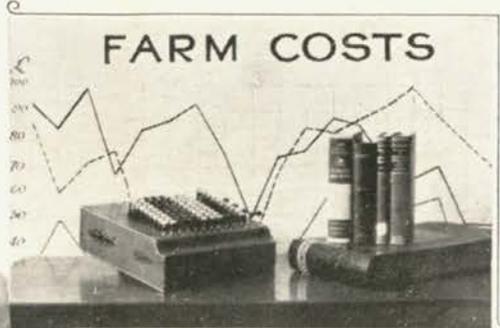


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Review of



Marketing and

Agricultural Economics

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DIVISION OF MARKETING
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REVIEW OF MARKETING AND AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS.

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VEGETABLE CONSUMPTION AND DIETARY STANDARDS.

It is well-known that during the war years Australia more than doubled her acreage under vegetables, and that this was made possible partly through the contract system which ensured guaranteed prices for at least portion of the vegetables grown; partly through the great increase in establishment of processing plants; and partly through the great strides in mechanisation of vegetable production. There was naturally a great impetus resulting from the National need, but these three factors were of considerable importance in stimulating increased acreages. Producers are now asking to what extent vegetable production must be reduced, as Service demands have receded since the close of hostilities.

Excluding potatoes and blue peas, the average area of vegetables harvested in Australia during the period 1934 to 1939 was 96,400 acres. In the period 1943/44, however, the area harvested was 191,936 acres, although the total area estimated to have been sown was 219,294 acres. It has been further estimated that in this 1943/44 period the area harvested for civilian consumption was 121,500 acres, the balance being used for the Services.

Based on the standards of the Commonwealth Nutrition Committee, it is estimated that the area required to be sown to vegetables in Australia to ensure optimum consumption by civilians of fresh vegetables would be 149,670 acres, by far the greater area being devoted to French beans, green peas, tomatoes, carrots and onions. This figure of 149,670 acres represents a great increase over the area actually sown to vegetables in the pre-war years, and also over that estimated to have been harvested in 1943/44 for civilian consumption.

It is apparent that a great deal more needs to be done in fostering increased consumption of vegetables, even if only to ensure that the National diet is on the basis that it should be. And that would lessen the need for drastic curtailment of present acreages, considered by many to be inevitable in the near future.

H. J. Hynes
Chief of Division.