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Fruit and Vegetable Crop Report

Ottawa, August 29, 1942.- The Dominion Bureau of Statistics in cooperation with the Fruit Branch of the Department of Agriculture and the Provincial Departments of Agriculture, issues today a report showing the condition of fruit and vegetable crops in the main producing areas for the month of August.

FRUIT

The favourable outlook for the fruit crops in Canada of a month ago remains substantially the same. While there was a general improvement in the prospective production of pears and peaches since July, minor reductions in the estimates of the apple and plum crops are now indicated. With continued good weather the grape harvest will be the largest on record.

APPLES: The Canadian apple crop in 1942 is estimated to be 3,891,200 barrels, an increase of 8.7 per cent over the 1941 crop of 3,578,400 barrels but 19 per cent below the five-year (1936-40) average of 4,813,800 barrels. A small increase in prospects in Ontario during the month was overcome by slight declines in condition in both Nova Scotia and British Columbia and with the estimates in New Brunswick and Quebec remaining unchanged, the outlook is approximately one per cent below that of a month ago.

The apple crop in Nova Scotia, now estimated at 1,021,400 barrels is generally sizing and colouring well. While the crop was not adversely affected by the dry weather in July the recent rains should be beneficial. Some dropping is reported in Gravensteins as a result of attacks by aphids and lack of proper thinning. The Crimson Beauty variety was ready for harvesting 10 days earlier than average.

The light crop in New Brunswick is 30 per cent smaller than that of a year ago. The fruit is reported to be a good size and colouring well and harvesting of the early varieties has commenced. The prospects for the Quebec crop remain unchanged since July. While some loss as a result of winds occurred in the Frelighsburg and St. Hilaire districts, the continued increase in size of fruit will compensate for the loss.

The outlook for the crop in Ontario has somewhat improved during the month of August. While the crop is now estimated at 492,000 barrels, an increase of five per cent over the July estimate, it is still 20 per cent below the 1941 crop of 614,900 barrels. Although the improvement in crop prospects is due mainly to the continued increase in the size of the fruit, a better "set" on the summer varieties, Baldwin, Stark and Wealthy in western Ontario than was first anticipated is a contributing factor. There has been no report of serious hail damage but heavy winds on August 20 and 21 brought down some fruit in the St. Lawrence Valley district. Apple scab continues to be quite serious throughout the province where timely sprays were not applied. Although codling moth damage has increased in Middlesex, Huron, Brant and Norfolk Counties, the infestation in eastern Ontario is less severe than in 1941.

The British Columbia crop prospects now indicate a harvest of 1,999,900 barrels, or about one-half million barrels more than was produced last year. The five-year (1936-40) average is 1,908,200 barrels. The development of both trees and fruit has been generally very satisfactory but colouring has been slower than usual due possibly to the hot, dry weather. In some sections where thinning has been badly carried out, many small apples are beginning to show up in the McIntosh variety. Picking of Duchess is nearing completion and Wealthies are beginning to move in carlot quantities.

PEARS: The Canadian pear crop is now indicated to be slightly larger than was reported in July. Total production is estimated at 558,400 bushels, an increase of 8 per cent over the 1941 crop of 517,000 bushels, and 3.6 per cent larger than the five-year (1936-40) average of 539,200 bushels.

Conditions during the month have been favourable for the continued development of the crop and increases over the July estimate in Nova Scotia, Ontario and British Columbia are recorded. The Nova Scotia crop showed a heavier "set" than was expected earlier in the season and this coupled with the rapid growth of the fruit has increased the prospects. The Ontario crop also improved during the month. The set of fruit especially of the Kieffer variety proved to be heavier than was indicated in July. The fruit is generally free from insect or disease damage and it is colouring and sizing exceptionally well. The continued good sizing of the British Columbia crop increased the prospects slightly during the month. Picking of the fruit in the Okanagan Valley is now well under way with Bartletts moving in volume.

PEACHES: The total peach crop is now estimated to be 990,500 bushels compared with the 1941 crop of 932,900 bushels and the five-year (1936-40) average of 703,300 bushels.

Prospects in Ontario and British Columbia, the only producing provinces, improved during the month. The upward revision in the July estimate for Ontario of 5 per cent brought the anticipated production in that province up to 721,000 bushels. Heavy crops are reported in the Niagara, Burlington, Essex and Middlesex districts but yields are lighter in Norfolk County where winter injury reduced the fruit buds. The fruit is growing rapidly and colouring well. While the crop is relatively free from insect or disease damage, ink spot is reported in Essex and Middlesex and brown rot is giving some cause for concern in the Niagara area. The bulk of the peaches now moving to market are of the "V" type.

The British Columbia estimate is now slightly higher at 269,500 bushels than at the end of July when the anticipated yield was set at 261,100 bushels. The current estimate is 15.7 per cent above the 1941 harvest. The size and the quality of the fruit is very good where proper thinning was carried out. The "V" types are now moving to market replacing the Rochester and Golden Jubilee which are past the peak.

PLUMS AND PRUNES: The plum and prune crop in Nova Scotia, Ontario and British Columbia is now estimated at 319,900 bushels, a decline of 1 per cent since July. The present estimate is 28.5 per cent smaller than the 1941 crop of 447,100 bushels but is 48.3 per cent larger than the five-year (1936-40) average of 215,700 bushels.

The Nova Scotia plum crop which makes up a small proportion of the total, matured earlier than usual and the size of the fruit was somewhat smaller than average especially the Burbank variety. The prospective yield, however, remained unchanged during the month. In Ontario a better "set" of fruit than was first anticipated and good sizing of the Japanese and European varieties improved the prospects approximately 17 per cent during the month. The prune crop, however, continues to be very light. Although brown rot is fairly common in many orchards, favourable weather until after the harvest and proper spraying may reduce the losses. The outlook in British Columbia is below that of a month ago as a result of the continued heavy "drop" of prunes in the Okanagan Valley. Italian prunes are now starting to move to market in volume.

APRICOTS: Commercial production of apricots is confined to British Columbia where the 1942 crop is estimated at 89,300 bushels. This year's crop is the second largest on record exceeded only by the very large crop in 1934. The yield is expected to be 41 per cent greater than that of a year ago when 63,300 bushels were produced, and 92 per cent greater than the five-year (1936-40) average of 46,400 bushels.

GRAPES: With continued favourable growing weather and absence of early frosts, the 1942 grape crop currently estimated at 70,334,000 pounds will be the largest on record. The crop this year is 49 per cent larger than the 47,151,300 pound crop produced in 1941 and is 59 per cent greater than the five-year (1936-40) average of 44,319,300 pounds.

The bulk of the crop amounting to 67,500,000 pounds is produced in south-western Ontario where the fruit is reported to be in excellent condition with practically no insect or disease damage in evidence. The bunches are compact and the berries of large size. Harvesting began in the earlier sections about the middle of August with the volume increasing rapidly towards the month's end. The British Columbia crop this year is estimated at 2,834,000 pounds, an increase of approximately 32 per cent over that of the year previous. The present crop is the largest on record for the province. The fruit is developing satisfactorily and although harvesting has begun the bulk of the fruit will not be picked until well into September.

VEGETABLES

The condition of vegetable crops across Canada is generally good although dry weather in Nova Scotia and eastern Ontario has somewhat reduced the prospects. The yields of onions in Ontario and British Columbia may be lower as a result of a serious infestation of powdery mildew.

All vegetable crops in Prince Edward Island are developing well and corn, tomatoes, cucumbers, carrots, beets and lettuce are now available in sufficient quantities to meet local demands. High temperatures and lack of rain during July and early August in Nova Scotia affected the corn, early potatoes and other vegetable crops grown on light soils. Sweet corn in the Kingston-Auburn-Aylesford district did not fill properly and ripened prematurely with under-sized ears. The tomato acreage is comparable in size with that of 1941. The crop ripened earlier than normal, but in the sandy areas the fruit is somewhat below average in size. Early potatoes on light land ripened prematurely and yielded approximately 50 per cent of the normal crop. In New Brunswick temperatures and moisture conditions were favourable to the development of all crops and prospects are promising. Tomatoes and peppers of excellent quality are now moving to market in volume and beets, carrots, corn, cucumbers and cabbage are beginning to appear in liberal quantities.

There is an abundant supply of all vegetables now on the Quebec markets. The tomato crop is at the peak of production but the canners are not operating yet. Some acreages have been ploughed under as the result of the heavy infestation of blossom end rot. The potato crop will be smaller than that of 1941 due to the dry weather which reduced the size of the tubers. Late blight is spreading rapidly and dealers are making only day to day purchases. The onion crop is developing well and in spite of a smaller acreage, the yield will be heavier than that of a year ago. Transplanted onions are now being harvested and the seeded crop will be ready to pull in about 10 days. The late cabbage crop is 40 per cent larger than that of 1941 and the plants continue to make excellent growth. The fall cauliflower crop, however, is about the same size as that of a year ago. The harvest is earlier than last season and should reach the peak in about two weeks. Beets and carrots will yield heavier crops than in 1941 as a result of the favourable growing weather. Sweet corn harvesting is now at the peak. Corn borer damage has been much less severe than a year ago. There is still ample supplies of head lettuce and this is the first time in many years that imported lettuce has not been required in August. Gaspe peas are arriving on the market in volume and the crop is expected to exceed that of last year.

The general condition of vegetables in Ontario is about average. In eastern Ontario, however, the tomato crop is badly in need of rain and many growers report that blight is developing in their fields. The crop is a week to 10 days later than last year. Very little processing has been done as yet but the factories are expected to be in full operation at the end of the month. The corn crop has greatly improved during the month but the yield is not expected to be as heavy as that of 1941.

In western Ontario recent weather conditions have been generally satisfactory for good development of all vegetables, with the probable exception of the south-western counties where hot, humid weather and intermittent rains was detrimental to such crops as cantaloupes, cucumbers and to a lesser extent tomatoes. Excessive moisture supplies earlier in the season resulted in a heavy infestation of powdery mildew on the onion tops in the Bradford Marsh area and production will be considerably reduced. Onions in the other main producing districts were unaffected and the quality of the crop is good although the bulbs are smaller in size than usual. The condition of the late potato crop is not as promising as it was a month ago. Leaf-hopper damage is reported in most districts and blight is prevalent in some areas. The condition of the canning corn crop is now satisfactory.

The vegetable crops in Manitoba, in general, remain from one to two weeks behind last year. This has been the case throughout the whole season as they were planted late and the weather has been very moist and cool and growth has not been rapid at any time. Light frosts occurred around Winnipeg over the weekend of August 23. It is a little early to determine how serious these frosts were, but it appears that only the tips of the foliage were seriously damaged. The vine crops have been the most severely affected. The cool, moist season was particularly favourable for such crops as cabbage and cauliflower. This, with the freedom from insect damage, has resulted in abundant yields. However, the weather conditions have brought both the early and late crops on the market at the same time so that supplies now exceed the present demand.

Both these crops are of excellent quality this season. The potato crop promises to be very good again this year. The season has been very favourable and yields have been high. Tomatoes are also an excellent crop with large quantities of green tomatoes being picked ath the present time. Sweet corn although rather late, is not on the market in quantity. Muskmellons and watermelons are also very late. The onion crop is progressing favourably and yields of both sets and pickling onions will be heavy. All the set crop has been pulled and is drying at the present.

On the whole the weather in Saskatchewan during the past month has been favourable for the growth of vegetables. Potato beetles and cabbage worms have been active in some areas but little damage has resulted. The potato crop is reported to be good over most of the province. Cucumbers and tomatoes, however, are very late. All vegetables are now available in British Columbia in quantity. With the sudden intense heat during the second and third week of August, shipments of semi-ripe tomatoes have been heavy. The onion harvest in the Okanagan Valley has begun but it is still too early to ascertain the probable yields. The serious epidemic of powdery mildew has affected many onion fields throughout the district and this may reduce the size of the bulbs and lower the expected yields.

August Estimates of the 1942 Fruit Crops in Canada, by Provinces, Compared with the Final Estimate for 1941

	1941		1942
		barrels	
Apples -			
Nova Scotia	1,148,000		1,021,400
New Brunswick	67,000		46,900
Quebec	255,600		331,000
Ontario	614,900		492,000
British Columbia	1,492,900		1,999,900
Total	3,578,400		3,891,200
		bushels	
Pears -			
Nova Scotia	17,400		21,700
Ontario	167,200		201,100
British Columbia	332,400		335,600
Total	517,000		558,400
Plums & Prunes -			
Nova Scotia	5,500		8,000
Ontario	143,500		105,300
British Columbia	298,100		206,600
Total	447,100		319,900
Peaches -			
Ontario	700,000		721,000
British Columbia	232,900		269,500
Total	932,900		990,500
Apricots -			
British Columbia	63,300		89,300
Total	63,300		89,300
		pounds	
Grapes -			
Ontario	45,000,000		67,500,000
British Columbia	2,151,300		2,834,000
Total	47,151,300		70,334,000