Published by Authority of the HON. W. D. EULER, M.P.,
Minister of Trade and Commerce

DEPARTMENT OF TRADE AND COMMERCE
DOMINION BUREAU OF STATISTICS - CANADA
AGRICULTURAL BRANCH

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Fruit and Vegetable Crop Report

Ottawa, November 23, 1936 - The Dominion Bureau of Statistics in co-operation with the Fruit Branch of the Department of Agriculture and the Provincial Departments of Agriculture issues to-day a report summarizing conditions during the harvesting season, together with estimates of production and comparative data for last year.

SUMMARY

Harvesting of the fruit and vegetable crops, which has been going on during the past two months, is now completed. For the most part, weather conditions throughout all the producing provinces have been favourable for gathering the crops although rains impeded the work to a certain extent while frosts and high winds were damaging factors in some sections. Total fruit production for the whole country is considerably below that of last year. Apple crops in all provinces are smaller, with the Nova Scotian and British Columbian crops showing the greatest reduction. Winter injury, spring frosts and summer droughts combined with insect and fungous pests to reduce the yields. Fall rains have improved prospects for next year although much permanent damage to tender fruit trees, grape vines and strawberry plantations will have an effect on 1937 production. Vegetable crops have yielded better than earlier reports indicated although in many cases, total production is below that of last year. Prices for most fruits show improvement over last season. Vegetables have also realized higher returns for the growers. Strong demand on the part of processors for all fruit and vegetable crops has helped to keep the markets active and prices firm. Stocks in storage show appreciable reductions from last year at the same time.

NOVA SCOTIA

The fall season was marked by unfavourable weather conditions and was one of the most unsatisfactory harvesting periods on record. High winds on October 12 were followed by frost on the night of the 14th. Further gales increased the damage while frosts on the 26th and 27th seriously injured practically all of the fruit still unpicked, estimated at about 25,000 barrels. Wind storms were responsible for the loss of some 100,000 barrels of apples and in addition, lowered the quality of fruit remaining on the trees. Frequent rains hampered the work of harvesting the crop.

Quality in general is below that of last season and neither size nor colour are up to the standard of last year's crop. Many varieties such as McIntosh, Wagener, Baldwin, King and even Spy, while showing promising colour on the trees, failed to come up to expectations when put over the grader. Scab and aphis injury, prevalent throughout the season, have further reduced the volume of fruit suitable for export.

Early season prospects for a good crop have suffered successive reductions as disease, insect pests, wind and frost all took their toll. The crop is now estimated at 1,500,000 barrels of which quantity probably less than 60 per cent will make export grades. Processing plants have been absorbing large quantities of low grade fruit and the pack of canned and dried apples will be exceptionally heavy. Some movement of car lot shipments to processing plants outside the province has helped to relieve the strain on local factories.

Losses caused by frosts and wind storms during October were accentuated by the fact that the apples damaged were mainly of such varieties as Spy, Wagener and Russet which ordinarily bring better prices than the earlier sorts. Frost damage was most severe in the central and eastern parts of the Valley while toward the western end, the loss was not serious.

With the exception of late varieties, the pear crop was generally of good quality and one of the largest for several years. Late sorts were damaged

by wind and frost while pear psylla affected the size, colour and quality of the fruit.

NEW BRUNSWICK

With favourable weather prevailing during the picking season, apples were harvested in good condition with little difficulty. Practically all the crop was off before the gales of mid-October, so that damage from that source was slight. While the fruit is not quite up to normal for size, colour is good and prices received by growers have been satisfactory.

QUEBEC

Weather conditions throughout October were generally favourable for the harvesting of apples and vegetable crops. Heavy rains in some sections flooded the fields and prevented the digging of potatoes. Losses by frost followed and some crops of cabbage and turnips still unharvested, were destroyed in addition to the potatoes.

The apple crop estimate has again been lowered. The harvest in the districts around Abbotsford, Rougemont, St. Hilaire and Dunham was disappointingly small, being little more than ten per cent of a normal crop. The total yield for the province is now estimated at 91,000 barrels, considerably less than half that of last year and the smallest crop reported for the past ten years. Quality is good and supplies are being cleaned up rapidly at good prices.

In contrast to the apple situation, market garden crops have yielded abundantly. Even despite the larger yields, prices have been well maintained and returns to growers will be substantially higher than last year. The total area planted to such crops as beets, carrots, cabbage, celery, cauliflower, cucumbers, beans, peas, lettuce, corn, onions, tomatoes, etc. was 38,900 acres, practically identical with the figure for the previous year. The value of these crops at the farm is estimated at $6,221,000 for this year as compared with $5,442,000 for 1935. Short crops of cabbage, corn and other vegetables in parts of Ontario opened a good market for these commodities, reversing the direction of the usual interprovincial movement. The value of the cabbage crop was more than double that of last year although the yield was only slightly better. Corn with a 30 per cent increase in volume showed a 60 per cent gain in value. With tomatoes, although both the acreage planted and total tonnage were below last year, the value of the crop was substantially higher.

The following table shows the acreage, production and value of some of the principal vegetable crops grown in the province during the past season:

ACREAGE, PRODUCTION AND VALUE OF PRINCIPAL VEGETABLE CROPS IN QUEBEC

Crop	Acreage	Production	Value ($)
Cabbage	2,520	816,000 bu.	465,000
Celery	760	1,332,000 doz.	639,000
Corn	11,200	1,590,000 doz.	1,208,000
Onions	2,600	707,000 bu.	445,000
Peas	4,500	338,000 bu.	450,000
Tomatoes	6,100	1,800,000 bu.	1,213,000

ONTARIO

Rainfall was abundant over all parts of the province during the late fall period. Conditions were favourable for the development of late crops and the work of harvesting was not unduly hampered. Some damage was done to apples by high winds in mid-October but the windfalls were disposed of readily on local markets and to processors so that the loss was not serious. Heavy frosts occurred over the province on October 26 but as most of the apples were harvested by that time, little damage was sustained. In the northern sections of the province and to some extent in eastern Ontario vegetable crops were damaged by frost, injury being confined chiefly to late crops of green vegetables. Wet weather held up the harvesting of some vegetable crops in the eastern end of the province.

The apple crop has turned out much better than originally anticipated and the present estimate of 684,200 barrels is only about six per cent below last

year's crop. In western Ontario, while the drought retarded growth in the early part of the season and early varieties were somewhat undersized and lacking in colour, there was sufficient moisture in the latter part of the season for the development of late varieties which attained normal size and colour, except in some sections on heavy soils. Scab infestation was very light in well sprayed orchards, but codling moth injury was quite prevalent in practically all areas. The latter resulted in considerable drop, and a fair proportion of low-grade fruit. Practically no hail damage was reported. Loss by frost was comparatively light. Peelers and cull apples were in strong demand by processors this year at very satisfactory prices. In the central and eastern parts, drought conditions prevailed from June 1 until September 1, but from then on rains were quite adequate, and apples, with the exception of Spy, attained fair size, and coloured remarkably well. McIntosh and Snow were affected by drought-spot, and corky core condition in sod orchards and where not properly cultivated. Gales in mid-October blew a considerable quantity of apples off the trees. These were sold in local markets and to processors so that little actual loss was sustained. Prices to the grower have been very satisfactory this year.

With plums, fairly heavy loss of trees and wood, especially in the varieties Reine Claude and Monarch, continued throughout the season. The heavy crop of last year produced under drought conditions, weakened the trees, and many orchards showed light bloom, particularly the European varieties. Heat and drought resulted in extensive development of drought-spot and shrivelling, consequently this fruit suffered more severely than any other. Size generally was below normal. There was no export movement this year, the domestic trade and processors taking care of the crop satisfactorily.

In the main peach producing section there was heavy mortality of trees and wood, especially in the eastern area. As a result, approximately eight per cent of the bearing trees were removed from this cause during the spring months. Trees in other sections appeared to be healthy. Yellows and little peach infestations were relatively light this season as compared with last year. Healthy young trees carried a normal set with older trees bearing comparatively light crops. Despite abnormal heat and drought in the summer months the crop showed good development, both in size and quality, and growers received considerably increased prices. Insect pests and fungous diseases were of minor importance. Generally speaking, trees have made good growth and under favourable weather conditions should produce a normal crop in 1937.

Bloom prospects for pears which were considerably below normal in most areas, were further reduced by frost in late May, which also caused heavy damage by blossom end russetting. Quality was affected by worm injury throughout the western Ontario district. Blight and pear psylla were well controlled. While drought affected sizing of early varieties, late sorts were generally of normal size.

Drought conditions in 1935, together with the hard frost in early October of that year, killed many grape vines on the heavy soils, but this loss was largely offset by recent plantings coming into bearing, and the general outlook early in the spring was for a normal crop. Heavy frost in late May killed many of the fruiting laterals in certain areas with an estimated loss of not less than 35 per cent. The extreme heat and drought which prevailed throughout most of the growing season further reduced the crop and total production is now estimated at 52 per cent below last year. Although berries were below normal in size, the sugar content was high and carrying quality was good. Grapes ripened early and were harvested without any frost losses. Practically no mildew injury occurred this season.

Weather conditions were very favourable this autumn for late development of vegetable crops, with the exception of early killing frosts in northern Ontario. In eastern Ontario harvesting was difficult on account of very wet weather while frost on October 12 did considerable damage owing to the very soft condition of some crops. Heavy frost on October 26 and 27, caused further injury to a number of crops in this area. Lettuce, cauliflower, Chinese cabbage, endive, celery, bunch beets, spinach and parsley, were all injured during the month.

The estimated acreage and total production for a number of vegetables are set out in the following table:

Asparagus	1,270	1,270 tons	400	200 tons	1,670	1,470 tons
Cabbage	1,296	11,700 "	800	6,800 "	2,096	18,500 "
Celery	825	332,250 crates	400	60,000 cr.	1,225	392,250 cr.
Onions	2,620	14,525 tons	550	3,125 tons	3,170	17,450 tons
Spinach	120	482 "	50	100 "	170	582 "
Tomatoes	20,640	4,035,950 bu.	5,000	875,000 bu.	25,640	4,910,950 bu.

BRITISH COLUMBIA

Throughout the harvesting season, weather conditions were generally favourable and crops were garnered with a minimum of loss. Some celery in the Armstrong district was damaged by frost but not beyond the point where it could be salvaged for hearts.

Estimates of the fruit crops are unchanged since the last report and the total crop of apples is now placed at 4,448,100 boxes compared with last year's figure of 5,144,700 boxes. The quality of the fruit is excellent, there being a noticeable freedom from insect and fungous injury. While smaller than usual, the apples are exceptionally well coloured.

The movement of apples so far has been brisk. Export orders have been numerous and some shippers are reported as having difficulty in filling contracts, particularly for Jonathans. Opening prices were low but have improved materially and now show a marked advance over prices prevailing for the past few years. Storage holdings are well below those of last year at the same time and it is not anticipated that there will be any difficulty in disposing of the balance of the crop at a good figure.

The reduction in the crop this year is mainly the result of the severe weather during the winter of 1935-36. Apart from trees killed outright, a large number suffered damage in varying degrees and it remains to be seen how many of these will recover and how long it will be before production returns to normal level.

The pear crop, estimated at 250,700 boxes, is a little below last year's figure of 269,200 boxes. Canners handled a considerable portion of the Vancouver Island crop while export shipments have accounted for a fairly large volume of the crop from the Interior.

There was little change in the vegetable acreages from those of last year. The onion crop yielded less than average because of reduced size but quality was good and the demand has been fairly brisk at prices somewhat better than last year. Field tomatoes were a light crop and although cannery prices were above those of last year, some factories were unable to secure their full requirements and as a result the pack will probably be smaller than that of 1935. Celery was a good crop and with the exception of the frost damage already noted, quality was satisfactory. Substantial quantities have been pitted and there appears to be plenty to supply any ordinary demand for this season. Potatoes were a medium crop with prices ruling higher than for a number of years.

VEGETABLE ACREAGES

The following table shows the acreages of some of the principal vegetable crops grown commercially in the main producing provinces of British Columbia, Ontario and Quebec.

ACREAGE AND PRODUCTION OF CERTAIN VEGETABLES IN ONTARIO
(Commercial Crop Only)

Crop	Western, Southern and Northern Ontario		Central and Eastern Ontario		Whole Province	
	Acreage	Production	Acreage	Production	Acreage	Production

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ACREAGE AND PRODUCTION OF CERTAIN VEGETABLES IN ONTARIO
(Commercial Crop Only)

Crop	Western, Southern and Northern Ontario		Central and Eastern Ontario		Whole Province	
	Acreage	Production	Acreage	Production	Acreage	Production

ESTIMATED COMMERCIAL ACREAGES OF CERTAIN VEGETABLES

	Quebec	Ontario	British Columbia	Total
		(Acres)		
Asparagus	200	1,670	105	1,975
Cabbage	2,520	2,096	380	4,996
Celery	760	1,225	200	2,185
Onions	2,600	3,170	1,100	6,870
Tomatoes	6,100	25,640	2,700	34,440

UNITED STATES

According to a report of the United States Department of Agriculture, weather conditions during the month of October were generally favourable for the harvesting of apples and other late maturing fruits. The freeze of October 27 caused little damage as harvesting operations were well advanced by that time. Late rains over the eastern and central areas improved the size of apples. The total apple crop for the year is now estimated at 108,031,000 bushels, compared with 167,283,000 bushels produced in 1935 and the five-year average (1928-32) of 161,333,000 bushels. The commercial crop or that part of the total crop which will be sold for fresh consumption is estimated at 66,201,000 bushels. The pear crop, now estimated at 23,750,000 bushels, is a little above the five-year average of 23,146,000 bushels. The production of cranberries, estimated at 515,300 barrels, is below last year's figure of 519,500 barrels and the five-year average of 581,023 barrels. Regarding the outlook for next year, the Department is forecasting a possible slight decline in apple and peach production which will be offset by larger production of citrus fruits, grapes and cherries. With the gradual improvement in consumer purchasing power, apple and peach growers may expect some improvement in prices while as a result of the rapidly increasing production, lower prices for citrus fruits are expected. Attention is drawn to the fact that world production of most fruits is increasing. Consequently keener competition may be expected in world markets in the future. General improvement in quality and the maintenance of high export standards will be necessary in order to retain a proditable outlet for fruit on foreign markets.

Production of commercial truck crops for fresh market shipment in 1937 is expected to exceed the record volume of 1936. This is due to the rise in vegetable prices during the current year which will probably be reflected in larger acreages next season. The small carryover of stored vegetables and the shorter supplies of canned vegetables will also have an influence in increasing next year's plantings.

Second estimate of fruit production, 1936 as compared with the final estimate of production for the year 1935.

CANADA	Second estimate of production, 1936	Final estimate of production, 1935
Apples	3,777,900 bbls.	4,496,400 brl.
Pears	368,400 bu.	423,100 bu.
Plums and prunes	156,100 "	263,100 "
Peaches	440,500 "	619,600 "
Apricots	2,660 "	99,900 "
Cherries	193,200 "	214,500 "
xxCantaloupes	149,000 "	200,000 "
Strawberries	21,347,000 qts.	27,505,800 qts.
Raspberries	5,447,600 "	8,140,700 "
xBlackberries	43,500 cases	39,400 cases
Grapes	23,104,000 lbs.	42,945,500 lbs.
xLoganberries	1,422,000 "	2,186,000 "
xCurrants	390,400 "	374,300 "
xGooseberries	289,320 "	272,400 "

x Figures of production available only from British Columbia.
xx Figures of production cover only Ontario.

NOVA SCOTIA		
Apples	1,500,000 brl.	1,800,000 brl.
Pears	9,000 bu.	7,000 bu.
Plums	15,000 "	8,000 "
Strawberries	1,100,000 qts.	976,000 qts.
Raspberries	72,000 "	60,000 "
NEW BRUNSWICK		
Apples	20,000 brl.	32,500 brl.
Strawberries	1,500,000 qts.	1,100,000 qts.
Raspberries	50,000 "	41,000 "
QUEBEC		
Apples	91,000 brl.	222,000 brl.
Strawberries	7,671,000 qts.	6,160,000 qts.
Raspberries	2,304,000 "	2,544,000 "
ONTARIO		
Apples	684,200 brl.	727,000 brl.
Pears	148,800 bu.	190,000 bu.
Plums and prunes	41,200 "	110,000 "
Peaches	402,300 "	575,000 "
Cherries	154,000 "	160,000 "
Cantaloupes	149,000 "	200,000 "
Strawberries	6,168,000 qts.	11,819,000 qts.
Raspberries	1,800,000 "	3,640,000 "
Grapes	21,640,000 lbs.	41,430,000 lbs.
BRITISH COLUMBIA(1)		
Apples	4,448,100 boxes	5,144,700 boxes
Pears	250,700 "	269,200 "
Plums and Prunes	299,800 cases	435,400 cases
Peaches	114,600 "	133,700 "
Apricots	8,000 "	99,900 "
Cherries	147,500 "	159,800 "
Strawberries	409,000 "	620,900 "
Raspberries	101,800 "	154,600 "
Blackberries	43,500 "	39,400 "
Grapes	1,464,000 lbs.	1,515,500 lbs.
Loganberries	1,422,000 "	2,186,000 "
Currants	390,400 "	374,300 "
Gooseberries	289,320 "	272,400 "

(1) Estimates for British Columbia have been converted on the following basis: Apples, three boxes to the barrel; pears, box 42 lbs. bushel 50 lbs; plums and prunes, peaches, apricots and cherries, three cases to the bushel; strawberries, raspberries and blackberries, 12 quarts to the case.