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Dominion Statistician:

S. A. Cudmore, M.A. (Oxon.), F.S.S., F.R.S.C.

Acting Chief, Agricultural Branch:

Ian S. McArthur, M.Sc.

Statistician:

R. E. Johnson, M.Sc.

FRUIT AND VEGETABLE CROP REPORT

Ottawa, May 27, 1944. - 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.

SUMMARY

The outlook for the 1944 fruit crops is at present bright. While it is still too early to predict the probable harvest accurately, generally speaking, the prospects are very favourable. In the Maritime Provinces the orchards came through the winter in excellent condition and the spring weather to date has been satisfactory for growth and early spraying, but rain would now be welcome. Some injury to early blossoms in old strawberry plantations were touched by late frost, but the damage will not reduce the crop. In Quebec the prospects are for an apple crop equal to that of the 1943 season. Frosts during the middle of the month affected the bloom in some orchards, but the damage is not extensive. Strawberry and raspberry plantations are in good condition. While some early bloom was affected by the frost during the month, the main crop was not touched. The outlook for the tree fruits in Ontario is average to excellent. Although the early apple varieties are somewhat below average, the main crop is expected to be normal. The prospects for the stone fruits and pears are very favourable. The peach trees in the Niagara district carried very heavy loads of bloom. The strawberry crop is expected to be average or slightly below; winter killing in the eastern area of the province and reduced plant numbers in Western Ontario are the contributing factors. Raspberries and grapes are still not far enough advanced to indicate the crop prospects, but plantations are making satisfactory growth. Judging by the bloom in the orchards in British Columbia, there is likely to be a record crop of all fruits. All districts report a heavy bloom on all kinds. Although rainfall has been light, showers during the latter part of the month have been beneficial. The outlook for strawberries is about the same as a year ago, but it is still too early to predict the raspberry harvest.

For the country as a whole, there appears to be a general increase in the vegetable acreage planted this season. Information on the prospects for the crops in the Maritime Provinces is still meagre, but weather conditions have been satisfactory for seeding and planting operations. In Quebec, despite some frost injury there appears to be a general increase in acreage of both fresh market and processing vegetables. The weather has been ideal for planting and growth, and the condition of the crops is better than average. In Ontario all crops are average to better than average in condition and an increase in the acreage of the four major canning crops, peas, beans, corn and tomatoes, is indicated. In British Columbia an increase in acreage is also reported. This is especially the case for onions, tomatoes and cabbage.

FRUIT

Apples

In Prince Edward Island the trees wintered fairly well and the only damage reported is pith injury in one year old wood. The girdling of young unprotected trees by mice has been quite serious. In Nova Scotia the weather during the winter and early spring months was normal, but with the coming of spring there has been a decided lack of rainfall. Soil moisture conditions, however, are still satisfactory. Winter injury is confined chiefly to rodent damage, which is light except in a few scattered orchards. Present development is satisfactory and although it is still too early to estimate the prospects with certainty, a normal harvest is anticipated. Extensive spraying is being done this season despite the severe labour shortage. In New Brunswick the trees wintered very well, but it is still too early to indicate the crop as the trees are just in the pre-pink stage. In Quebec the prospects are about the same as they were last year. While some damage is reported as a result of the frost on the nights of May 17 and 18, there are still enough blossoms to give a crop equal to that of 1943. In Eastern Ontario, with the exception of some mice damage in sod orchards, little winter injury is reported. Trees are in good condition and with the exception of a few

orchards that had heavy crops last year, there will be an average crop of fall and winter varieties. Ben Davis and Gano, however, are reported to be light in Durham County. The bloom is well advanced and Snow and McIntosh were in full bloom on May 24. In Western Ontario the trees are generally in good condition with no winter or spring injury apparent and rodent damage less than usual. Although the bloom indications are irregular, in general early varieties are expected to be below average while fall and winter varieties will have average crops. The British Columbia prospects are excellent for all varieties. There has been no frost injury reported. Rainfall has been light, but rains in all districts on May 14 and 15 have materially improved conditions.

Pears

Orchards in Nova Scotia came through the winter in excellent condition. Moisture, however, is below normal. It is still too early to estimate the crop in this district. In Eastern Ontario no winter injury is reported. Insect and disease damage are at a minimum and most varieties are now in full bloom. Judging by the amount of bloom, the crop should be excellent. The prospects in Western Ontario are also exceptionally good. All varieties in the main producing areas have a heavy show of bloom. The first blossoms were reported on May 11, while the trees in most districts were in full bloom by May 16. The prospects in British Columbia are also excellent. The bloom has been heavy and the weather during the blossoming period was satisfactory for pollination.

Plums and Prunes

The Nova Scotia plum crop is expected to be average or slightly above average. In Eastern Ontario trees are now in full bloom and indications are for a crop of about average size, except in Durham County. The severe frost during the middle of the month may have done some damage, however. There was a good display of bloom of all varieties in the main producing areas in Western Ontario, and the crop prospects are very favourable. As in the case of the other tree fruits in British Columbia, the outlook for plums and prunes is generally excellent.

Cherries

The trees in Eastern Ontario wintered well except in some orchards in Durham County. The bloom was heavy, but damage may result from the frosts on the nights of May 17 to 19. In Western Ontario, except for the accumulated damage caused by the winter and spring injury of the winter of 1942-43, trees are generally in healthy condition; only slight frost damage is reported in a few localized areas. The amount of bloom in the main producing areas was average to above average. The British Columbia orchards all carried very heavy loads of bloom and are showing no winter injury. Although it is too early to predict yields, a heavy crop is looked for. Some areas, however, indicate an irregular setting of the fruit.

Peaches

The bloom in the Niagara district of Ontario—the largest producing area—was exceptionally heavy. The condition of the trees is generally good except in sections where trees were weakened by the severe weather in 1942-43. A few orchards in Elgin and Oxford Counties reported winter killing of the buds. The British Columbia orchards bloomed heavily and expectations are for a better-than-average crop.

Apricots

British Columbia is the only commercial producing province and the bloom in this district was heavy and the fruit has set well. An excellent crop is anticipated.

Strawberries

Little or no winter injury is reported in Nova Scotia plantations and the beds are looking exceptionally healthy. Late frosts damaged some bloom in the old plantations, but new plantings were untouched. The crop is not expected to be affected. The New Brunswick plantations are also in healthy condition and although the weather this spring has been generally favourable, rain is now much needed. In Quebec there are prospects of a good crop. There has been satisfactory growth and although some early blooms were damaged by frost during the middle of the month, the main crop was unaffected. The outlook in Eastern Ontario is for a below-average harvest. Uncovered beds were damaged extensively during the winter, materially reducing the producing area. While there is practically no winter injury in evidence and plantations are in healthy condition in Western Ontario, the rows are narrow and there are many misses. Plant numbers are estimated at approximately 75 per cent of the 1943 population. With favourable weather, however, production should be about 10 per cent below last year's

crop. In British Columbia crop prospects are about the same as last year. On Vancouver Island, plantations are in healthier condition than in 1943, but the acreage may be slightly reduced. On the Lower Mainland growth has been very satisfactory and present indications are that the crop will be larger than that of last year. In the interior growth has been good but due to low moisture supplies, the harvest is not expected to show an increase over that of the previous season.

Raspberries

No winter or spring damage to the canes occurred in the Maritimes or Quebec. It is still too early to predict the probable crop in these districts, but the plantations are in very healthy condition. In Eastern Ontario the prospects are for an average crop. In Western Ontario, except in Norfolk County, where killing back was fairly heavy, winter damage is only normal and the present crop prospects are good. The British Columbia crop is expected to be slightly larger than that of last year. Some districts reported killing back of the canes, but on the whole the plantations are in excellent condition.

Grapes

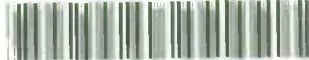
The vineyards in Western Ontario, the main producing area, have come through the winter with practically no injury in evidence. Although it is still too early to estimate the probable harvest, the vines are at present making excellent growth.

VEGETABLES

Generally speaking, conditions have been exceptionally good for planting and seeding of the vegetable crops in all the main producing areas. Some early market garden produce was caught by the frost on the nights of May 17 and 18 in Quebec, and will have to be replanted, but on the whole damage was not serious enough to affect the final harvest. The canning crops were untouched as only peas were in the ground. Early potatoes in the south-shore district were slightly affected but no permanent injury will result. Hot-bed lettuce will be on the market in heavy volume by June 6. Field lettuce is in excellent condition and a large crop is anticipated. Hot-bed cucumbers are now beginning to move into consumption and spinach, which is developing rapidly, will be harvested in quantity about June 12. Onions will be a large crop this year as will early cabbage and cauliflower. In Eastern Ontario there has been too much rain and the weather has been cool and backward, although conditions were not as unsatisfactory as they were last season. All commercial plantings are in much better shape than at the same time a year ago. The frost during the nights of May 17 and 19 did considerable damage in many sections. There is a decided increase in the pea, corn and tomato acreages intended for the canners. Although cool, wet weather in some districts delayed early seeding and planting in Western Ontario, recent conditions have been satisfactory and growth has been excellent. At present, the condition of all crops is average to slightly above average and harvesting is expected to be a week or ten days earlier than in 1943. In the Northern Ontario and Head of the Lakes area there has been practically no seeding or planting, due to low temperatures and wet soil conditions. The processing acreages now indicate an increase in tomatoes and possibly a slight increase in peas, corn and beans.

Condition of Ontario Vegetable Crops on May 22

<u>Kind</u>	<u>Eastern Ontario</u>	<u>Western Ontario</u>
Asparagus	above average	average
Beans, snap	average	average
Beets, bunching	average	average
Cabbage, early	average	average
Cauliflower, early	average	average
Carrots, bunching	average	average
Corn, sweet	average	average
Lettuce	above average	average
Onions, dry and bunching	above average	average
Peas	above average	average
Potatoes, early	above average	average
Spinach	average	average
Tomatoes	above average	average



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In Saskatchewan out-of-door planting of vegetables was general from May 1 to May 15. No frost was reported to date, with the season a week earlier than last year. Growth of radishes, lettuce, onions and peas is good. There is no increase in the acreage reported in gardens except in the central districts. In British Columbia there is a general increase in the acreage of the main vegetable crops, particularly onions, cabbages and **tomatoes**. The area intended for canners has been especially increased. Most of the cool-weather crops are now in the ground and making rapid growth.

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