plantations in Western Ontario had not been seriously affected by the various adverse weather factors so far and increased production was expected in most areas. Blossom was opening rapidly throughout the district.

Raspberries in Eastern Ontario have made good cane growth so far this year and it was expected that the canes would be in blossom during the week of June 24th. Crop prospects were described as promising for both Purple and Red varieties in most plantings. However, moisture might prove to be a limiting factor.

Cherries - Sweet cherry orchards in Western Ontario were greatly affected by frost and poor weather for pollination during the blossom period. This, combined with stem rot, has reduced crop prospects which, as of June 15, were placed at 53,000 bushels, 50 per cent below 1955. Sour cherries with their later blossom were less severely affected by adverse weather conditions except in the Georgian Bay area where frost damage was heavy. In Eastern Ontario frost on May 16 and 17 resulted in severe bud damage. The 1956 Ontario sour cherry crop was estimated at 281,000 bushels, 29 per cent below 1955. Some loss of trees occurred in Prince Edward County due to high water table and poor drainage.

Apples - The set of fruit on apple orchards was very irregular on different varieties and in different areas in Western Ontario as a result of frost damage, poor conditions for pollination during the blossom, and biennial bearing. The variety Spy showed the best prospects. The June drop was not complete by the middle of the month. It was felt that production would be down from last year. In Eastern Ontario all varieties except Spy were in full bloom during the week of June 5th and conditions for pollination were ideal. Blossom varied from heavy to patchy. Some serious bud damage from frost in the Ottawa area and St. Lawrence Valley district was reported and a few orchards in the Lakeshore Counties also sustained some injury. In general, however, the initial set of apples appeared fairly good. Scab and insects were reported to be under good control in most orchards.

Pears - This crop was at the calyx stage in all early counties of Western Ontario by the middle of June. Prospects were somewhat better than had been expected earlier. In Eastern Ontario the initial set on most varieties was promising, the blossom having been heavy.

Peaches - The set of fruit on peach trees in Western Ontario showed considerable irregularity depending on variety and location. Indications at mid-June suggested a reduced output this year due to poor weather at blossom time. However, better sizing may compensate for some of the loss of fruit.

Plums and Prunes - Plum orchards in Western Ontario had an adequate blossom but frost, poor pollination, stem rot and a heavy drop reduced crop prospects to less than half of last year. This applied to all varieties. In Eastern Ontario most varieties showed bud injury and crop prospects were down.

Grapes - Irregular frost damage in the Niagara District reduced crop prospects below last year although good berry size could make up for this factor. Wet soil condition greatly hindered soil cultivation operations well into June.

BRITISH COLUMBIA

Up until the beginning of June the weather in British Columbia was very favourable in all districts. The month of June, however, was quite cool with showers in the Coastal Districts and fairly high temperatures in the Interior. The Osoyoos and Kelowna areas in the Interior had several showers and some hail during this period, which caused severe splitting in sweet cherries and reduced crop prospects. The effects of the November and February freezes were still showing up in the Interior and it was expected that losses will be as high as 25 per cent in trees from one to ten years of age.

Strawberries - Estimates as of June 15th placed the 1956 strawberry crop at 1.6 million quarts, 79 per cent below that of 1955. This reduction is due to severe low temperature damage to plantations in the Fraser Valley last winter. On Vancouver Island strawberry picking had reached its peak by about June 21st. Indications were that production in that area would be at least as good as in 1955. In spite of some losses due to showery weather the quality has been generally good. However, because of the damp weather, only a limited quantity of fruit had been shipped to the fresh market with the balance being processed for jam or frozen. In the Fraser Valley, the principal producing area, it was expected that the crop would be down 89 per cent from last year.

Raspberries - The outlook for raspberries was poor, a crop of 1.9 million quarts being forecast as of June 15th, about 79 per cent below 1955. As in the case of strawberries this reduction was the result of severe winter injury.

Cherries - Estimates as of June 15th indicate a cherry crop of 55,000 bushels, down 53 per cent from 1955. Winter injury to the trees and fruit buds last November and February severely cut down crop prospects while recent rain and hail in the important southern Okanagan districts brought about further reductions.

Table 1. - Forecast of Commercial Production in the Maritimes, Ontario and British Columbia of Strawberries, Raspberries and Cherries, 1956, with Comparable Figures for 1955.

Kind of Fruit	Production in Volumetric Units			Production in Tons ^{1/}	
	Unit	1955	1956	1955	1956
		'000	'000	tons	tons
Canada -					
Cherries, sweet	bu.	221	108	5,525	2,700
Cherries, sour	bu.	394	281	9,850	7,025
Prince Edward Island -					
Strawberries	qt.	890	1,115	556	697
Nova Scotia -					
Strawberries	qt.	825	875	516	547
Raspberries	qt.	40	40	25	25
New Brunswick -					
Strawberries	qt.	850	850	531	531
Raspberries	qt.	45	40	28	25
Ontario -					
Strawberries	qt.	8,568	6,900	5,355	4,312
Raspberries	qt.	2,521	2,853	1,576	1,783
Cherries, sweet	bu.	105	53	2,625	1,325
Cherries, sour	bu.	394	281	9,850	7,025
British Columbia -					
Strawberries	qt.	7,530	1,577	5,648	1,183
Raspberries	qt.	9,147	1,877	6,860	1,408
Cherries, sweet	bu.	116	55	2,900	1,375

^{1/} The original estimates secured by the Bureau were stated in measures of volume. These were converted to tons at the following rates: 1 bushel of cherries = 50 pounds. 1 quart of strawberries or raspberries = 1.25 pounds except in British Columbia where the rate of 1 quart = 1.50 pounds was used.

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