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In Charge of Apicultural Statistics:

R. H. Coats, LL.D., F.R.S.C.
Margaret E. MacLellan, B.A.

PRODUCTION AND VALUE OF HONEY AND BEESWAX

1924 TO 1938.

Ottawa, May 15, 1939.- This report contains statistical data on apiculture including estimates of the numbers of beekeepers and apiaries, the production of honey, and the value of honey and beeswax in Canada for the years 1924 to 1938. These data have been revised in cooperation with the Dominion and the Provincial Departments of Agriculture. While data for the earlier years are incomplete these revised estimates present a reasonably accurate picture of the general trend of honey production over the past fifteen years.

Production

Honey production is steadily increasing in Canada. The revised estimate of the 1938 crop shows a production of 37,268,700 pounds as compared with 23,196,600 pounds in 1937 and 16,839,800 pounds in 1924, the earliest year for which estimates for all provinces are available. The 1938 crop was not only of record proportions but was also of very good quality. The largest proportion of this production was in Ontario where a record crop estimated at 15,708,000 pounds of better-than-average quality honey was harvested. As evidence of the expansion which has taken place in this industry in the past fifteen years, the Ontario crop alone in 1938 was practically equal to the entire Canadian production in 1924. While production has increased in all provinces, except Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, expansion since 1924 has been most marked in the Prairie Provinces. The combined production in these three provinces in 1924 amounted to 785,300 pounds. In 1938, production totalled 14,752,100 pounds. Honey produced in western Canada is of generally high quality due to the abundance of sweet clover in the Prairie Provinces. The almost phenomenal expansion in production in these provinces has been largely due to the introduction of sweet clover and the expansion in acreage of this crop.

Numbers of beekeepers and colonies have shown a gradual increase since 1924. This increase has been sharply marked in the Prairie Provinces, where there were over 8,000 beekeepers in 1938 reporting 97,000 colonies as compared with less than 2,000 beekeepers and 14,000 colonies in 1924. Numbers in all provinces totalled 27,400 beekeepers and 394,000 colonies in 1938 as compared with 22,200 beekeepers and 282,000 colonies in 1924.

Production of honey in 1938, totalling 37,268,700 pounds, was distributed by provinces in order of magnitude as follows, with the estimates for the 1937 crop within brackets: Ontario 15,708,000 (8,000,000); Manitoba 9,539,900 (6,748,600); Quebec 5,108,200 (3,588,700); Saskatchewan 2,794,200 (1,142,500); Alberta 2,418,000 (2,160,000); British Columbia 1,584,100 (1,427,500); Nova Scotia 55,000 (46,100); New Brunswick 50,000 (67,000); Prince Edward Island 11,300 (16,200).

The production of beeswax in 1938 was estimated at 446,850 pounds as compared with 286,650 pounds in 1937.

Prices

While production of honey has more than doubled during the past fifteen years, prices have declined during the same period. The average price received by producers for the 1938 crop was estimated at 7.8 cents per pound as compared with 9.0 cents per pound in 1937 and 12.4 cents per pound in 1924. Total value of production, including beeswax, was estimated at \$3,027,400 for the 1938 crop as compared with \$2,163,700 in 1937 and \$2,183,100 in 1924.

Average prices paid to producers for the 1938 honey crop in cents per pound, with comparative estimates of prices for the 1936 and 1924 crops respectively within brackets are as follows: Prince Edward Island 12 (12, 16); Nova Scotia 14 (16, 16); New Brunswick 14 (17, 15); Quebec 10 (10, 16); Ontario 7 (9, 10); Manitoba 6.5 (7, 25); Saskatchewan 8.5 (9, 21); Alberta 7 (7.5, 25); British Columbia 15 (15, 22).

The total value of honey and wax, estimated at \$3,027,400 in 1938, was distributed by provinces in order of magnitude as follows, with the corresponding estimates for 1937 within brackets: Ontario \$1,157,100 (\$753,100); Manitoba \$655,000 (\$517,200); Quebec \$529,500 (\$373,700); British Columbia \$243,400 (\$219,900); Saskatchewan \$247,700 (\$107,600); Alberta \$178,200 (\$170,900); Nova Scotia \$7,900 (\$7,600); New Brunswick \$7,200 (\$11,700); Prince Edward Island \$1,400 (\$2,000).

Marketing

Reports indicate that at least 70 per cent of the Ontario crop of 1938 is now out of the hands of the beekeepers. Movement of Ontario honey interprovincially will be at least normal and it is expected that the export market will absorb a little more than normal. Prior to 1921 Ontario was practically the only province in which production was in excess of local requirements and the surplus was readily absorbed by the other provinces. Increased production in the western provinces has resulted in the development of export markets. Exports, particularly to the United Kingdom, have shown a steady increase from 1,721,965 pounds during the honey crop year ending July 31, 1926 to 2,842,923 pounds during the year ending July 31, 1938. Nearly all western Canadian honey is used as a table product. Manitoba honey is sold in all the western provinces. Normally it does not move eastward, except in the case of a poor crop in the East as in 1938, because prices in Ontario are generally lower. Saskatchewan and British Columbia do not as yet produce sufficient honey to meet local requirements and the surplus production in Alberta finds a market in these two provinces. The 1938 Alberta crop moved into market channels rapidly and, although prices were not as high as in previous years, all large lots were in the hands of the wholesalers by the end of November. Prices quoted for British Columbia are relatively higher than for the other provinces as there are very few commercial producers in this province and only a small proportion of the crop reaches the wholesale market.

Statistical data on which this report is based are shown in the following tables. Production of honey in 1937 and 1938 is shown by provinces in Table 1. Numbers of beekeepers and hives, production and prices of honey, and values of honey and beeswax for the years 1924 to 1938 are shown in Table 2. This information is published in detail by provinces in the "Monthly Bulletin of Agricultural Statistics, March 1939."

Table 1.

Revised Estimates of Canadian Honey Production, by Provinces, 1938 as compared with 1937.

Province	1937	1938	Increase (+) or Decrease (-) compared with 1937
	lb.	lb.	lb.
Prince Edward Island	16,200	11,300	- 4,900
Nova Scotia	46,100	55,000	+ 8,900
New Brunswick	67,000	50,000	- 17,000
Quebec	3,588,700	5,108,200	+ 1,519,500
Ontario	8,000,000	15,708,000	+ 7,708,000
Manitoba	6,748,600	9,539,900	+ 2,791,300
Saskatchewan	1,142,500	2,794,200	+ 1,651,700
Alberta	2,160,000	2,418,000	+ 258,000
British Columbia	1,427,500	1,584,100	+ 156,600
CANADA	23,196,600	37,268,700	+ 14,072,100

Table 2.

Numbers of Beekeepers and Hives, Production of Honey and Value of Honey
and Beeswax in Canada, by Provinces, 1924 to 1938.

	Beekeepers	Colonies	Honey -			Total value of honey and wax
			Average production per hive	Total production	Average farm value	
	No.	No.	lb.	lb.	cents per lb.	\$
1924	22,200	282,000	60	16,839,800	12.4	2,183,100
1925	22,600	309,400	65	19,977,400	12.1	2,527,300
1926	22,300	307,500	63	19,525,600	12.3	2,520,300
1927	22,800	323,800	72	23,230,800	11.8	2,882,300
1928	22,700	335,700	66	22,224,600	11.0	2,555,600
1929	22,300	345,900	67	23,163,800	9.2	2,228,200
1930	24,200	362,100	68	24,486,500	8.3	2,133,600
1931	24,000	350,500	72	25,106,400	8.0	2,095,200
1932	24,600	349,300	61	21,169,300	7.5	1,663,200
1933	23,100	328,200	77	25,287,800	8.6	2,256,900
1934	24,300	328,400	82	27,062,800	9.2	2,574,700
1935	24,800	357,000	75	26,814,800	8.3	2,337,500
1936	26,300	370,800	86	31,938,100	8.5	2,822,900
1937	27,900	386,400	60	23,196,600	9.0	2,163,700
1938	27,400	393,900	95	37,268,700	7.8	3,027,400



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TABLE 1. Summary of the results of the 1981 Census of Canada, by province and territory

TABLE 1. Résumé des résultats du recensement de 1981, par province et territoire

Province and territory		Province et territoire		Total		Total	
Province	Territory	Province	Territory	Province	Territory	Province	Territory
Alberta		Alberta		Alberta		Alberta	
British Columbia		British Columbia		British Columbia		British Columbia	
Manitoba		Manitoba		Manitoba		Manitoba	
Ontario		Ontario		Ontario		Ontario	
Quebec		Quebec		Quebec		Quebec	
Saskatchewan		Saskatchewan		Saskatchewan		Saskatchewan	
Atlantic		Atlantic		Atlantic		Atlantic	
Northwest Territories		Northwest Territories		Northwest Territories		Northwest Territories	
Yukon		Yukon		Yukon		Yukon	
Nunavut		Nunavut		Nunavut		Nunavut	