

# Crops Recover

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goes into storage around November, and retail prices typically rise as supplies are reduced. Last season, however, the shortage of apples for the fresh market - and especially for processing - caused an abnormally large retail price increase. By May 1974, prices were more than 30 percent above those of a year earlier.

Despite the price rise, Canadian apple consumption continues its long-term uptrend. Currently, a gain of 7 percent to around 595 million pounds is seen for consumption of fresh apples in 1974-75.

Canadian production of pears this year has rebounded even more sharply - some 32 percent - than that of apples. Current estimates place the crop at 87.1 million pounds, com-

pared with 66 million last year. However, this is still below the 90.9 million and 94.8 million pounds in 1972 and 1971, respectively.

Virtually all of the 1974 gain took place in Ontario, where output more than doubled the 1973 level to around 41 million pounds. The other major producer - British Columbia - had a crop of about 44 million pounds, slightly less than that of 1973.

This year's larger crop will allow Canada's pear exports to recover to around 2.5 million pounds in 1974-75 from the low 703,000 of 1973-74. This would about equal shipment in each of the 2 previous years.

Also as a result of increased production, imports of fresh pears can be expected to drop back to about

Commercial nurserymen and vegetable producers picked up some useful new production ideas and market predictions at the recent meeting of the Peninsula Horticulture Society in Princess Anne, Maryland.

Reporting on the meeting, Derby Walker, Jr., assistant agricultural agent for Sussex county, says there will be several shortages of basic chemicals used in the nursery and commercial vegetable industries in 1975. One of the most notable of these will be a 10 to 20 percent reduction in the supply of Dacthal from last year. This herbicide is used extensively in establishing strawberries, as well as on nursery crops. Another chemical, Planavin (commonly used on cucumbers,

50 million pounds in 1974-75 from the 61.6 million of 1973-74.

Unlike apples, domestic consumption of fresh pears has been adversely affected by last season's shortfall and attendant high prices. Current estimates place consumption of fresh pears in 1974-75 at 97.1 million pounds for a slight decline from the 101.8 million of 1973-74. At the same time, more pears will probably go into processing than in 1973-74.

Based on dispatch from Office of U.S. Agricultural Attache, Ottawa

peppers and other vegetables), will no longer be available at all, as the company that makes it has stopped its production.

Walker says, though, that even with certain chemicals being in short supply, there are others that are adequate substitutes for them. He recommends growers check with their local suppliers regarding changes they may have to make.

On the other hand, there's good news for greenhouse operators and nurserymen who've been having trouble getting plastic trays and similar items. Not only are supplies of these materials good now, but one company that produces them predicts that their prices will be coming down in 1975. The same company predicts that plastic trays will replace peat pots in packing bedding plants for sale.

Among useful new ideas for commercial vegetable growers was a report on a new system for raising tomato transplants. A company in New Jersey is now using a four-inch wide trench eight inches deep, with a high soil furrow along one side as a kind of buried cold frame for tomato seedlings. Seeds are sown in the trench in early April and the trenches are then covered with plastic to create a greenhouse-type environment in which the young tomato plants appear to thrive. As the weather warms up, holes are punched in the plastic to keep down temperatures and help plants become acclimatized for subsequent transplanting in the field.

The company that has

been using this technique put in five acres of tomato seedlings last year and found that they were far superior to those shipped in from other areas. In particular, they appear to be freer of disease, and better suited to regional growing conditions.

For the producer of greenhouse vegetable transplants there was another useful idea - this one introduced from Florida.


Plants are raised in plastic trays shaped like an inverted pyramid. Tomatoes, cabbage, broccoli and other transplants grown in this type of tray appear to become less pot-bound, developing a root system more like a tap root. They harden up quickly in the containers and have an excellent resale value, reports Walker. The new style trays have been around for a couple of years, but are just becoming available in this area.

New Society officers were

elected at the business section of the meeting. For the coming year they will be: President, William Guy of Salisbury, Md.; Vice President, Woodrow Whaley of Laurel, Del.; Treasurer, Ray Nicholas of Vienna, Md.; Secretary, Herman Hohlt of Painter, Va.; Asst. Secretary, Derby Walker, Jr., of Laurel, Del.; and Editor, Chuck McClurg of College Park, Md.

Two awards for outstanding service to agriculture on the Delmarva Peninsula were presented at the meeting. Those honored were Curtis Jones, Jr., of Franktown, Va., and Herbert Richardson of Wyoming, Del. Jones is a vegetable grower and former Pen-Hort president. Richardson is a fruit and vegetable farmer who has served the Society as its treasurer for 22 years.

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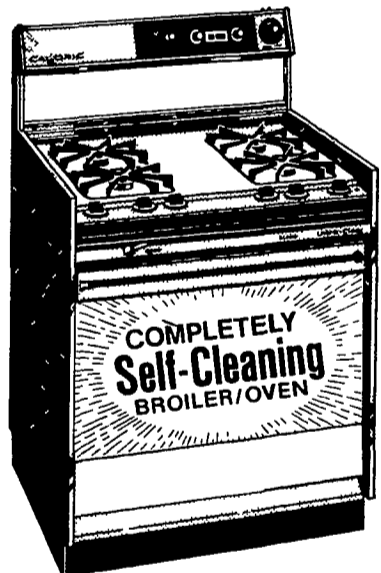


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