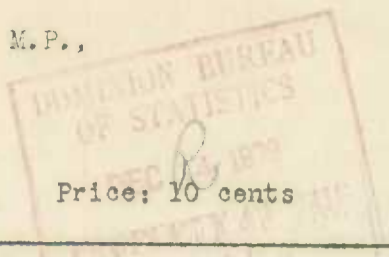


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THE 1939 CANADIAN HONEY CROP

Ottawa, December 13, 1939, 4 P.M. - The Dominion Bureau of Statistics in cooperation with the Dominion and Provincial Departments of Agriculture issues today a preliminary report on honey production in Canada in 1939.

Production

The preliminary estimate of the 1939 honey crop shows a total production of 27,911,500 pounds as compared with the revised estimate of 37,819,900 pounds in 1938. While this represents a decrease of 9,908,400 pounds or 26.2 per cent from the record production of the previous year, it is slightly higher than the average production during the five-year period 1933-1937 estimated at 26,860,000 pounds.

Although the 1939 Ontario crop was smaller by 5 million pounds than the 1938 crop of 16.3 million pounds it represented more than 40 per cent of the total for Canada. The Manitoba crop, estimated at 5.5 million pounds, was little more than half of the 1938 crop. Smaller crops were produced in all provinces except Prince Edward Island and Saskatchewan. Production in the latter province showed an increase of 25 per cent over the 1938 crop and reached a new high, estimated at 3.5 million pounds.

The distribution of the 1939 honey production in pounds, by provinces in order of magnitude, follows, with the revised estimates for 1938 within brackets: Ontario 11,300,000 (16,300,000); Manitoba 5,500,000 (9,539,900); Quebec 4,451,400 (5,108,200); Saskatchewan 3,500,000 (2,794,200); Alberta 2,000,000 (2,418,000); British Columbia 1,004,900 (1,584,100); New Brunswick 82,800 (90,100); Nova Scotia 60,000 (64,100); Prince Edward Island 12,400 (11,300).

Comparative data for the ten-year period 1930 to 1939 are shown in the tables which follow:

Table I.

Total Production of Honey in Canada, 1930 to 1939

	<u>Pounds</u>
1930	24,486,500
1931	25,106,400
1932	21,169,300
1933	25,287,800
1934	27,062,800
1935	26,814,800
1936	31,938,100
1937	23,196,600
1938	37,819,900 ^{1/}
1939	27,911,500 _{2/}
Ten-year average, 1928-37	25,045,000
Five-year average, 1933-37	26,860,000

1/ Revised, November 1939.

2/ Preliminary, November 1939.

Table II.

Preliminary Estimates of Canadian Honey Production, by Provinces, 1939
as compared with Revised Estimates for 1938.

Province	1938	1939	Increase (+) or Decrease (-) compared with 1938	% Increase over 1938
	lb.	lb.	lb.	%
Prince Edward Island	11,300	12,400	+ 1,100	+ 9.73
Nova Scotia	64,100	60,000	- 4,100	- 6.39
New Brunswick	90,100	82,800	- 7,300	- 8.10
Quebec	5,108,200	4,451,400	- 656,800	- 12.86
Ontario	16,300,000	11,300,000	- 5,000,000	- 30.67
Manitoba	9,539,900	5,500,000	- 4,039,900	- 42.34
Saskatchewan	2,794,200	3,500,000	+ 705,800	+ 25.26
Alberta	2,418,000	2,000,000	- 418,000	- 17.29
British Columbia	1,584,100	1,004,900	- 579,200	- 36.56
CANADA	37,819,900	27,911,500	- 9,908,400	- 26.20

THE 1939 HONEY SEASON

Maritime Provinces- The honey season was extremely dry for the most part, and the usual fall honey flow was almost completely cut off in Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island. Production in the central areas of New Brunswick was affected by continuous drought from July to September, but in the northern areas and the marsh lands in the eastern part of the province conditions were very favourable for honey production. Although the dry weather considerably reduced the volume of the crop, the lack of moisture resulted in a crop of fine quality honey.

Quebec- Winter losses of bees were not above normal but spring feeding was moderately heavy owing to adverse weather conditions and a dearth of early clover bloom. The buckwheat crop flowered earlier this year and at almost the same time as the clover with the result that instead of two distinct crops of light and dark honey the product this year is generally a uniform amber colour. Although production, particularly of white honey, is considerably less than in 1938, the crop is of good quality.

Ontario- The quality of the 1939 crop is below average. This has been brought about largely by a slow irregular yield during the latter part of the main honey flow and the fact that the bees gathered considerable honeydew during the early part of the season, resulting in a darker and stronger-flavoured product. The density is not so great as in the 1938 crop and therefore the keeping qualities of the crop will not be as good. The below-average quality of the light honey crop was the result of a cold backward spring followed by hot dry weather early in July. Lack of general rains resulted in a wide variety of yields in different apiaries relatively close together. The buckwheat crop was also below average and was in fact almost a complete failure in many districts. While the crop in Old Ontario was considerably lighter than in the previous year a splendid crop was harvested in Northern Ontario.

The Prairie Provinces- Combined honey production in the three provinces is estimated at 11.0 million pounds as compared with the final estimate of 14.8 million pounds in 1938. This represents a decrease of 4.8 million pounds, most of which was due to the short crop in Manitoba. A large proportion of the honey crop in this province depends on the second crop of sweet clover but as a result of very hot weather immediately following the cutting of the first crop there was no second growth as is usual in a normal season. Colonies were much stronger at the beginning of the season than in former years, partly due to good wintering and partly to early deliveries of package bees which arrived in excellent condition. The first crop of clover was luxuriant and early prospects promising, but later developments were disappointing. On the whole the quality of the 1939 crop is not as high as in the previous year.

The upward trend of production in Saskatchewan was maintained and another record crop of excellent quality was produced in 1939. Colonies built up well during the spring, and generally speaking were in excellent condition by early July. Unfortunately the weather in the southern half of the province was very dry for

the remainder of the summer and less than the average honey crop was secured from this area. Plenty of warm weather and rain in the northern district resulted in a bumper crop. The total production for the year was considerably higher than in 1938, due to the fact that the number of colonies increased materially and the average production was higher than in previous years.

Dry weather reduced the volume of the crop in Alberta at least 25 per cent below normal. A late spring, a large number of weak colonies in July, followed by hot dry weather during August were the contributing factors in this decreased production. On the other hand, the crop was of excellent quality and the bulk of it would classify as White No. 1.

British Columbia- The winter of 1938-39 was favourable to bees in that no extremes or wide fluctuations of temperature disturbed the even clustering of wintered-over colonies, resulting in a minimum of winter loss and light consumption of stores. Spring brood rearing started early with conditions favourable throughout the province. Bees were able to gather nectar beginning with the early willows and continuing with hardly a check through dandelion, maple and fruit bloom. By the end of May, colonies already averaged a surplus of 40 to 60 pounds of honey with prospects for a record crop.

Cool and cloudy weather in June, with intermittent fine days, checked these favourable conditions and induced excessive swarming. The latter part of June and nearly all of July continued cloudy and wet, the worst possible conditions during the months when the main honey flows are usually obtained. Many swarms, with no reserves of stores, died of starvation in July, and other colonies were so weakened that recovery was impossible in time to secure a fair surplus from the later honey sources on the Lower Mainland and coast districts. The latter part of summer was hot and dry and a light surplus was obtained in firewood areas. In the Interior, or dry belt, conditions were not so serious, as crops depending on irrigation, such as alfalfa and sweet clover, yielded nectar freely during the latter part of the season, resulting in fair to normal crops in most districts. The total honey crop for the province was, therefore, about 65 per cent of normal, totalling 1 million pounds as compared with 1.6 million pounds in 1938.

PRICES AND MARKETS

Honey prices during the fall of 1939 have averaged three or four cents higher than during the same period in the previous year. With only a small carry-over from 1938 and a smaller crop in 1939, prices tended to rise slightly during the early part of the marketing season. The temporary sugar shortage in September also resulted in an increase in demand and the 1939 crop moved into consumption at a rapid rate. Following the sugar shortage and because no licenses were being issued for export there was a temporary lull in the movement of honey and prices tended downward. When the restrictions on importations of honey into the United Kingdom were lifted in November, there was a sharp increase in demand and a firming of prices on both domestic and export markets. Prices for Canadian honey in the United Kingdom are now averaging 55s. per cwt. of 112 pounds as compared with a range of 37s. to 40s. in the fall of 1938 and 50s. to 57s. for the same period in 1937.

The bulk of the exports of Canadian honey go to the United Kingdom, and in 1938 accounted for 41 per cent of the total imports into that country as compared with 23 per cent in 1937. Of a total of 5.5 million pounds of honey exported from Canada during the crop year ended July 31, 1939, as compared with 2.8 million pounds in the previous year, some 4.7 million pounds or 85 per cent went to the United Kingdom. Owing to the temporary embargo on imports of honey into the United Kingdom during the early weeks of the war and the difficulty in securing shipping space after the restrictions were lifted, exports during the three months September to November 1939 totalled only 628,871 pounds of which only 102,934 pounds went to the United Kingdom as compared with 2,072,463 pounds out of a total of 2,308,294 pounds exported during the corresponding period in 1938.



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