

has been most vulnerable to adverse conditions, as it relies almost wholly on pastures for feed-supply, and shortage of labour has a physical reaction on the number of cows which can be handled.

A comprehensive review of performance during the war period calls for appreciation of achievement rather than for pessimism. The structure of primary industries is sound. Breeding-ewes are at a high level; the position of breeding-cows of beef types is good, and dairy stock, though depleted, can be increased on sound breeding lines within a few years. Mechanization of all industries has been maintained on a satisfactory basis.

OBJECTIVES

Continuous pressure from the United Kingdom and United States of America for an increased volume of foodstuffs has necessitated a review of the Dominion's potentialities. The Government, in consultation with representatives of the respective industries, has given target figures for 1944-45 for dairy-produce and pig-meats, and tentative objectives have been set for various cash crops. The target for butterfat is set at 180,000 tons, and it is felt that under normal weather conditions this figure will be reached, if not exceeded. It is known that additional cows will be milked, and producers have expressed their intention of exerting every effort to meet the requirements of the United Kingdom and our Allies. It is expected that pig-meats will be increased by 5,000 tons to 8,000 tons, and a token increase of 10 per cent. is aimed at in overall meat-production. There will be an endeavour to increase grain, seed, and pulse crops, but it is feared that we shall still have to rely on Australia for a proportion of our internal needs of wheat and barley.

The Department of Agriculture must continue its activities in the production of vegetables for export to the Armed Forces in the Pacific, and the "Dig for Victory" campaign will be continued in an endeavour to supplement local market requirements.

Direct action has been taken by the Government to counteract two factors which tend to retard production—namely, labour and fertilizer shortages. Men are being drafted from the Pacific Division for work on farms and in allied industries, and it is already assured that no farm need be understaffed for the forthcoming season.

The Combined Food Board in Washington has accepted the recommendation of the Fertilizer Committee in London, and phosphate-supplies representing an increase of 50 per cent. over 1943-44 have been allocated. This increase is to be used for priority crops and as a direct allocation on the basis of cows to be milked. Further incentive has been provided in the form of cash payment on products, and a subsidy will be paid on crops grown specifically for pig-feeding.

The National Council of Primary Production and its subsidiary District Councils and Committees have given consistent backing to the Hon. the Minister of Agriculture and his Department, and the forthcoming season is awaited with every confidence that past efforts of primary producers will be maintained and that results will exceed expectations.

E. J. FAWCETT, Director-General.

ACCOUNTS DIVISION

REPORT OF L. C. SCOTT, ACCOUNTANT

Net expenditure for 1943-44 was estimated to require £990,088, an increase of £54,088 on the 1942-43 estimated requirement. The aims were to meet the usual grants and subsidies; maintain inspectional services to control quality in produce for sale, to restrict diseases and pests, and to ensure healthy conditions in crop and animal life; afford essential advisory aids to agricultural industry; and to assist directly a vegetable-production programme. The increase in anticipated net expenditure was attributable to keen continuous inquiry for advisory aids, coupled with an expanded vegetable programme—the latter as a tangible aid to production, in contrast with the advisory aids, which must always be assessed as of a value somewhat intangible in character.

The year was cleared with a net expenditure of £1,017,400, an overexpenditure of £27,312.

Actually, gross revenue exceeded the estimate by about £20,000, there being a general buoyancy in credits from all sources except those relating to dairying. On the other hand, gross expenditure exceeded the estimates by approximately £47,000, of which lime and fertilizer carriage assistance called for £37,000, leaving "unders" and "overs" to give rise to the remaining £10,000. In this latter connection the main increases in expenditure centred on vegetable-production and advisory aids to general agricultural industry.