



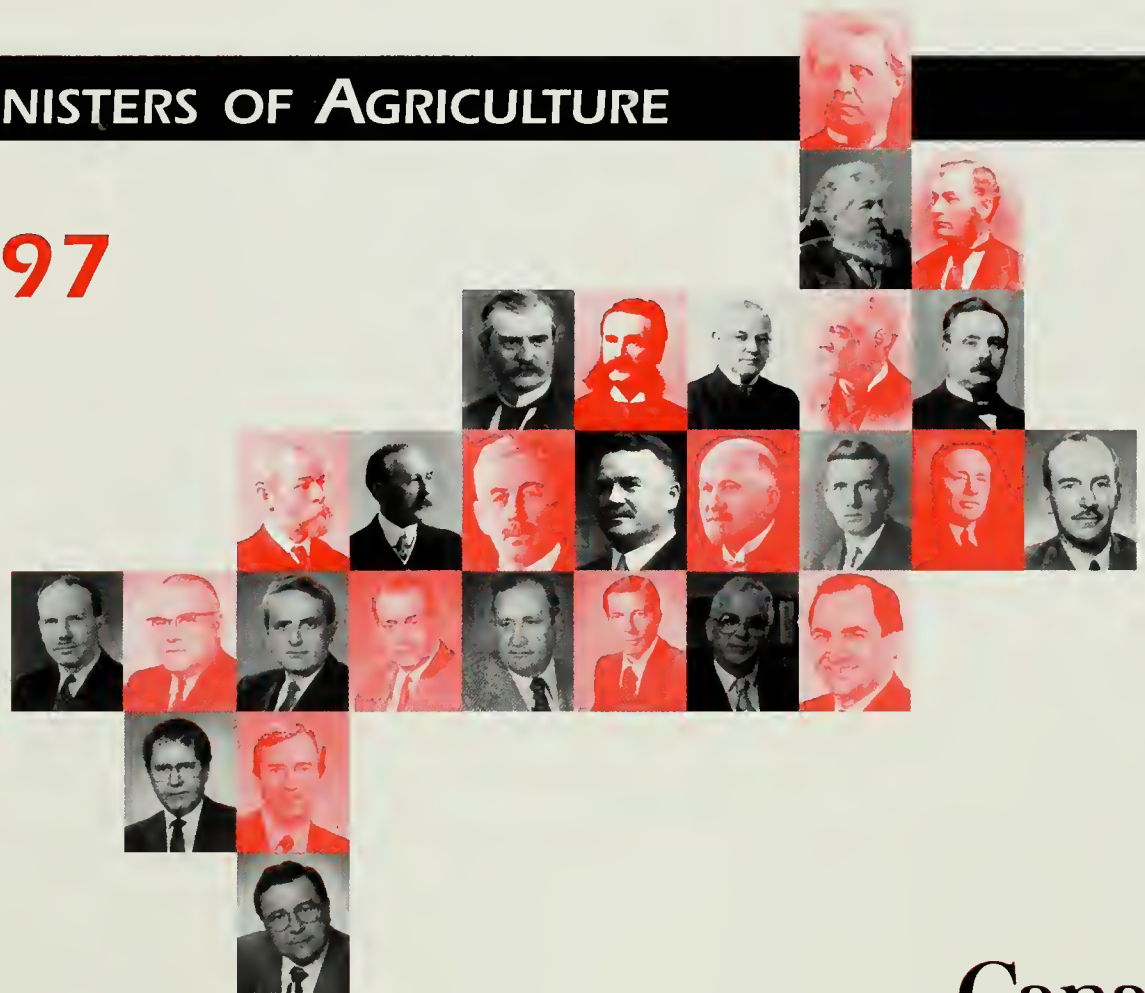
Agriculture and
Agri-Food Canada

Agriculture et
Agroalimentaire Canada


Serving Agriculture

CANADA'S MINISTERS OF AGRICULTURE

1867-1997



Canada



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Preface

Agriculture is one of the most complex and demanding portfolios in the Government of Canada. The industry is diverse, encompassing everything from conservation and resource issues to processing technology and international trade. The agriculture and food sector represents businesses both big and small; it is simultaneously the subject of sophisticated international trade negotiations and a traditional way of life for thousands of farm families. Finally, it affects not only rural communities but also urban manufacturing, processing and transportation conglomerates. From early settlers stepping off boats at Grosse Isle to Asian businesspeople sampling maple syrup on a trade mission, the department has presided over an industry that in many ways defines Canada's unique character.

Summarizing each of these ministers' careers and contributions has not been easy. Some of these gentlemen served for many years or over multiple terms. Others served only for a few months. It's hard to profile a minister who served for 22 years in the same manner as someone who served for only three months, but I've done my best. If I've omitted something important or made an error, please let us know.

The department has had a spectacular array of personalities and talents in its minister's office over the years. Some were farmers, some were not. Some were veteran politicians for whom this was just one of many roles. For others, their time as minister of agriculture defined their professional and political careers. Through crisis, triumph or controversy, each minister left a unique legacy with the department. Some went on to serve in other portfolios, to lead provincial governments, or to accept appointments as board members, senators or lieutenant-governors. We've not yet seen one become prime minister, but perhaps this is still to come.

The following profiles tell the story of our department, our industry and our country over the last 130 years. I'd like to thank my library colleagues for all their help, and former ministers Bud Olson, Eugene Whelan, John Wise, Don Mazankowski and Charlie Mayer for agreeing to be interviewed for this project.

*Janyce McGregor
Canadian Agriculture Library
September 1997*

Introduction

When I reflect upon the Ministers of Agriculture who have preceded me, I confess it is a little humbling.

I know something of the fabric of my recent predecessors, but there are so many more. That's why this book is valuable to me. On each page, there is evidence of the stimulating, and indeed, demanding nature of this portfolio. Canada's first agriculture minister, Jean-Charles Chapais, had hardly begun his term when he was faced with a possible plague of "texian fever" carried on imported horned cattle. Our third Minister, John Henry Pope was already grappling with exhausted virgin soils as early as the 1880s. And by the 1890s, the department under John Carling was experimenting with 300 varieties of potatoes and mailing information to some 30,000 farmers.

What this book captures, above all, is the humanity in the job; its trials and triumphs come in a surprising number of forms. After the First World War, for example, the department sponsored egg-laying contests to stimulate poultry flock performance: Canada's champion hen produced a world record 351 eggs in a single year.

I can quite honestly say that I have a passion for stories such as this — and in fact for the agriculture and agri-food industry in Canada. I have lived and breathed agriculture all of my life. It's an incredible industry with incredible opportunities for growth.

As Canada's 27th agriculture minister, I will have the privilege of guiding the department in the next few years — years in which the sector stands to figure prominently in meeting Canada's goals: to spur economic growth and reap the benefits of liberalized trade.

These are not new directions for Canada. In 1876, our fourth Minister Luc Letellier de Saint-Just, exhibited some international acumen when Canada participated in its first trade show: the Philadelphia World Fair. Through 130 years of nationhood, trade has become increasingly important, and, thanks in large part to the efforts of my predecessors, we're doing very well indeed. We produce some of the best food products in the world and, clearly, the world knows it.

A key trademark of the nineties is partnership: the industry is actively involved in taking Canada into the global arena. It's through partnership that Canada continues to solidify its reputation for food quality and safety, for world-class agricultural science and technology, and for innovation. These are our tickets to expanding our markets throughout the world, for the benefit of all Canadians.

My long involvement in agriculture has taught me to have a profound respect for the sector and its people. History has demonstrated, generation after generation, what can be accomplished by those who work to put food on the tables of the nation, and indeed, tables around the world.

Our strong foundation was laid in years past, and ably maintained by determined and talented people across the country. It's this strength, this ability to work together, that will enable us to continue to meet the challenges of the marketplace. I am proud to be a part of it.

*Lyle Vanclief
Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food
and Minister Coordinating Rural Affairs*

Canadian Ministers of Agriculture Since Confederation*

Jean-Charles Chapais
1867/07/01 - 1869/11/15

Christopher Dunkin
1869/11/16 - 1871/10/24

John Henry Pope
1871/10/25 - 1873/11/05
1878/10/17 - 1885/09/24

Luc Letellier de Saint-Just
1873/11/07 - 1876/12/14

Charles Alphonse Pantaléon Pelletier
1877/01/26 - 1878/10/08

John Carling
1885/09/25 - 1892/11/24

Auguste-Réal Angers
1892/12/07 - 1895/07/12

Walter Humphries Montague
1895/12/21 - 1896/01/05
1896/01/15 - 1896/07/08

Sydney Arthur Fisher
1896/07/13 - 1911/10/06

Martin Burrell
1911/10/16 - 1917/10/12

Thomas Alexander Crerar
1917/10/12 - 1919/06/11

Simon Fraser Tolmie
1919/08/12 - 1921/12/29
1926/07/13 - 1926/09/25

William Richard Motherwell
1921/12/29 - 1926/06/28
1926/09/25 - 1930/08/07

Robert Weir
1930/08/08 - 1935/10/23

James Garfield Gardiner
1935/11/04 - 1957/06/21

Douglas Scott Harkness
1957/06/21 - 1960/10/10

Francis Alvin George Hamilton
1960/10/11 - 1963/04/22

Harry William Hays
1963/04/22 - 1965/12/17

John J. Greene
1965/12/18 - 1968/07/05

Horace Andrew (Bud) Olson
1968/07/06 - 1972/11/26

Eugene Francis Whelan
1972/11/27 - 1979/06/03
1980/03/03 - 1984/06/29

John Wise
1979/06/04 - 1980/03/02
1984/09/17 - 1988/09/14

Ralph Ferguson
1984/06/30 - 1984/09/16

Donald Frank Mazankowski
1988/09/15 - 1991/04/20

William Hunter McKnight
1991/04/21 - 1993/01/04

Charles James Mayer
1993/01/04 - 1993/11/04

Ralph Goodale
1993/11/04 - 1997/06/11

* Excluding interim acting ministers

Compiled in 1997.

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Ministres de l'Agriculture du Canada

1867-1997



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Jean-Charles Chapais

July 1, 1867 - November 15, 1869



Jean-Charles Chapais

(1811-1885)

Birthplace

Rivière-Ouelle, Lower Canada

Federal Constituency

Kamouraska (Quebec)

Education

Nicolet College (1824-1830)

Professional Background

General retail merchant, fishery owner and cattle farmer; helped establish local church, library

Political Affiliation

Conservative

“As a farmer and longtime representative of one of the most beautiful farming regions of Quebec, working for agricultural prosperity is, to my way of thinking, more than a duty. It is also a source of immense pleasure.”

— Jean-Charles Chapais, letter to his supporters, July 8, 1867

Political Career

The Chapais were one of the wealthy, politically active families that guided the development of the parish community of St-Denis. Jean-Charles Chapais was the first mayor, while his father-in-law, the wealthy merchant and seigneur Amable Dionne, served in the colonial government representing Kamouraska.

Dionne encouraged Chapais to run for election to the legislative assembly when a seat became vacant. After one unsuccessful attempt, Chapais was elected in 1851 and re-elected in four consecutive elections.

In 1864, a coalition of parties agreed to prorogue the assembly and concentrate on achieving Confederation to end the political stalemate in Upper and Lower Canada, which are now the provinces of Ontario and Quebec. Chapais was appointed commissioner of public works and served in cabinet through the Confederation conferences and debates. He established the Intercolonial Railway and developed the Grand Trunk Railway—infrastructure that laid the groundwork for Confederation.

On July 1, 1867, Chapais became Canada’s first minister of agriculture. He understood the industry well, having written a 13-part report on Quebec agriculture in 1851.

Later that summer, he ran to represent Kamouraska at both the provincial and federal levels. Rioting and a scandal over irregularities in voting procedures cancelled the election and the riding lost its right to representation for two years. Chapais was acclaimed for Champlain in the Quebec national assembly in December 1867 and was appointed to the Senate in January 1868.

Chapais’ agriculture portfolio became onerous over time. His party’s popularity also was waning under the pressures of governing a new country. Prime Minister John A. Macdonald needed to bring new people into cabinet—especially MPs from the House of Commons. Chapais was transferred to the receiver general portfolio, a less demanding but thankless job. In 1873, he resigned from cabinet because he was disenchanted with Ottawa life and wanted to spend more time with his family and business. He continued to serve as a senator until his death in 1885.

Industry Issues

Canadian agriculture in the 19th century reflected a diversity of farm climates, soil types and growing seasons. Some regions, such as Quebec, had been farmed for generations. Others, such as the Northwest Territories, hadn't yet been settled.

Early farmers and new settlers lacked the time and resources to solve their own problems. The department acted first in an area of immediate concern: the impact of animal disease on dairy and livestock production.

Departmental Developments

Before Confederation, the province of Canada had a small and relatively ineffective bureau of agriculture. Chapais oversaw a small Ottawa office of just 23 clerks—a far cry from the thousands of professionals employed by the department in the 1990s.

In 1868, the federal government passed an Act to organize and establish the Department of Agriculture. Its mandate went beyond traditional agriculture concerns to include immigration and emigration; public health and quarantine; the marine and emigrant hospital at Quebec; arts and manufacturing; census activities, statistics and registration; patents; copyright; and industrial designs and trademarks.

Early annual reports hardly mention agriculture, focusing on more immediate colonial concerns such as immigration.

Accomplishments as Minister

Chapais' first recorded action was an Order in Council on August 13, 1868 prohibiting imports of horned cattle from the United States into Ontario and Quebec. A plague of "texian fever" in cattle threatened to contaminate livestock transported by rail. Chapais appointed Canada's first two agricultural inspectors to enforce the ban at two Ontario border crossings.

The first departmental legislation was *An Act Respecting the Contagious Diseases of Animals*, passed in 1869. Farmers trying to establish livestock herds needed protection from rinderpest and other European diseases.

Canada's first chief veterinary inspector oversaw early inspections and quarantines at maritime ports and American border crossings to prevent diseased animals from entering Canada. Existing diseases were monitored and controlled. These basic principles of inspection and disease control still exist in the current *Health of Animals Act* (1990).

Worth Noting

- Canada's first prime minister, John A. Macdonald, nicknamed Chapais "my little nun" for his dedication to the Catholic Church and the civil institutions of French Canadians.
- Chapais was a delegate to the Quebec Conference of 1864, where the 72 Resolutions that led to Canadian Confederation were debated and passed. He is one of the Fathers of Confederation seated around the table in Robert Harris' famous portrait.
- Dr. J.C. Taché, the first deputy minister of the department, was both a nephew of former Quebec leader Etienne-Pascal Taché and Chapais' trusted ally from Kamouraska.
- Two of Chapais' political rivals in Kamouraska also became ministers of agriculture.



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Christopher Dunkin

November 16, 1869 - October 24, 1871



Canada

Christopher Dunkin

(1812-1881)

Birthplace

Walworth, England

Federal Constituencies

Drummond-Arthabaska, Brome (Quebec)

Education

University of London, Glasgow University, Harvard University

Professional Background

Harvard professor; editor of Montreal's *Morning Courier*; secretary of Lord Durham's education commission (1838) and the postal service commission (until 1842); assistant provincial secretary, Canada East, 1842-1847; called to the bar in 1846, practised law in Montreal and later in Knowlton, Quebec; served on the Council of Public Instruction in 1859

Political Affiliation

Conservative

Political Career

Christopher Dunkin was defeated in his first attempt to represent Drummond in the colonial legislative assembly in 1844. His second attempt at politics was more successful, although his tenure was brief: he was elected to the assembly in 1858 to represent Drummond-Arthabaska, but he lost the seat in 1861. Finally, the resilient Dunkin was elected to represent Brome, a seat he held from 1862 until Confederation.

Dunkin contributed to the crisis in government that eventually led to Canadian Confederation when he refused to support the government of fellow Conservatives John A. Macdonald and Etienne-Pascal Taché in 1864. The loss of his vote denied their ministry the majority it needed to stay in power. The legislative gridlock that resulted from the government's fall led to the desperate coalition of parties that eventually achieved Confederation. Ironically, Dunkin, who represented the English Protestant minority in Quebec's Eastern Townships, opposed Confederation during the parliamentary debates of 1865. He predicted that the new country would have too many regional, racial, religious and political differences to develop as a nation.

In 1867, Dunkin was elected to both the House of Commons and the Quebec national assembly for Brome. He turned down a Quebec cabinet position because premier-designate Joseph Edouard Cauchon would

not introduce and support a bill giving Protestants their own schools. Pierre Joseph Olivier Chauveau, a former associate of Dunkin's, was more willing to address Protestants' needs. Chauveau became premier and formed Quebec's first provincial government. Dunkin was his treasurer from 1867 to 1869 and was so influential that people nicknamed it the "Chauveau-Dunkin" government.

In 1869, Prime Minister Macdonald rearranged his cabinet and needed a new English-speaking Quebec representative. When his first choice, John Henry Pope, refused—only to accept two years later—Macdonald appointed Dunkin minister of agriculture. Dunkin, however, was in poor health and losing political support. In 1871, Dunkin resigned and left politics to become a puisne judge of the Superior Court of Quebec until his death in 1881.

Departmental Developments

Dunkin owned a 316-acre industrial-sized farm in Knowlton on Lac Brome and was no stranger to agricultural issues. Like Chapais before him, most of his concerns at the Department of Agriculture had little to do with what would appear to be important to agricultural policy today. Annual reports of the period dwell on immigration issues and the collection of statistics.

Accomplishments as Minister

The only agricultural concern Dunkin appears to have faced was a brief scare over a resurgence of the cattle plague that caused Chapais to ban American horned cattle imports for several weeks in 1868. In 1870, after an investigation by Ontario government officials, Dunkin concluded there was no cause for alarm.

Worth Noting

- Dunkin's political legacy may have more to do with his role as Quebec's minister of finance than his achievements as Canada's minister of agriculture.
- Dunkin started a tradition in Quebec politics that lasted over a century: appointing an English-speaking member of the assembly as Quebec's treasurer.
- Dunkin might have been ahead of his time on federal-provincial issues, strongly advocating the equality of federal and provincial governments and espousing what biographer Pierre Corbeil calls a "true Quebecker's view of politics and the Constitution." Dunkin believed the provincial government had to take an active role in Quebec's economic development, even though provinces depended on Ottawa for revenue.



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John Henry Pope

*October 25, 1871 - November 5, 1873
and October 17, 1878 - September 24, 1885*



Canada

John Henry Pope

(1824-1889)

Birthplace

Eaton Township, Lower Canada

Federal Constituency

Compton (Quebec)

Education

Compton High School, Eastern Townships

Professional Background

Farmer, investor and promoter in Cookshire, Quebec; owner, president or director of lumber mill, railway, bank, public utility and woollen mill

Political Affiliation

Conservative

“This Department, although charged . . . with the subject of Agriculture, has not hitherto, except incidentally, dealt with it . . . The subject is, however, of the greatest importance to Canada, and the branch, properly organized, would be of very great service. . . in facilitating improvements in agriculture. . . to enable our farmers to compete with those of other countries.”

— John Henry Pope, 1871 Department of Agriculture annual report

Political Career

Pope represented his township on Sherbrooke county council in the 1840s. He ran unsuccessfully for a seat in the colonial government in 1851, 1853 and 1854 before being acclaimed to the legislative assembly in 1857. He represented the riding of Compton in the assembly and, later, in the House of Commons until he died in 1889. Once in office, he proved to be a popular representative. He often ran unopposed or won with large margins.

As was the case with many Confederation-era politicians, Pope’s mix of politics and business was frequently controversial. He was involved in questionable land deals and his efforts to secure a railway link for his county and his businesses tangled him in a web of deal-making with local, provincial and federal government officials.

Pope’s farm was his original and constant business interest. He was one of the first Canadians to try to improve cattle herds by importing thoroughbred stock. When he was appointed minister of agriculture in 1871, he became the first minister to focus on agricultural issues. Pope resigned with the rest of Macdonald’s cabinet over the Pacific railway scandal of 1873. When the Conservatives were re-elected in 1878, Pope went back to his old portfolio.

Later in Pope’s second term, he also became acting minister of railways and canals. When the government could not find British capital to complete the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR), Pope took action to secure the necessary construction contract, persuading Macdonald to offer the CPR a controversial \$30-million loan in 1884 so it could finish construction. In 1885, Pope officially became minister of railways and canals. Even though he had cancer of the liver, he continued to serve in that portfolio until he died in 1889.

Industry Issues

Canadian agriculture was in a “transition state” between a system where farmers depended on virgin soil—fast becoming exhausted from use—and a more sophisticated system of soil maintenance. Farmers needed new farming techniques to diversify and improve productivity and sustainability on farms.

The Conservatives’ “National Policy”, a scheme of preferential tariffs designed to promote east-west trade across Canada, also developed agriculture. As shipping methods for livestock improved, disease and injury in transit decreased. More valuable, pedigreed animals were imported to improve the quality of Canadian herds and exports. Farmers established large cattle ranches at the foot of the Rocky Mountains in the Northwest Territories.

Departmental Developments

By 1878, the department oversaw the new Library of Parliament, an infant public archives, and the national census. It continued to be responsible for immigration, since many settlers arrived ready to buy farms or land thanks to an agricultural depression in the United Kingdom.

The department also expanded its efforts in animal disease control. It began actively discouraging the use of American ports with inferior health facilities after some Canadian animals had to be destroyed because of foot and mouth disease before reaching the United Kingdom. Pope banned the import of American cattle in 1879 and 1884, except at points where quarantine and inspection were available, to avoid an outbreak of pleuro-pneumonia and to maintain Canada's strong reputation for disease control in the eyes of British trade officials.

Department inspectors were dispatched to implement quarantines to control livestock diseases in Canadian communities. Pope was the first minister to recognize that producers would co-operate with disease control measures only if they realized a net benefit from the government's interventions. For the first time, farmers whose diseased animals were slaughtered received compensation.

Accomplishments as Minister

Pope presided over early attempts to gather agricultural statistics. By 1883, he was supervising a comprehensive system of crop reporting for Manitoba and the Northwest Territories. The findings showed great potential for wheat production, settlement and economic development in the Canadian West.

International and domestic exhibitions promoted Canadian agricultural products at home and abroad. Pope presided over the awarding and distribution of medals as well as the organization and funding of these events.

In 1883, Pope responded to recent crop damage due to insect attacks by appointing the first departmental entomologist.

Worth Noting

- Pope served in the militia during the Lower Canada Rebellion of 1837.
- Pope was a loyalist and opposed the American annexationist movement. He became friends with John A. Macdonald at a meeting of the British American League in Kingston. He later acted as an intermediary between Macdonald and George Brown in the Confederation negotiations.



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Luc Letellier de Saint-Just

November 7, 1873 - December 14, 1876



Canada

Luc Letellier de Saint-Just

(1820-1881)

Birthplace

Rivière-Ouelle, Lower Canada

Federal Constituencies

Kamouraska, Grandville (Quebec)

Education

College of Ste. Anne de la Pocatière,
Petit Séminaire de Québec

Professional Background

Trained as a notary, admitted as a
notary public in 1841 and practised in
Rivière-Ouelle

Political Affiliation

Liberal

*“His initiative and daring, legal
knowledge and speaking proficiency
predestined him to take up a career
in politics.”*

— Philippe-Baby Casgrain, *Letellier de
Saint-Just et son temps*

Political Career

Letellier’s first political rival was Canada’s first minister of agriculture, Jean-Charles Chapais. Letellier won only the first of five electoral contests he waged in Kamouraska against Chapais and served briefly in the colonial legislative assembly in 1851. These political confrontations were bitter and hard-fought—violence and corruption plagued both sides. Both candidates received support from family connections and local rivalries.

After 10 years of defeats, Letellier was appointed to the legislative council representing Grandville in 1860. He served briefly as minister of agriculture for the united colonies of Canada East and Canada West in 1863 when the Grit/Rouge coalition government sent the struggling Conservative/Bleu alliance to the opposition benches.

Letellier originally opposed Confederation because he feared for the future of French culture. He eventually came to support the union and agreed to lead the Liberals in the Senate. Like other political leaders of the period, Letellier also sought election to the Quebec national assembly but was unsuccessful in winning a seat.

When the Macdonald government fell in the face of the Pacific scandal of November 1873, the new Liberal prime minister, Alexander Mackenzie, appointed Letellier minister of agriculture and leader of the Senate.

Three years later, when the lieutenant-governor of Quebec died, Mackenzie reluctantly parted with Letellier, his second-in-command, and appointed him to that post. Letellier was a controversial lieutenant-governor, dismissing Boucher de Boucherville’s government in March 1878 over a railway policy of which he did not approve. The federal government refused to tolerate what Quebec Conservatives saw as a “coup d’état”. Prime Minister Macdonald, who had recently been re-elected, removed Letellier from office in July 1879. Letellier retired, and died two years later of a heart attack at his home in Rivière-Ouelle.

Industry Issues

As minister, Letellier actively encouraged the import of foreign seeds, grains and plants to enhance the quality and variety of Canadian agricultural products. To support this kind of international exchange, Letellier advocated the establishment of agronomic institutes. These institutes, along with institutions of higher education and technical training in agriculture, would supply the kind of specialists needed to direct agricultural development in Canada.

Departmental Developments

Threats of contagious disease in cattle, this time originating in the United Kingdom and Europe, were averted in 1875-76 through conscientious monitoring of cattle imports at Canadian ports and strict quarantine measures. Importers supported these preventative measures.

An invasion of grasshoppers devastated Manitoba crops in the summer of 1876. Letellier visited Manitoba to investigate the extent of the losses and lent \$60,000 to affected farmers “to prevent actual starvation, and to enable the purchase of necessary seed grains”. At the same time, Letellier was impressed by the potential for agriculture in Manitoba.

The department also had to contend with the effects of the gradual spread of the potato beetle eastward across Canada. In 1876, the insects were found on steamers bound for Germany, and the Imperial government in the United Kingdom asked for an investigation by departmental officials into precautionary measures that could be taken in Canada to prevent the spread of the pest into Europe. The department recommended monitoring the situation at ports, while handpicking, crushing and poisoning insects and their eggs to help control their spread across Canada.

Accomplishments as Minister

Letellier was more of a politician than an administrator. But he was active in organizing funding and committees to ensure Canada’s participation in the Philadelphia World’s Fair of 1876. For the first time, Canadian industries and products were put on display internationally to promote trade.

Worth Noting

- As lieutenant-governor, Letellier meddled in electoral contests and once outright refused to sign an order-in-council “on principle”. Quebec’s Attorney General at the time, Auguste-Réal Angers, refused invitations to functions at Letellier’s official residence, and eventually the mutual distrust between Letellier and Angers peaked when he dismissed the government over a controversial railway policy. The public approved of Letellier’s stand on the issue, but his fellow Liberals in Ottawa, did not. Angers became Canada’s seventh minister of agriculture in 1892.

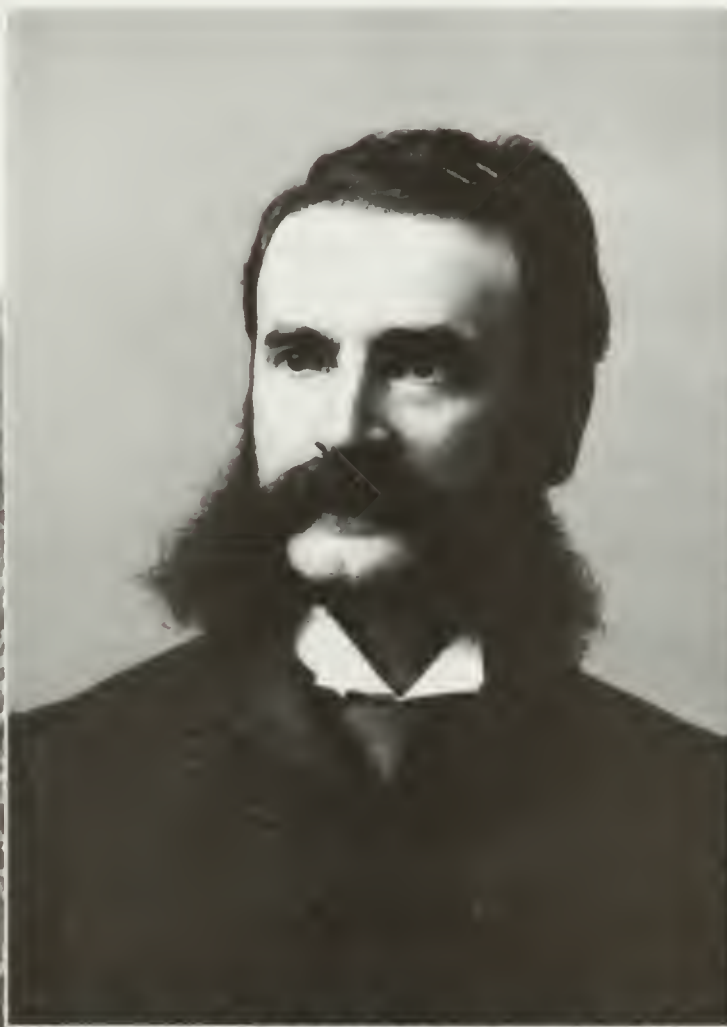


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Charles Alphonse Pantaléon Pelletier

January 26, 1877 - October 8, 1878



Canada

Charles Alphonse Pantaléon Pelletier

(1837-1911)

Birthplace

Rivière-Ouelle, Lower Canada

Federal Constituency

Kamouraska (Quebec)

Education

College of Ste. Anne de la Pocatière,
Laval University, Military School

Professional Background

Called to the bar in 1860, practised law
in Quebec City; director for Quebec and
Charlevoix Navigation Co. and Quebec
Fire Insurance Co.

Political Affiliation

Liberal

Political Career

Pelletier's first election campaign was over before voters had a chance to have their say. Recruited by the Liberals and supported by Jean-Charles Chapais' longtime rival Luc Letellier de Saint-Just, Pelletier challenged Chapais in the first election for the House of Commons in 1867. Irregularities in voters' lists and rioting caused officials to refuse to hold the vote, denying Kamouraska constituents a representative for two years.

Pelletier eventually won the seat in a special double by-election, held in 1869 to select members for both the provincial and the federal governments. Pelletier sat as MP for Kamouraska until 1877. He also represented Quebec East in the Quebec national assembly from 1873 until dual representation was abolished in 1874.

In 1877, Pelletier was appointed minister of agriculture and called to the Senate. His term as minister of agriculture ended with the defeat of the Liberal government in September 1878.

Pelletier was selected speaker of the Senate in 1896 and served until 1901. He resigned from the Senate to accept an appointment as puisne judge of the Superior Court of Quebec in 1904.

In 1908 he resigned from the Superior Court to serve as lieutenant-governor of Quebec until his death in Quebec City in 1911.

Departmental Developments

In 1877, Pelletier found it necessary to further modify the cattle quarantine regulations and ban the import of neat cattle, as well as cattle parts, straw, fodder or other products capable of carrying disease, in order to protect against rinderpest from England and other parts of Europe. Diligent quarantine efforts also helped prevent the introduction of contagious hog typhoid into Canada that year.

By 1878, the department's annual report stated that "owing to the selection and care of our importers, and partly owing to our Cattle Quarantine establishments, no disease has been introduced into the country". The Imperial Government in the United Kingdom found Canada's new inspection and quarantine system so reliable in preventing the spread of contagious animal diseases that Canada was exempt from the provisions of imperial disease control legislation, which required all animals imported into the United Kingdom to be slaughtered immediately. Even 120 years ago, Canadian efforts to prevent and control animal disease facilitated international trade in livestock.

Accomplishments as Minister

Pelletier oversaw the creation of the first Dominion Council of Agriculture in 1877. Thirteen representatives of agricultural societies, provincial agriculture councils and commodity groups from every province were appointed to the council. Pelletier became honorary president, while David Christie, the speaker of the Senate from Paris, Ontario, was selected president. Twelve standing committees were formed to study timely agricultural concerns.

Based on the department's success in promoting Canadian agriculture at the 1876 World's Fair in Philadelphia, Pelletier organized a Canadian exhibition for the Metropolitan Exhibition held in Sydney, Australia in 1877. Exhibitors and the department had little time to research what types of products might be suitable for Australian trade—some goods were shipped directly from Philadelphia to Sydney—but the exhibits, totalling 550 cubic tons of ocean freight, were well received. Some exhibits won prizes, while others helped spark trade in several industries and commodities. The total cost to the department was \$26,433, a sum Pelletier called “moderate” in his annual report.

Additional awards, trade opportunities and national recognition resulted from Canada's participation in a similar international exposition in Paris in 1878.

Worth Noting

- Pelletier was a major in the 9th Battalion Voltigeurs de Québec during the Fenian Raids of 1866.
- Pelletier founded Quebec's Parti National in 1872, a party that went on to form a nationalist government in Quebec under Honoré Mercier in 1887.
- Adolphe Routhier, a lawyer from Kamouraska defeated by Pelletier in the 1869 election, wrote the French words of our national anthem: “*O Canada! Terre de nos aïeux!*”



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John Carling

September 25, 1885 - November 24, 1892



Canada

John Carling

(1828-1911)

Birthplace

London, Upper Canada

Federal Constituency

London (Ontario)

Education

London Common School

Professional Background

President of Carling Brewing and Malting Co.; director of Great Western Railway, London-Port Stanley Railway and London-Huron-Bruce Railway

Political Affiliation

Conservative

Political Career

Carling inherited his family's brewing and malting company and was an established businessman long before he entered politics. He started as a city alderman in London in 1854 and stayed in municipal politics for four years. He also represented London in the colonial legislature from 1857 until Confederation. In 1862 he was appointed receiver general.

In the first general election after Confederation, Carling was elected to both Ontario's legislative assembly and the House of Commons, representing London. Provincially, he served as minister of agriculture and public works from 1867 to 1871. He was re-elected as London's representative to the Ontario legislative assembly in 1871 but resigned in 1872 to concentrate on federal politics.

Carling served as the federal MP for London from 1867 to 1874 but was defeated along with Macdonald's Conservative government in the 1874 general election. He was re-elected when the Conservatives regained power in 1878 and appointed to cabinet.

Carling served as postmaster general from 1882 to 1885 and minister of agriculture from 1885 to 1892. When he was defeated as an MP in the election of 1891, Carling was appointed to the Senate and continued to

serve as minister of agriculture. He was re-elected MP for London in 1892 and served as minister without portfolio from 1892 to 1894.

Carling was recalled to the Senate in 1896, where he served until his death in 1911.

Industry Issues

In Carling's time, farmers urgently needed advanced agricultural knowledge to help them farm in new Canadian climates. Prairie farmers needed a spring wheat that would ripen before early western frosts; if the government could develop a superior baking wheat for this climate, opportunities for immigration and economic development would follow. Experimental stations in other countries and government stock farms in the Maritimes already had proved valuable in agricultural development. International trade also inspired agricultural research. For example, an American tariff on Canadian barley encouraged the development and promotion of a new malting barley for the British market.

Departmental Developments

Disease control efforts of the period further underscored the need for experimental stations. The testing and development of vaccines for diseases such as anthrax required proper scientific laboratories and controlled test environments.

After a 1889 convention of dairymen's associations in Ottawa, the department extended its activities to cover the dairy industry. Departmental bulletins, conventions and lectures educated farmers about manufacturing butter and cheese and feeding cattle for milk production. Uniform methods for processing dairy products improved their quality and enhanced their potential for export. Experimental dairy stations and systems of co-operative dairying were established in each province after 1891. A dairy school also was established at St-Hyacinthe, Quebec in 1892.

Accomplishments as Minister

Carling's legacy as minister of agriculture was the experimental farm research program. Based on a 1884 House of Commons committee's recommendation and research done by Professor William Saunders, the eventual director of the first experimental farms, the *Experimental Farm Station Act* was given royal assent in June 1886.

The legislation was so well conceived that only minor amendments, mostly to establish additional farms or make administrative changes, were necessary for 110 years.

The land for the central farm in Ottawa was purchased first, followed by sites for the other regional farms in Brandon, Manitoba; Indian Head, Northwest Territories (now Saskatchewan); Nappan, Nova Scotia; and Agassiz, British Columbia. The first research activities on the farms were testing crop varieties and cultural methods, and gathering information about climate conditions. Once they identified new crops for a region, researchers distributed samples of the improved varieties to local farmers and published information in public bulletins.

Records from 1890 show that the Central Experimental Farm in Ottawa was already experimenting with 300 varieties of potatoes, 100 varieties of wheat, 100 varieties of oats and 80 varieties of barley. Crosses made in 1892 between an early-ripening wheat from

India and the already-popular Red Fife wheat led to the development of Marquis wheat, world famous for its milling quality and high prairie yields. Indian corn and spring rye were developed as effective hay substitutes for use in years where the prairie hay crop was insufficient to feed livestock through the winter. Upwards of 12,000 seed samples were distributed to farmers and more than 30,000 people were on the farms' mailing list for information.

Thoroughbred livestock available from the farms for breeding also improved local dairy and beef herds. Carling took a keen interest in the farms' development and frequently visited the Ottawa property.

Worth Noting

- The French-speaking assistant to Canada's first dairy commissioner, Dr. James Robinson, was Jean-Charles Chapais, the son of Canada's first agriculture minister.



Agriculture and
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Auguste-Réal Angers

December 7, 1892 - July 12, 1895



Canada

Auguste-Réal Angers

(1838-1919)

Birthplace

Quebec City, Lower Canada

Federal Constituency

Montmorency (Quebec)

Education

Nicolet College, Laval University (1888)

Professional Background

Called to the bar in 1860, practised law in Quebec City; director of Credit Foncier Franco-Canadien and La Société d'Administration Générale

Political Affiliation

Conservative

Political Career

Angers' political career began when he was elected to the legislative assembly of Quebec in 1874 in a by-election for Montmorency. He was immediately appointed solicitor general in Boucher de Boucherville's government, and served until appointed attorney general in January 1876. Angers was also government leader in the assembly from 1875 to 1878.

In 1878, the lieutenant-governor of Quebec, Luc Letellier de Saint-Just, dismissed Angers' government over a controversial railway policy. Angers became leader of the opposition, and in the next election the public supported Letellier's dismissal of the Conservatives. Angers lost his seat.

Undeterred from public life, Angers was elected to represent Montmorency in the House of Commons in a February 1880 by-election. In November, he resigned his seat to serve as puisne judge for the Superior Court of Quebec. In October 1887, Angers resigned from the Superior Court to become lieutenant-governor of Quebec. This time it was Angers' turn to dismiss a government of which he did not approve, when Honoré Mercier's nationalist government became tangled in a railway scandal of its own.

In December 1892, Angers resigned as lieutenant-governor and was called to the Senate and appointed federal minister of agriculture. He served under the short-lived administrations of John Thompson and Mackenzie Bowell. Bowell's leadership on the Manitoba schools controversy so dissatisfied Angers that he resigned from cabinet in 1895. Angers briefly resumed his law practice but declined an appointment to the Supreme Court—he wasn't ready to end his political career just yet.

After Charles Tupper replaced Bowell as Conservative leader and prime minister, Angers served briefly as president of the Privy Council from May to July 1896. He subsequently resigned from the Senate to run for the House of Commons representing Quebec City in the general election of 1896. He failed to win the seat as Wilfrid Laurier's Liberals swept to power. Angers resumed his law practice in Montreal as head of the successful firm A. De Lorimier & Godin. He died in Montreal in 1919.

Industry Issues

Minister Angers wanted to diversify Canadian agriculture. Mixed farming, he believed, offered the best protection for Canadian farmers and the broader agriculture industry against market fluctuations, poor growing conditions and other unforeseen obstacles. His 1893 trip to Manitoba and the Northwest Territories illustrated the need for farmers to look beyond wheat and grains. A combination of poor weather and low prices that summer adversely affected communities entirely dependent on grains. Mixed farming fostered home industries and offered settlers additional products to trade locally. Although Angers no longer had immediate responsibility for immigration, the well-being of new settlers in farm communities was still a concern.

Canada's impressive presence at international exhibitions such as the 1893 World's Fair in Chicago proved that the country's agriculture industry was coming of age. The United Kingdom was starting to feel real agricultural competition from its former colony, thanks to superior training and research. The Central Experimental Farm's Agriculture Museum opened in 1895, with more than 12,000 visitors each year.

Departmental Developments

Disease control and animal inspection remained a priority, with new quarantine stations and inspection points established along the American boundary with the Northwest Territories in 1894. That same year, bovine tuberculosis emerged as a serious threat to animal health. A tuberculin test developed at the Central Experimental Farm was used across Canada and at points of entry to control disease by identifying sick animals for isolation and slaughter.

Canadian cattle exports faced a serious setback during Angers' tenure. In October 1892, the British government imposed an embargo on Canadian cattle because of suspected pleuro-pneumonia in cattle shipped from Montreal. False rumours also circulated in the United Kingdom that cattle from the United States, where pleuro-pneumonia did exist, were imported into Manitoba and the Northwest Territories without inspection. Despite the department's best efforts to investigate and disprove the allegations, the British government refused to relent on its embargo.

Accomplishments as Minister

Angers continued the work begun by Carling to promote and regulate Canada's emerging dairy industry. The *Dairy Products Act* of 1893 provided for the branding of dairy products and prohibited the sale of filled or imitation cheese. By 1895, the Dairy Branch was also carrying out non-dairy activities, such as investigating the export possibilities for Canadian hay, apples, bacon and other pork products. Successful shipments of butter and cheese to British ports were made possible because the department fitted commercial steamers with insulated and refrigerated food storage chambers. Experimental shipments of other fruits and preserved eggs, which also needed these cold-storage facilities, weren't as successful.

Angers was responsible for the first tobacco grown on Canadian farms in 1893. Departmental research identified the ideal varieties and growing techniques for use in eastern Ontario and western Quebec.



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Walter Humphries Montague

*December 21, 1895 - January 5, 1896
and January 15, 1896 - July 8, 1896*



Canada

Walter Humphries Montague

(1858-1915)

Birthplace

Adelaide Township, Canada West

Federal Constituency

Haldimand-Monck (Ontario)

Education

Woodstock College; Victoria University,
Cobourg; Toronto School of Medicine

Professional Background

Obtained MD in 1882 and practised
medicine in Dunnville, Ontario and
Winnipeg, Manitoba

Political Affiliation

Conservative

Political Career

Montague's political career started slowly. He lost his bid to represent Monck in the Ontario legislative assembly's general election of 1883. In 1887, he was elected to the House of Commons for Haldimand, Ontario—but the election was declared void. Later in the year, he won a second election, which was also plagued by controversy and voided in court. Montague was defeated again in a by-election in 1889.

Montague finally won the Haldimand seat in a 1890 by-election. He was re-elected as MP for Haldimand (later Haldimand-Monck) in 1891, 1895 and 1896. He also served as vice-president of the Conservative Union of Ontario in 1892.

Montague was appointed to the Privy Council in 1894 and served as minister without portfolio from December 1894 to March 1895, and as secretary of state from March to December 1895. In December 1895, he was appointed minister of agriculture.

Montague resigned briefly in January 1896 as one of the cabinet ministers Prime Minister Mackenzie Bowell called a "nest of traitors" for deserting the government in protest of Bowell's inaction on the Manitoba schools issue. Montague returned to cabinet when the controversy passed, but the Conservative caucus was slowly unravelling. Charles Tupper (the Conservatives' fifth leader since Macdonald's death in 1891) became prime minister before the 1896 election, but the Conservative government was soundly defeated by Wilfrid Laurier's triumphant Liberals.

Montague lost his Haldimand-Monck seat in the 1900 election and left politics to return to his medical practice. In 1908 he moved to Winnipeg, and five years later he again ran for public office. In November 1913 Montague was elected to the legislative assembly of Manitoba, representing Kildonan-St. Andrews. He was re-elected in 1914 and appointed minister of public works in the Roblin government from November 1913 to May 1915. Montague died in Winnipeg in 1915.

Accomplishments as Minister

Montague's seven-month tenure as minister coincided with a turbulent period in the life of his government. As a result, his legacy is one of maintenance of existing programs rather than considerable policy or organizational innovation.

Worth Noting

- Montague's predecessor, Angers, also resigned as minister of agriculture to protest Prime Minister Bowell's leadership.



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Sydney Arthur Fisher

July 13, 1896 - October 6, 1911



Canada

Sydney Arthur Fisher

(1850-1921)

Birthplace

Montreal, Canada East

Federal Constituency

Brome (Quebec)

Education

McGill University and Trinity College,
Cambridge (BA, 1871)

Professional Background

Owner-operator of Alva Farm in Knowlton,
Quebec; president of Montreal Ensilage and
Stock Feeding Association; founder and
president of Quebec Fruit Growers'
Association; member of Canadian National
Livestock Association, Provincial Dairy
Association and Brome Agricultural
Association; charity board member and
founder of arts organizations

Political Affiliation

Liberal

Political Career

Fisher was elected as a Liberal MP in 1882 and served until he lost by a majority of one in the face of Prime Minister Macdonald's Conservatives' final electoral victory in 1891. Fisher accepted an appointment to the Quebec Council of Agriculture. Five years later, he was re-elected when Laurier's Liberals swept to power. His passion and experience as a farmer and agricultural activist as well as an MP made him a logical choice for agriculture minister. He served as an MP and as minister of agriculture for the next 15 years.

Laurier and his Liberal party—including Fisher—lost the 1911 general election over the reciprocity issue. Fisher retired from public life and died in Ottawa in 1921.

Industry Issues

In 1896, the public land once available in the American west was closed. The Canadian Prairies became the "Last Best West" and a new era of settlement and agricultural expansion began. Rising prices and inexpensive shipping created a world market for hard spring wheat, and prairie production grew from 29 to 209 million bushels a year. Marquis wheat, developed mostly by Charles Saunders (son of experimental farms director William Saunders), was introduced in 1907 and soon accounted for 90 per cent of prairie production. Western settlement and development led to the creation of two new provinces, Saskatchewan and Alberta, in 1905.

In 1901, bad management kept the CPR from moving more than a third of a bumper wheat crop before freeze-up on Lake Superior. National Policy tariffs prevented western farmers from buying inexpensive American machinery and manufactured goods. Dissatisfied farmers formed co-operatives to advance their political and business interests. By the fall of 1910, grievances climaxed as 1,000 farmers staged the "March on Ottawa" to protest government inaction on tariffs, freight rates and land policies. Laurier drafted a reciprocity (free trade) agreement with the Americans, but both Laurier and farmers were defeated when eastern business interests and blue-collar workers would not support reciprocity.

Departmental Developments

Fisher's legacy as agriculture minister includes a major expansion of the scope and activities of the department. Amendments to the *Experimental Farms Stations Act* in 1900 extended the branch farm system and new research stations opened in every province. The Tobacco Branch was organized in the department in 1905 to encourage and develop this new industry.

In 1897, the Canadian and American departments of agriculture agreed to co-operate in the reporting and tracking of livestock diseases. The new co-operative inspection agreement significantly increased livestock trade between the two countries. In 1899, the department appointed a livestock commissioner. A biological laboratory was established on the Central Experimental Farm in 1902 to research animal disease control.

After 1907, the *Meat and Canned Foods Act* provided for the inspection of meat packing plants and canning factories. Departmental veterinarians and inspectors have worked at food establishments ever since.

A seed laboratory was established in Ottawa in 1903 to test seeds for their germination and purity. The *Seed Control Act* of 1905 allowed the government to regulate the quality of Canadian seeds under the authority of a new seed commissioner. Additional seed laboratories across Canada continued this work.

Accomplishments as Minister

- The *Grains Act* (1900) regulated and provided inspectors for the western wheat industry.
- An *Animal Contagious Diseases Act* amendment (1904) compensated livestock owners whose animals were slaughtered to control the spread of disease.
- The *Act Respecting the Incorporation of Livestock Records* (1900, 1905) created one record association to validate credentials for each breed, making it easier to export purebred animals.
- The *Fruit Marks Act* (1901) standardized fruit grades and grade marks on fruit packaging, and introduced inspection at ports to facilitate commercial production and trade.
- New dairy products legislation (1903) prohibited margarine and introduced quality control regulations for butter and cheese to facilitate exports.
- The *Cold Storage Act* (1907) and similar regulations encouraged the use of public cold storage warehouses and refrigerated shipping for dairy products and fruit.
- The *San José Scale Act* (1898) and *Destructive Insect and Pest Act* (1910) introduced inspection and quarantine to prevent pests and disease spreading through fruit trees and crops.

Worth Noting

- The prairie protest movement that was active during Fisher's tenure started the political careers of two future Liberal ministers of agriculture: Thomas Crerar, founder of what became the United Grain Growers, and W.R. Motherwell, founder of the Territorial (Saskatchewan) Grain Growers' Association.
- Reports show that the government was recovering costs for services even at the turn of the century. Fees charged for livestock inspection ranged from two cents to one dollar per animal.



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Martin Burrell

October 16, 1911 - October 12, 1917



Canada

Martin Burrell

(1858-1938)

Birthplace

Faringdon, Berkshire, England

Federal Constituency

Yale-Cariboo/Yale (British Columbia)

Education

St. John's College, Hurstpierpont, England;
Queen's University (LLD (Hon.), 1928)

Professional Background

Bank clerk; fruit farmer in Niagara and Grand Forks, B.C.; lecturer for Farmers' Institute and Ontario Fruit Growers' Association; member, B.C. Board of Horticulture; B.C. fruit commissioner; lecturer in England

Political Affiliation

Conservative

"Our laws would be better—there would be less bitterness in our strife—if we were oftener moved by a sincere desire to lighten the work and brighten the lives of those, who, in the silence and solitude of the fields and the woods, are doing the foundation work of our common country."

— Martin Burrell, speech in the House of Commons, 1913

Political Career

Burrell began his political career as mayor of Grand Forks in 1903. He was elected to the House of Commons as MP for Yale-Cariboo on his second attempt in 1908. Burrell's background as a fruit farmer and horticulturalist in both Ontario and B.C. gave him a different perspective from prairie wheat farmers'. In the 1911 election, he opposed free trade— a position that brought his Conservative party into power. Prime Minister Robert Borden appointed Burrell minister of agriculture.

Burrell served as an MP until 1920. But by the election of 1917, his health had deteriorated and he could no longer handle the demands of the agriculture portfolio. The face of the Borden government changed to reflect the increasingly serious consequences of the First World War. Party lines had blurred and partisanship was on hold: Borden masterminded a coalition Union government dedicated to conscription, wartime prohibition and the elimination of political patronage.

The new government agenda needed a new team to execute wartime policy, and in the subsequent cabinet adjustments, Burrell left the agriculture portfolio to become secretary of state and minister of mines from October 1917 until December 1919 (after the end of

the war). Burrell also served as minister of customs and inland revenue (December 1919 to July 1920) before quitting politics in 1920.

After his public life, Burrell served as librarian for the Library of Parliament until his death in 1938.

Industry Issues

A major drought in Palliser Triangle in 1913 and 1914 slowed once-prosperous prairie wheat production to a comparative trickle. But then came a blessing in disguise: the First World War. With Russia unable to export, world demand for North American wheat raised grain prices to a level previously unseen and new crops, such as flax, could be grown profitably. Burrell called for an all-out war effort and Canadian farmers responded. Even as yields fell later in the war, world consumers accepted what they believed were temporarily higher prices and kept grain production profitable for farmers.

Departmental Developments

The Census and Statistics Office was transferred to the Department of Trade and Commerce in 1912. The Publications Branch was created to distribute information, handle correspondence and, eventually, maintain a departmental library.

The department launched educational and marketing campaigns to inspire the war effort—for example, wool growers, whose product was in demand for military uniforms, learned to grade and pack wool and to form co-operative marketing associations. Department officials were in charge of securing supplies of hay, oats and grain for wartime food production and shipment overseas. Telegraphic market reporting between Canada and Europe improved trade after 1915.

When a rust epidemic in 1916 threatened the supply of seed for the next year's crop, a seed purchasing commission was appointed to purchase, clean, store and distribute the necessary inspected seed grain at cost.

The war affected the department's research. By 1916, more than 100 employees from experimental farms alone had enlisted in the military, threatening the quality of the research service. Still, researchers overcame a threat to Canadian cheese production during the war. Rennet imported from eastern Europe was no longer available. Pepsin, developed in 1916 at Ontario's Finch Dairy Station, proved to be an effective alternative.

The experimental farms started a publicity division in 1915 to organize exhibits and promote their research work.

Accomplishments as Minister

- The *Agricultural Instruction Act* (1913) offered \$10 million to the provinces over a 10-year period to establish and improve agricultural colleges and other forms of agriculture-related training. The Agricultural Instruction Branch was formed to administer these programs.
- In 1914, a system of certified field inspection and tuber examination for potato exports not only lifted an American embargo, but also improved the quality of seed stock and exports. Today's seed potato certification program evolved from these measures.
- The Municipal Testing Order (1914) fought bovine tuberculosis by licensing dairies and encouraging communities to test all dairy cattle every two years.
- First attempts at co-operative marketing, quality control regulations and inspection for eggs were implemented.
- *An Act Respecting Livestock* (1917) authorized the minister of agriculture to supervise the management, fees and conditions of public stockyards.

Worth Noting

- In 1915, a future experimental station in the Abitibi district served as a prisoner-of-war camp. Prisoners cleared 155 acres of forest and 2,500 cords of wood were sold for pulp.
- Burrell was trapped and seriously injured in the 1916 fire in the Parliament Buildings.
- Between 1924 and 1938, Burrell wrote a weekly literary column, *Literature and Life*, for the *Ottawa Journal*. His articles became the basis for two books: *Betwixt Heaven and Charing Cross* (Toronto: 1928) and *Crumbs are Also Bread* (Toronto: 1934).



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Thomas Alexander Crerar

October 12, 1917 - June 11, 1919



Canada

Thomas Alexander Crerar

(1876-1975)

Birthplace

Molesworth, Ontario

Federal Constituencies

Marquette, Brandon, Churchill (Manitoba)

Education

Portage la Prairie Collegiate

Professional Background

Rural schoolteacher; grain farmer and manager of Farmers' Elevator Co-op; president of Grain Growers Grain Company (later United Grain Growers Limited); director of Great West Life Assurance Company, Canada Steamship Lines Ltd., Algoma Steel Corp. Ltd. and Modern Dairies Ltd.

Political Affiliation

Liberal (Unionist) (1917-21), Progressive (1921-25), Liberal (1925-66)

“In T.A. Crerar, Minister of Agriculture for the Unionists, the farmers had a leader who even wrote his ministerial letters on United Grain Growers' paper.”

— Canadian historian Desmond Morton, *A Short History of Canada*

Political Career

Crerar developed his taste for politics as the first reeve of Silver Creek, Manitoba. He entered the national political scene when he was elected as MP for Marquette in 1917.

Crerar's impressive credentials as a farmer, grain buyer and rural activist made him an ideal candidate for the agriculture portfolio. He was appointed minister of agriculture in October 1917, serving in a wartime coalition (Union) government dedicated to non-partisanship and to the effective channelling of Dominion resources toward the war effort in Europe.

The Canadian Council of Agriculture drafted a farmers' platform in 1916. Farmers proposed a different national policy: reciprocity, lower freight rates, bank reforms, railway nationalization and a graduated income tax. In 1918, farmers were furious at the cancellation of their sons' exemption from conscription.

Minister Crerar was listening and fought for farmers' interests around the cabinet table. But he didn't succeed. When Finance Minister Thomas White's 1919 Budget again fell short of farmers' expectations, Crerar quit the cabinet.

Farmers' parties were governing Ontario, Manitoba and Alberta. While Crerar was reluctant to support these political

movements—he was a pragmatist and recognized the appeal of these policies to the soft Liberal vote—his party wasn't listening to farmers. Crerar worked to form a national farmers' party, the Progressives, and became its leader in 1920.

In the 1921 election, Crerar was re-elected as an MP, and the Progressives won 65 seats in Ontario and the West. Crerar refused opposition leader status, hoping instead for the accommodation of farmers' policies within the government agenda. The strategy didn't work, and his party became divided over policy. Frustrated, Crerar resigned as party leader in 1922. He sat as an MP until the end of the 14th parliament but didn't run in the general election of 1925.

After a brief absence from politics, Crerar re-emerged as a Liberal cabinet minister under King in 1929. He served as minister of railways and canals from December 1929 until August 1930 and was re-elected as an MP in a 1930 by-election for Brandon. Later in 1930, he was defeated in the general election that removed Mackenzie King's Liberals from power.

In 1935, Crerar became MP for Churchill and returned to cabinet as minister of mines, of immigration and colonization, and of the interior and as superintendent-general of Indian affairs (October 1935 to November 1936). His appointment was later simplified to minister of mines and resources

(December 1936 to April 1945). As the cabinet minister responsible for natural resources, Crerar was an important decision-maker in King's cabinet during the Second World War.

Crerar was re-elected as MP for Churchill in 1940 and sat in the House of Commons until the dissolution of 19th parliament in April 1945. King called him to the Senate, where he served until his resignation in May 1966. Crerar died in 1975.

Industry Issues

Prompted by the soaring world demand for Canadian wheat at a time of declining prairie yields, the government closed the Winnipeg Grain Exchange in 1917 and created a single wheat board to market the Canadian product. Wheat prices soared to \$3.15 per bushel, offering farmers relative prosperity despite the psychological strain of watching their sons go to war. After the 1919 harvest, the wheat board was dissolved and free enterprise returned to prairie farming.

Departmental Developments

Matters unrelated to agriculture were removed from the department's jurisdiction in 1917: exhibitions, patents, copyrights, trademarks, public health and quarantines were transferred to the Department of Immigration and Colonization.

Oleomargarine was prohibited as a butter substitute under the *Dairy Industry Act* (1903). But in 1917, the Canada Food Board passed an order permitting the use of oleomargarine under the provisions of the *War Measures Act*. The department supervised its manufacture and sale.

Near the end of the war, livestock feed contaminants became an issue—mill feeds were being mixed with harmful weed seeds. In 1918, the Seed Branch began microscopic studies of allegedly contaminated feeds. These investigations placed pressure on feed suppliers to improve the overall quality and accuracy of labelling on feeds offered for sale in Canada.

At the end of the war, Canadian breeders had difficulty shipping cattle to the United States because of Canada's inadequate tuberculosis control record. The department responded with regulations providing for accredited tuberculosis-free herds in September 1919.

Worth Noting

- Crerar is the only minister to have resigned over farmers' issues.
- In 1974, Crerar became the first politician recognized as a companion of the Order of Canada.



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Simon Fraser Tolmie

*August 12, 1919 - December 29, 1921
and July 13, 1926 - September 25, 1926*



Canada

Simon Fraser Tolmie

(1867-1937)

Birthplace

Victoria, British Columbia

Federal Constituency

Victoria (British Columbia)

Education

Ontario Veterinary College, Guelph;
University of British Columbia (LLD (Hon.))

Professional Background

Farmer and breeder of purebred cattle in Victoria, British Columbia; chief inspector, B.C. Health of Animals Branch; Dominion livestock commissioner for B.C.; Dominion organizer for the Conservative Party

Political Affiliation

Conservative

Political Career

Tolmie was elected MP for Victoria in 1917 and served in the Union government under prime ministers Robert Borden and Arthur Meighen. He was appointed minister of agriculture after the resignation of Thomas Crerar in 1919.

The Conservatives lost the 1921 general election to Mackenzie King's Liberals. Tolmie retained his seat but lost his cabinet portfolio. Tolmie again held the agriculture portfolio for a few months in the summer of 1926 when Meighen's Conservatives were asked to form a government during the King-Byng constitutional crisis. King's Liberals were re-elected in 1926 and Tolmie returned to the opposition benches.

Tolmie became active in provincial politics and was elected leader of the B.C. Conservative Party in November 1926. He resigned his federal seat in 1928 and was elected to represent Saanich in the legislative assembly of British Columbia. He became premier of British Columbia and minister of railways until November 1933, when his government lost the election and he lost his seat. Tolmie was re-elected to represent Victoria in the House of Commons in a 1936 by-election but died in office in 1937.

Industry Issues

The Prairies had a problem: declining productivity. Farmers were beginning to experience serious crop failures from their fast-depleting soils. And as world market conditions returned to normal after the First World War, grain prices plummeted to 45 per cent of their wartime peak within two years. Buoyed by their relative prosperity several years earlier, many prairie farmers had heavily invested in land and machinery, only to see their industry falter. Farmers' political parties were in power in Ontario, Manitoba and Alberta, and the federal government was under pressure to improve farmers' fortunes or risk losing their votes.

Departmental Developments

Once the war ended, the department's research work, previously limited by employee absences and diffused by unique wartime demands, resumed at full strength. But new staffing challenges emerged. As the Canadian economy strengthened, technically trained employees were often lost to the private sector, where salaries were higher. Jobs were plentiful and, unfortunately for the department, Canadian universities were only just beginning to produce agriculture graduates.

With the war effort over, the department could discontinue some areas of research and begin new projects. The Seed Purchasing Commission, for example, was no longer needed to guarantee stock in peacetime. New research activities investigated everything from binder twine to sunflowers. The Horticulture Division was expanded and began investigating not only fruit and vegetable culture, but also ornamental gardening, greenhouses and canning. The Fruit Branch was created to oversee the marketing, grading, inspection and transport of fruits for export. New botanical laboratories were established at branch farms, and new experimental stations and substations were established according to research needs.

Market information, both national and international, became more important as the agriculture industry expanded. The department assembled telegraph services for daily markets and interstockyard communication. It created weekly reports and distributed them through the Canadian Press wire and by regular mail. Newspapers and other organizations used these reports and services to disseminate standardized, reliable market information.

Accomplishments as Minister

- A 1920 federal-provincial agreement established that grading dairy products for export was within federal jurisdiction, while grading for home consumption was a provincial concern.
- Grading was introduced for eggs and hogs, in consultation with industry. These quality-control measures helped exporters obtain premium prices, particularly for bacon-type hogs in the British market.
- Regulations were also passed for the inspection, grading and sale of commercial feeds, fertilizers and vegetables.
- Performance testing was introduced for poultry. Department-sponsored inspections and egg-laying contests motivated producers to improve flock quality and performance.
- Under 1920 amendments to the *Criminal Code*, the minister of agriculture was assigned responsibility for horse racing. RCMP officers under departmental supervision enforced regulations at racetracks.

Worth Noting

- In 1926, the Agassiz Experimental Farm received worldwide publicity from an egg-laying contest when a bird owned by the University of British Columbia produced a world record 351 eggs in 365 days.



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William Richard Motherwell

*December 29, 1921 - June 28, 1926
and September 25, 1926 - August 7, 1930*



Canada

William Richard Motherwell

(1860-1943)

Birthplace

Perth, Canada West

Federal Constituencies

Regina, Melville (Saskatchewan)

Education

Ontario Agricultural College, Guelph (1882);
University of Saskatoon (LLD (Hon.) 1928)

Professional Background

Farmer; secretary of Abernethy school district; magistrate of the peace for the Northwest Territories; founder and president of Central Canada Seed Growers Association; co-founder and president of Territorial (later Saskatchewan) Grain Growers' Association

Political Affiliation

Liberal

“Motherwell is not what I call a political farmer. He has been in politics for many years, but during all those years he has always been regarded as a good farmer, even among his neighbours; and this is the acid test.”

— Yorkton, Saskatchewan banker, as quoted in the *Country Guide and Nor-West Farmer*, 1941

Political Career

Although he was born and educated in Ontario, Motherwell's economic and political roots took hold in the wheat fields of Saskatchewan. He ran unsuccessfully to represent Qu'Appelle North in Northwest Territories assembly in 1894 and 1896. But after the CPR failed to transport prairie wheat to lake ports before freeze-up in 1901, Motherwell founded the Territorial Grain Growers' Association, took the CPR to court, and lobbied for legislation to curb railway and line elevator monopolies. This success led to his election to the Saskatchewan assembly in 1905.

Motherwell was Saskatchewan's first commissioner of agriculture from 1905 to 1909, and its first minister of agriculture from 1909 to 1918. As minister, Motherwell initiated co-operative schemes to manage creameries, grain marketing and hail insurance. He supported research into prairie dry belt cultivation and oversaw the founding of the college of agriculture at the new University of Saskatoon in 1908. Motherwell was also provincial secretary between 1905 and 1912. He served as a member of the assembly almost continuously until his resignation in 1918 over a school language controversy.

Motherwell continued his political career in federal politics. Defeated in a by-election for Assiniboia in 1919, he was elected as MP for Regina from 1921 to 1925 and for Melville from 1925 to 1940. In 1921, Motherwell was the only Liberal MP from Alberta or Saskatchewan and a natural candidate for minister of agriculture, given his experience. He served until 1930, except when the Conservatives held power during the King-Byng constitutional crisis of 1926.

By 1930, the Liberals were in as much trouble as the prairie economy. They lost the 1930 general election, but Motherwell continued to be active in agricultural issues as an opposition MP through the Depression. When he retired in 1940 at age 80, he reflected that his farm took more out of him than politics. He died in Regina in 1943.

Industry Issues

The 1920s brought rapid technological change. But with limited resources, farmers couldn't test new machinery, seeds or techniques without considerable risk. They needed non-partisan departmental research to keep up.

After several years of prairie crop losses, a conference on rust control for wheat was held in September 1924. Researchers from the experimental farms, the National Research Council, and Canadian and American universities co-operated to found the Dominion Rust Research Laboratory at the Manitoba Agricultural College in Winnipeg. New rust-resistant varieties of wheat, oats and other cereals were developed.

After a bountiful harvest in 1928, the Wheat Pool had an excess of wheat to sell. The pool-guaranteed price paid to farmers was no longer competitive on the world market; a market correction was inevitable. Farmers and other businesspeople cancelled orders and cut consumption. Inventories were large and terms of credit came due. The stage was set for an economic downturn—the drought of 1929 only served to make things official.

Departmental Developments

In 1923, the British embargo against Canadian cattle ended, providing new export options for Canadian producers. Departmental veterinarians supervised quarantines and inspections and accompanied the shipments of cattle overseas. To facilitate cattle exports to the United States, Canada adopted a new restricted areas plan to control tuberculosis. Other supervised and accredited herd plans registered cattle free of disease and suitable for breeding and export.

Despite the department's best efforts, foot and mouth disease from the United Kingdom penetrated Canadian livestock. By 1927, rabies also crossed the Canadian border from the United States. Sheep scab, however, was successfully eradicated.

In 1923, bacteriology became a division of the Experimental Farms Service. By 1929, 186 illustration (experimental project) stations were established across Canada.

The Agricultural Economics Branch, formed in 1929, was a first: never before had a government department focused so intently on economics and the integrated management of scientific and financial issues.

The shared field of agriculture policy continued to require federal-provincial co-ordination to maintain quality standards. Federal grading regulations developed for international trade were extended to interprovincial trade by enabling provincial legislation.

Worth Noting

- In 1882, Motherwell became one of the first graduates of the Ontario Agricultural College.
- Motherwell was recommended for the Saskatchewan agriculture portfolio in Premier Walter Scott's cabinet by some of the CPR staff he took to court for mismanagement and monopolistic practices.



Agriculture and
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Agriculture et
Agroalimentaire Canada

Robert Weir

August 8, 1930 - October 23, 1935



Canada

Robert Weir

(1882-1939)

Birthplace

Wingham, Ontario

Federal Constituency

Melfort (Saskatchewan)

Education

University of Toronto (BA, 1911)

Professional Background

Teacher in Huron County, Ontario and Regina, Saskatchewan; actuary with Confederation Life; major, 78th Battalion, Canadian Expeditionary Force; Saskatchewan public school inspector; farmer and breeder of horses, cattle and hogs

Political Affiliation

Conservative

Political Career

Robert Weir was elected MP for Melfort in the general election of 1930 and served the department during one of the most challenging periods in Canadian agricultural history.

The Depression was a difficult time to be in government. Communist organizers agitated in prairie relief camps and orchestrated the "On to Ottawa" trek to protest the Conservative government's policies.

Established Tories and business leaders deserted Prime Minister R.B. Bennett and his social policies to organize their own Reconstruction party, which aimed to reform capitalism. The Co-operative Commonwealth Federation (CCF) party gained strength and popularity in Weir's Saskatchewan, while the Social Credit party dominated the political agenda in Alberta. Bennett's Depression-fighting tariffs hurt more than helped the economy.

Weir lost both his seat and his portfolio when the Bennett government was defeated in 1935. He died in Weldon, Saskatchewan in 1939.

Industry Issues

Some regions and commodities continued to expand at a satisfactory level during the Depression. But the prairie wheat pool was ruined when its payments to farmers exceeded the world price for wheat in 1929. The Conservatives kept it alive with secret subsidies, and Bennett gave \$20 million in emergency relief to ailing prairie farmers in 1930.

Prairie winds began lifting topsoil in 1931. The grasshoppers came in 1932 and in 1933 drought, rust, hail and frost joined them in destroying the once-prosperous prairie wheat industry. Land that yielded 23 bushels per acre in 1928 was reduced to an unviable three bushels per acre in 1937. Wheat prices dropped from \$1.28 to 60 cents per bushel between 1928 and 1931. Many farmers quit or moved away from the Prairies. Previous ministers' fears about the vulnerability of prairie farmers who failed to diversify their operations were realized.

Departmental Developments

Departmental researchers at Indian Head, Scott, Swift Current and Lethbridge taught farmers how to prevent soil drifting. Some of the less-viable land was returned to pasture, for which it was more suitable. The department also provided funding for soil surveys in dry areas. The new Soil Research Laboratory at Swift Current studied moisture, drifting and fertility. The new Forage Crops Laboratory at the University of Saskatchewan established an international reputation for breeding and genetic studies with grasses and legumes, as well as for teaching.

Officials from several branches collaborated on a major grasshopper control campaign in 1933. Working with the provinces, they succeeded in dramatically reducing crop losses caused by these pests.

Between 1931 and 1933, the Agricultural Economics Branch conducted a farm power and machinery survey to compare the costs of horse versus tractor power. The survey was one of the first farm management and social change studies conducted in Canada.

Jurisdictional debates arose over the federal government's right to establish standards for trade. In 1934, the *Natural Products Marketing Act* was declared unconstitutional for going beyond the federal government's jurisdiction in creating the single Dominion Marketing Board.

Accomplishments as Minister

Weir's *Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration Act* passed in April 1935. It provided \$1 million per year to help farmers solve their own problems in three ways: by improving cultural practices, conserving water supplies and changing land use. Other federal agencies and prairie provincial governments collaborated in these efforts. Originally, experimental farms staff administered the Act; today, a separate administration continues this work.

Weir opposed centralizing all government research under the National Research Council (NRC), even though the rest of the members of the Privy Council committee studying the issue favoured the change. Rather than remove research from his department, Weir suggested a parallel agricultural research council. By 1934, committees involving agriculture were reorganized as joint committees of the department and the NRC. They also included representatives from industry, academia, other departments and provinces. This co-operative structure still exists in the form of the Canadian Agricultural Research Council.

Worth Noting

- Weir was a First World War hero, wounded at Passchendaele.
- The department's 1932 annual report notes an increase in enquiries about ornamental horticulture, presumably because the unemployed had more time for home improvement.
- During the Depression, Newfoundlanders tried to help by sending salt cod to destitute prairie farmers. But prairie settlers didn't know what it was—some soaked it and used it to plug holes in their roofs!



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James Garfield Gardiner

November 4, 1935 - June 21, 1957



Canada

James Garfield Gardiner

(1883-1962)

Birthplace

Farquhar (Huron County), Ontario

Federal Constituency

Melville (Saskatchewan)

Education

Manitoba College, Winnipeg (BA, 1911)

Professional Background

School principal; farmer

Political Affiliation

Liberal

“[Gardiner was] so single-minded in espousing western affairs that he frequently exasperated his colleagues... His faith in individual effort and in limited government...never wavered, and he consistently applied his ideas to building his province...through depression, war and reconstruction. Notably partisan, he held that a minister should be fully responsible and believed frankly in patronage.”

— Biographer Norman Ward

Political Career

Gardiner won his first provincial by-election for Qu'Appelle North in 1914 and was re-elected to Saskatchewan's legislative assembly five times. He served as minister of highways (1922-26), minister of railways (1926-27), and treasurer (1926-27 and 1934-35). When Premier C.A. Dunning was called to the federal cabinet, Gardiner was chosen leader of the Saskatchewan Liberals and served as premier from 1926 to 1929. The Liberals catered to farmers and the ethnic community for support, but their affinity for patronage contributed to their electoral defeat in 1929.

Gardiner sat as leader of the opposition through the early years of the Depression. The Liberals won the 1934 Saskatchewan election and Gardiner, now MLA for Melville, became premier for the second time in July 1934.

Prime Minister Mackenzie King needed a new federal minister of agriculture and asked Gardiner to leave provincial politics to join him in Ottawa. Gardiner agreed and resigned as premier on November 1, 1935. The following January, he was elected MP for Melville. He was re-elected federally five times.

In addition to his responsibilities in the agriculture portfolio, Gardiner served as minister of war services in 1940 and 1941. His political ambitions went beyond cabinet—he unsuccessfully contested the federal Liberal leadership in 1948. Gardiner's only defeat came during Diefenbaker's electoral sweep of the Prairies in 1958. He retired from politics and died in 1962.

Industry Issues

Gardiner continued efforts started by Weir to rejuvenate prairie soils and rebuild the prairie economy through farm assistance. The Second World War required leadership to secure a supply of agricultural products for Europe and for Canadian troops overseas. Canada had bumper crops after 1939, but the war-stricken United Kingdom could not buy products without a \$1.5-million loan from the Canadian government.

Until 1947, the agricultural supplies committee planned and managed food production and marketing. Commodity-specific boards conserved materials; secured seed; bought, sold and stored supplies; and licensed products for export. Feed freight assistance was implemented to overcome shortages in Eastern Canada. When world production and trade returned to normal after the war and prices dropped, an appointed board marketed farm products and provided subsidies and equalization payments to ensure adequate farm returns.

Departmental Developments

In 1937, a major departmental reorganization grouped similar functions under one administrative head. Four operating services—production, marketing, experimental farms and science—were created in place of the previous nine branches. The separation of basic research activities (Science Service) from the applied research activities (Experimental Farms Service) caused some controversy and confusion. A fifth service, administration service, encompassed the Prairie Farms Rehabilitation Administration (PFRA), library, publicity and extension activities.

Important rehabilitation research occurred at new district experimental substations across the Prairies. After 1935, the national soil survey committee, funded by the PFRA and consisting of provincial, departmental and university researchers, began analysing soil samples to better monitor and understand changing soil resources. With PFRA money and training, field shelterbelt associations planted hedges to prevent drifting and to protect buildings from high winds.

When vegetable seed supplies were cut off during the war, experimental farms produced additional stock. Soybeans, sunflowers and rapeseed provided new forms of industrial oils. Milkweed was studied as a potential rubber substitute and as floss for marine life

preservers. Researchers also advised Department of National Defence officials on the planting and maintenance of airfield grasses.

When Newfoundland joined Confederation in 1949, the department gained a demonstration farm and agricultural school.

In 1951, forest biologists and entomologists were almost moved to the Department of Resources and Development. To keep them in the department and improve service to industry, the Department of Agriculture created a new division of forest entomologists and plant pathologists to encourage co-operative research.

When a serious foot and mouth disease outbreak hit Saskatchewan in 1952, the department realized that officials diagnosing the disease worked in a separate service from those administering quarantines and that this was inefficient. Gardiner ordered animal pathology moved from the Science Service to the Production Service. In 1956, plant protection moved to the Production Service for similar reasons.

Accomplishments as Minister

- The *Prairie Farm Assistance Act* (1939) provided direct payments to farmers who suffered low yields through circumstances beyond their control.
- The *Wheat Acreage Reduction Act* (1942) implemented grain delivery quotas for the first time to overcome wartime surpluses. Farmers were compensated for losses, while additional payments encouraged seeding coarse grains and extending summer fallow.
- The *Agricultural Prices Support Act* (1944) created a board to market products and provided subsidies and equalization payments for farmers during the post-war transition.

Worth Noting

- Gardiner was the longest-serving cabinet minister in one portfolio (22 years).
- The South Saskatchewan River dam, built during the Diefenbaker government to promote irrigation, is named after Gardiner. The reservoir it created is called Diefenbaker Lake.



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Douglas Scott Harkness

June 21, 1957 - October 10, 1960



Canada

Douglas Scott Harkness

(1903-)

Birthplace

Toronto, Ontario

Federal Constituency

Calgary North (Alberta)

Education

University of Alberta (BA);

University of Calgary (LLD (Hon.))

Professional Background

Teacher; farmer; lieutenant colonel in Royal Canadian Artillery

Political Affiliation

Conservative

“He was the only person who could make both farmers and city folk mad in the same speech...He was against all forms of subsidies to farmers and you don’t say that sort of thing to farmers. Then he’d go out and blast city people for trying to get low prices for agricultural goods when they already had the lowest priced food in the world.”

— Alvin Hamilton

Political Career

Harkness returned to Calgary a hero after the Second World War, and was quickly elected MP for Calgary North in 1945. He was a popular local politician, re-elected for either Calgary North, East or Centre over nine successive elections.

By June 1957, western farmers were unimpressed with the governing Liberals and blamed them for unsold grain stocks left sitting on the Prairies. After the election that month, John Diefenbaker’s Conservatives formed a minority government with a margin of only seven seats. For the first time, Western Canadians dominated in Ottawa. Harkness became minister of both northern affairs and natural resources, and agriculture. Two portfolios soon proved onerous, and his Saskatchewan colleague Alvin Hamilton took over the northern affairs and natural resources portfolio a few months later.

In 1958, Diefenbaker called another election and won an unprecedented 53.6 per cent of the popular vote, taking 208 seats in the biggest majority government ever. His government was popular with rural voters, which made it easier for Diefenbaker, Harkness and Hamilton, chair of the cabinet wheat committee and longtime agriculture policy activist, to introduce and implement an aggressive national agricultural program over the next two years.

Harkness was effective but not popular as agriculture minister, so Diefenbaker moved Hamilton into agriculture and switched Harkness to the defence portfolio. Defence was a difficult assignment in the early 1960s given the Cold War, Diefenbaker’s poor relations with the U.S. and the recent cancellation of the Avro Arrow aircraft project. Diefenbaker was always against nuclear arms, but after the Cuban missile crisis most Canadians saw a need for nuclear protection. When Diefenbaker refused Harkness’ recommendation to arm Canadian missiles with nuclear warheads, a leadership crisis emerged in cabinet. Ministers wavered in their support for Diefenbaker, and Harkness resigned from cabinet on February 4, 1963.

The Conservatives were defeated in the general election of 1963 but Harkness remained an MP until he retired in 1972. He still lives in Calgary.

Industry Issues

Agriculture was one of the few sectors not to benefit from the post-war boom. Despite the Conservatives’ free enterprise rhetoric, Harkness’ tenure was relatively interventionist. Harkness and Hamilton believed the long-term effects of their policies would help farmers adjust to changing market conditions. But faced with increasing pressure to help farmers over short-term financial crises, the government offered modest acreage payments. Farmers were not satisfied with this help, and expressed their frustration to Minister Harkness and the cabinet wheat committee through petitions and a march on Ottawa in March 1959.

Departmental Developments

Harkness reorganized the department and reunited pure science with the experimental farms in the Research Branch. Production and marketing formed a second branch, and administration (including economics) formed a third.

The Research Branch was organized geographically into research institutes, regional laboratories and branch farms. Senior scientists co-ordinated research on a problem rather than a discipline basis. Authority was decentralized among regional and institute officers so headquarters could focus on planning and development. Illustration stations were renamed experimental project farms and consolidated in order to better equip the most important facilities.

The Department of Forestry was created in 1960 and incorporated the Forest Biology Division and its 10 regional laboratories.

Accomplishments as Minister

- The *Prairie Grain Advance Payments Act* (1957) provided payments for harvested grain in storage while the Canadian Wheat Board disposed of surpluses from the early 1950s.
- The *Agricultural Stabilization Act* (1958) established a system of flexible guaranteed prices for key commodities based on a 10-year moving average formula.
- The *Farm Credit Act* (1959) established the Farm Credit Corporation to encourage and facilitate new farm investments.
- The *Crop Insurance Act* (1959) allowed the federal government to make direct contributions to provinces that established crop insurance schemes.
- The government intervened to help farmers deal with increasing freight rates and established a royal commission on rail transportation in 1959.
- The *Humane Slaughter of Food Animals Act* (1959) established standards to guide livestock processing establishments in dignified killing practices.

Worth Noting

- Harkness' principal when he taught at Calgary's Crescent Heights High School in the early 1930s was William "Bible Bill" Aberhart, Alberta's famous Social Credit premier.
- Harkness received the George Medal in the Second World War for "courage, gallantry and devotion to duty of a higher order" during the Sicilian campaign.
- Douglas Harkness Community School in Calgary commemorates his accomplishments.
- Harkness was admitted to the Order of Canada in 1978.



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Francis Alvin George Hamilton

October 11, 1960 - April 22, 1963



Canada

Francis Alvin George Hamilton

(1912-)

Birthplace

Kenora, Ontario

Federal Constituency

Qu'Appelle/Qu'Appelle-Moose Mountain
(Saskatchewan)

Education

Normal School, Saskatoon; University of Saskatchewan (BA, 1937, LLD (Hon.), 1989)

Professional Background

Teacher; flight lieutenant, Royal Canadian Air Force; Chairman, Resources and Industries Associates; partner, Baker Trading Co.; mining investor; writer/lecturer; consultant

Political Affiliation

Conservative

"...probably the most popular minister of agriculture in Canadian history...a true prairie radical and an able parliamentarian..."

— Peter Newman, *Renegade in Power: The Diefenbaker Years*

"If you let Alvin loose in a 40-acre field with just three cow pies in it, Alvin would step in all three."

— John Diefenbaker

Political Career

In university, Hamilton cut his political teeth writing speeches for John Diefenbaker and organizing Conservative election campaigns. Saskatchewan Tories were both unpopular and disorganized; Hamilton's ideas, papers, committee work and speeches contributed to their 1957 comeback.

Hamilton worked full time as federal Conservative director in Saskatchewan from 1948 to 1957, and although his eyes were on the federal arena, he was chosen provincial Conservative leader in 1949. By 1957, after unsuccessfully contesting the 1948, 1952 and 1956 provincial elections, he became frustrated with provincial politics and resigned as Saskatchewan leader to focus on the 1957 national campaign.

After defeats in the 1945, 1949 and 1953 federal elections, he vowed that if he did not become an MP, he would quit politics and look for a job. On the strength of Diefenbaker's national development policy, Hamilton was finally elected MP for Qu'Appelle in 1957. At first he told Diefenbaker he did not want a cabinet portfolio, but both his supporters and Diefenbaker felt he deserved one so he became minister of northern affairs and national resources and chaired the cabinet wheat committee from August 1957. In a 1960 cabinet shuffle, Diefenbaker turned the agriculture portfolio over to Hamilton. Hamilton became ill and could not actively

campaign in the 1962 election. The Conservatives won only a minority government, retaining most of their rural ridings but losing the support and confidence of eastern and urban voters. Many Diefenbaker-era policies appeared to benefit only the west—for example, Hamilton solved the problem of grain surpluses but did little to overcome surpluses of butter or other dairy products. Voters were impatient, and despite efforts to develop new policies in support of easterners, the Conservatives lost the 1963 election.

Hamilton resisted the pressure to return to Saskatchewan politics after 1963. He became opposition critic for agriculture, finance and energy, and chaired caucus committees on agriculture and policy. He also sat on the House committee on northern affairs and natural resources and was active in international trade. Hamilton also unsuccessfully contested the federal Conservative leadership in 1967.

Hamilton lost his seat in the 1968 federal election, but returned as MP for Qu'Appelle-Moose Mountain in 1972. He held the seat for the next 16 years. After the Conservatives won the 1984 election, he served as a policy advisor to the Mulroney government.

Hamilton retired from federal politics in 1988 and lives in Manotick, Ontario.

Departmental Developments

Hamilton took a hands-off approach to the department, leaving administration to his deputy and focusing on trade and development.

He transferred the Canadian Wheat Board from the trade and commerce portfolio to agriculture because he felt that to solve farmers' cash flow problems, he needed control over grain sales. The Board of Grain Commissioners also came under his authority after 1960.

In 1962, the Health of Animals Division split from the Production and Marketing Branch. Hamilton also established the Food Research Institute, combining three related institutes into one to study food quality and consumer acceptance, storage and processing.

Accomplishments as Minister

At the height of the Cold War, Hamilton sold Canada's surplus grain to communist China. Beijing had a food shortage and started buying Canadian wheat in 1958. Under a 1960 agreement, over \$422 million worth of wheat and barley was sent to China over two and a half years.

The trade and diplomatic negotiations were controversial. Cabinet almost didn't approve the credit arrangements. Americans opposed trading with "enemy communists". Commonwealth loyalists opposed China's aggression towards India. And textile manufacturers feared lost market share if reciprocal Chinese goods entered Canada. However, these sales restored western agricultural prosperity—the average farm income tripled—and created a lasting legacy for the Conservative party across the Prairies. Today, grain sales to China are worth \$750 million.

Hamilton helped establish the United Nations' World Food Program and the Agricultural Economic Research Council, a joint industry-government agency dedicated to independent policy evaluation and research in agricultural economics and rural sociology.

His final legacy was the *Agricultural Rehabilitation and Development Act* (ARDA) of 1961. This legislation made it easier for joint federal-provincial programs to help farmers operating small or unprofitable farms pursue alternate land use or employment, to promote soil and water conservation, and to fund research and rural development projects.

Worth Noting

- Hamilton won the Burma Star Decoration for his service in the Second World War.
- In 1987, Parliament recognized Hamilton for his 30th anniversary as a MP. John Turner toasted and roasted his career, concluding, "The farmers of this country will always remember him as a spectacularly successful minister...The only weakness in judgement he has ever shown is having hired Brian Mulroney." (Mulroney worked on Hamilton's 1962 campaign.)



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Harry William Hays

April 22, 1963 - December 17, 1965



Canada

Harry William Hays

(1909-1982)

Birthplace

Carstairs, Alberta

Federal Constituency

Calgary South (Alberta)

Education

St. Mary's High School, Calgary

Professional Background

Auctioneer, cattle exporter, rancher/farmer and Holstein breeder; president of Canadian Swine Breeders during the wartime "Bacon for Britain" campaign; founding member/president, Alberta Poultry Breeders' Association; president, Alberta Holstein Breeders' Association; chairman, Calgary Board of Trade agricultural bureau; radio broadcaster

Political Affiliation

Liberal

"I don't want to present myself as a country bumpkin or a hayseed, whatever political advantages that folksy image may have seemed to have... I don't believe you have to pose as a country cousin with barnyard on your overalls... to do a decent job as minister of agriculture."

— Harry Hays

"No minister seems more inept inside Parliament and few get so much done outside it."

— Walter Stewart, *Toronto Star Weekly*, 1965

Political Career

When Harry Hays sold his dairy herd and became mayor of Calgary in 1959 he said he had "made his fortune as a rancher and dairyman and needed something to do in retirement."

Hays admired Lester Pearson and was offered the chance to develop Liberal agriculture policy if he ran in the 1963 election. He became the only Liberal elected in Alberta or Saskatchewan that year. After he was appointed minister of agriculture, his frequent absences in Parliament were controversial—his time was precious as he continued to serve briefly as Calgary's mayor, travelled as Rotary Club district governor and refused to stop auctioneering.

Hays was a colourful politician, using poor grammar and swearing, then telling reporters who smoothed the "roughage" from his quotes that he was misquoted. Hays once described his goal: "We want a flush-toilet, not an outhouse, farm economy for Canada". He was popular in caucus, and would often invite rural backbenchers to review draft legislation and offer opinions. But he found Ottawa's slow pace "a burr under my saddle". He antagonized farmers' organizations by shooting down proposals he didn't like.

He thought Canada was behind other countries in establishing prices to ensure a strong industry and said subsidies led to surpluses. He advocated a minimum farm income and a comprehensive marketing system for farmers.

In 1965, Hays was defeated as an MP. Albertans were unimpressed with Liberal policies on medicare, pensions and the new Canadian flag. Hays was appointed to the Senate in 1966 and continued to develop agriculture policy as member of the Senate agriculture committee.

Hays also co-chaired the special joint committee of the Senate and the House of Commons on the Constitution in 1980, and played a key role in developing the Charter of Rights and convincing his fellow senators to dilute their power to veto legislation. He died following heart surgery in 1982.

Departmental Developments

- Trade Minister Mitchell Sharp oversaw the Canadian Wheat Board during Hays' tenure.
- Computers were used to process milk production records after 1963.
- In 1964, the Economics Division became a branch, responsible for marketing and trade.
- Some experimental stations were closed and consolidated to improve research efficiency.

Accomplishments as Minister

After successful imports of Charolais cattle from the United States in 1951, Hays responded to farmers' demands for quality exotic breeds and developed a European importation plan. One hundred and thirteen Charolais cattle were imported directly into Canada from Europe in 1965, subject to strict quarantines and inspections. Simmental, Limousin, Main Anjou and Brown Swiss imports followed.

In return, Hays established Canada's showcase herds of dairy and beef breeds. The herds were kept on experimental farms; the Production and Marketing Branch managed and funded their activities. In 1965, a travelling exhibit of Canadian Holsteins was flown to France for a two-month tour of agricultural shows to promote two-way trade. Similar European and North American tours were organized in subsequent years.

Hays' *Dairy Commission Act* (1966) created a regulatory agency to purchase, process, ship, store and dispose of product; make payments to stabilize prices; investigate production, processing and marketing; and promote the use of dairy products and improvements in their quality and variety. However, Hays believed farmers needed to expand and diversify because "price alone cannot correct the economic difficulties of...small producers".

The *Farm Machinery Syndicate Credit Act* (1964) offered groups of farmers loans to purchase machinery on a co-operative basis and expanded the size of loans available.

The federal government revised its support for farm fairs and exhibitions in 1965 and created controversial new product classifications emphasizing utility over appearances.

Hays also established the Veterinary College at Saskatoon, expanded the crop insurance system and originated a national farm accounting system.

Worth Noting

- Hays introduced cattle exports by air, shipped purebred cattle to the United Kingdom and Mexico for the first time, and opened new markets as North America's biggest livestock exporter in the 1950s. He once had Canada's largest Holstein herd and held numerous world records.
- He also developed Hays Converter beef cattle, the first new breed recognized for registry in Canada.
- Hays regretted his lack of formal education and dreamed of running the experimental farm at Lethbridge. When he became minister, his wife joked that he now ran all 38.

- Douglas Harkness (also from Calgary) was a good friend of Hays. But Alvin Hamilton was a bitter political opponent. Hamilton's image, according to Hays, was inflated "to the dimensions of a latter-day saint of the back forty". Hays once challenged Hamilton to go to the Central Experimental Farm to prove he could milk cows—but the milking contest never occurred, much to the media's chagrin.
- Calgary's federal building on Fourth Avenue SE is named after Hays.
- Hays' son Dan is currently a Liberal senator for Alberta.



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John J. Greene

December 18, 1965 - July 5, 1968



Canada

John J. Greene

(1920-1978)

Birthplace

Toronto, Ontario

Federal Constituencies

Renfrew South, Niagara Falls (Ontario)

Education

University of Toronto (BA, 1948), Osgoode Hall (LLB, 1950)

Professional Background

Northern Ontario mine worker; flight lieutenant, Royal Canadian Air Force (1941-45); established law firm in Arnprior, Ontario in 1949

Political Affiliation

Liberal

I find it hard not to go like hell. If I can't do it, I'll just have to quit.

— J. J. Greene, speaking about his 1969 heart attack

Political Career

Although his upbringing in Toronto was very different from a farm lifestyle, Greene was once described in the *Toronto Star* as “folksy, friendly and successful...easy-going and rustic...one of the best stump politicians in the Commons”. As one of Canada’s few non-farmer ministers of agriculture, Greene used his experience in small-town and county politics in Arnprior and Renfrew County to gain an understanding of rural communities.

Greene unsuccessfully contested the Ontario Liberal leadership in 1959. He was elected MP for Renfrew South in 1963. After his re-election in 1965, Greene became Lester Pearson’s minister of agriculture—the first easterner in 54 years to hold the post. He was criticized for being an urban lawyer who knew nothing about agriculture and had simply lobbied harder than anyone else for the job.

In 1968, Greene contested the federal Liberal leadership, delivering an inspiring speech on national unity and making it to the third ballot before supporting Pierre Trudeau. Later that year he was re-elected as MP for a new constituency, Niagara Falls, and appointed minister of energy, mines and resources in Trudeau’s first cabinet. As energy minister, he prevented the sale of the largest oil company under Canadian control and Canada’s largest uranium producer to American interests.

Greene suffered a heart attack in 1969. In 1971, he suffered a stroke while attending a nuclear conference in Japan. He retired from cabinet in January 1972 and was called to the Senate in September 1972. Greene never stopped working for Canadians. He was still participating in Senate debates the week before he died in Ottawa in 1978.

Departmental Developments

- In 1966, the Board of Grain Commissioners computerized the warehouse receipts and accounting documents of Canadian government elevators.
- During Canada's Centennial in 1967, the department produced several special publications to document the history of the department and of Canada's agriculture industry. Higher than average numbers of visitors were noted at experimental farm establishments and the agriculture museum throughout 1967.
- The Sir John Carling building opened in Ottawa in 1967. For the first time, administrators from different department divisions and branches were brought together at an administrative headquarters on the Central Experimental Farm.
- In addition to assisting the nine original commodities it was designed to help, the Agricultural Stabilization Board provided subsidies for sugar beets, potatoes, and milk and cream for manufacturing.
- Departmental research started to place more emphasis on livestock and agricultural engineering.
- The Canadian Livestock Feed Board, created under the jurisdiction of the minister of forestry in 1966, was transferred to Greene's portfolio in 1968.

Accomplishments as Minister

Under Greene's leadership, five prominent agricultural economists were appointed to the 1967 Task Force on Agricultural Policy to make recommendations to the minister on how best to ensure farmers' income and welfare. The task force commissioned 12 studies on current agriculture issues.

In 1965, the Economics Branch began a long-term appraisal of Canadian agriculture, researching projected supply and demand figures for commodities and anticipating the market behaviour of producers and consumers. These studies considered the implementation of marketing boards for a variety of Canadian commodities and paved the way for future marketing legislation.

Amendments to the *Crop Insurance Act* in 1966 made insurance available to more farmers and reduced the costs of farmer participation by increasing federal contributions. The program was also extended to cover production units such as fruit trees, berry plants and forage stands, as well as the costs of preparing summer fallow should seeding be impossible the following spring due to excess moisture. Greene's amendments worked: the 1968-69 departmental annual report notes a 93-percent increase in the number of farmers participating in provincial insurance schemes over the previous year.

Greene was elected chairman of the World Food Program Pledging Conference at the United Nations in 1966 and led the Canadian delegation to the Food and Agricultural Organization Conference in Rome in 1967.

Worth Noting

- Greene won the Distinguished Flying Cross for his service in the Second World War.



Agriculture and
Agri-Food Canada

Agriculture et
Agroalimentaire Canada

Horace Andrew (Bud) Olson

July 6, 1968 - November 26, 1972



Canada

Horace Andrew (Bud) Olson

(1925-)

Birthplace

Iddesleigh, Alberta

Federal Constituency

Medicine Hat (Alberta)

Education

Medicine Hat High School

Professional Background

Rancher/wheat farmer; general store merchant and owner of farm supply business; member of Farmers' Union of Canada and Western Stock Growers' Association until elected to Parliament; member of Economic Council of Canada (1975-79)

Political Affiliation

Social Credit (until 1967), Liberal

"A man of great civility and intelligence."

— Jean Chrétien, speaking about Olson on his appointment as lieutenant-governor of Alberta, 1996

"Farmers regarded the minister and the Department of Agriculture as their champion of everything and if you're a good politician you'd better accept that's the vision they have of you and do something useful for them..."

— Bud Olson

Political Career

Olson became a Social Credit MP for Medicine Hat in 1957. Although he was defeated in the 1958 election, he won the seat again in 1962 and was re-elected in 1963 and 1965. By 1967, the federal Social Credit party was disintegrating. Though many of Olson's colleagues switched to the Conservatives, former Liberal agriculture minister Harry Hays helped persuade him to sit as a Liberal MP. Always the pragmatist, Olson decided his chances of making a difference with the Liberals, who had no seats in Alberta at the time, were greater than with the Conservatives, who dominated western Canadian seats.

Olson supported Pierre Trudeau's Liberal leadership campaign and was appointed minister of agriculture after winning his first election as a Liberal in 1968. But in the early 1970s, federal Liberal policies were unpopular in Alberta. (Trudeau even asked struggling western farmers "Why should I sell your wheat?") Olson was defeated in the 1972 and 1974 elections.

In 1977, Olson was called to the Senate. He served as opposition House leader in 1979 and government leader from 1982 to 1984. Olson's favourite cabinet portfolio was one he held as a senator—minister of economic and regional development from 1980 to 1984. As one of Trudeau's most powerful ministers, he chaired the cabinet committee on economic development from 1980 to

1983. He was also the minister responsible for the Northern Pipeline Agency from 1980 to 1984. "Selling" the National Energy Policy in his home province was a major political challenge, but he tried to work with oil company representatives on regulatory reforms. A 1982 *Macleans* article described him as "low-key, affable, unflappable and shrewd as a fox".

Olson became Alberta's 14th lieutenant-governor in April 1996. Some considered the appointment controversial, but Olson said, "If you want someone to do this well, get a politician".

Industry Issues

In 1969, a special task force studied the challenges and conditions facing farmers and processors and released a report called *Canadian Agriculture in the Seventies*. Overproduction was a chronic problem with many commodities, and marketing systems were a top priority for policy development. Olson reflects that his role "was a selling job all the time. We had great surpluses of wheat, pork in storage, a mountain of skim milk powder...and we had to get out in the international market and sell it. And that was not easy...other countries also had surpluses and we had to try to get a decent price".

Departmental Developments

Popular ideology suggested a “food systems” approach would be appropriate for planning and co-ordinating government activities. In 1972, the Food Systems Branch was created to “review, evaluate and monitor federal government food programs as they related to the production and marketing of agricultural products”. These changes introduced a market-oriented approach to commodity management that included not only primary producers but also processors, distributors, retailers and consumers. The new approach was controversial among some farm organizations, who feared a loss of control over agricultural policies.

The department was actively involved in implementing programs to curtail overproduction, particularly in grains. A grassland incentive program was introduced and research branch scientists sought ways to encourage grain farmers to seed their poorer land to permanent grass. Scientists also tried to find new uses for surplus cereals and identify innovative new crops that could be marketed to both Canadian and world markets.

The size and scope of government activities were restricted for the first time. Some research stations were closed to reduce overhead costs. For example, in 1971 the Institute for Biological Control in Belleville closed and many employees moved to Winnipeg or Regina.

Some research was contracted out to universities or the private sector. This stimulated private sector employment and innovation in areas where the department lacked sufficient resources. Contracts were awarded for solutions to specific problems, which ensured results could be quickly and effectively used in the economy.

Accomplishments as Minister

- Olson oversaw the early and controversial steps towards supply management, including enabling legislation for marketing boards for turkey and chicken. “I tried to persuade farmers that their job was to participate in marketing and not expect someone else to do it for them,” says Olson. “Others would only be interested in margins. Farmers needed to be active to get a good price.”
- The LIFT (Lower Inventories for Tomorrow) program was introduced to curtail western wheat production and reduce grain surpluses.
- The department revised the *Canada Grains Act* for the first time in 30 years.
- It also introduced the Small Farms Development Program, which would both help struggling producers and also offer other options to those who wanted to quit farming.



Agriculture and
Agri-Food Canada

Agriculture et
Agroalimentaire Canada

Eugene Francis Whelan

*November 27, 1972 - June 3, 1979
and March 3, 1980 - June 29, 1984*



Canada

Eugene Francis Whelan

(1924-)

Birthplace

Amherstburg, Ontario

Federal Constituency

Essex South/Essex-Windsor (Ontario)

Education

Walkerville Vocational and Technical School,
University of Windsor (LLD (Hon.) 1983)

Professional Background

Mixed farmer, trained as a tool and die maker; director and president of Harrow Farmers Co-op; director of United Co-operatives of Ontario, Co-operators Insurance Co., Ontario Winter Wheat Producers Marketing Board; president of Essex County branch, board member of Ontario Federation of Agriculture

Political Affiliation

Liberal

“Paper doesn’t feed cows and it doesn’t feed people.”

— Eugene Whelan

Political Career

Whelan learned about grassroots democracy from his experiences in municipal politics, working his way from the local separate school board in 1945 to township council and the Essex County road committee in the 1950s and eventually serving as warden of Essex County in 1962. After an early defeat in the provincial election of 1959, he was elected MP for Essex South in the general election of 1962 and held the seat until he retired from politics.

Agriculture and resource issues were Whelan’s consistent focus as an MP; he became involved in politics because “he wanted farmers to have a bigger say”. He chaired the House of Commons’ agriculture committee (1965-68) and served as parliamentary secretary to the minister of fisheries and forestry (1968-70). After the 1972 election he was appointed minister of agriculture, a post he held for the next 12 years, except for the nine-month tenure of Joe Clark’s Conservative government in 1979-80.

Whelan took a particular interest in international parliamentary and agriculture organizations, representing Canada at the founding conference of the United Nations World Food Council (1974) and serving as its president (1983-85). As both a minister and an MP, he was active in foreign aid and

agricultural development issues and participated in several trade missions and in conferences of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations.

Whelan ran unsuccessfully for the Liberal leadership in June 1984. He decided not to contest the 1984 election and became an agriculture and agri-food policy consultant, continuing his involvement in international agriculture issues. On his retirement in July 1984, he was appointed the first Canadian ambassador and permanent representative to the FAO in Rome. His appointment was cancelled by the Conservatives that October because they felt it was an example of Liberal patronage. He accepted a Senate appointment in August 1996.

Industry Issues

Whelan’s government introduced food price controls to offset inflation. Even though the Food Prices Review Board blamed marketing boards and not supermarkets for high prices, Whelan championed farmers’ rights to good prices. He saw their problems as, not overproduction, but producing the wrong things for the wrong market.

Departmental Developments

By 1977, the food systems approach had permeated management across the department. The Food Systems Branch was absorbed into the Regional Development Branch. The other five branches were also realigned to promote a “food policy” orientation. A further reorganization in 1978 created the Policy, Planning and Evaluation Branch as a liaison between domestic and international development issues. More and more, the department’s work overlapped with food policy work in other departments, and Whelan worked to establish collaborative policies.

Whelan’s commitment to international agriculture and his strong personal concern about the potential famine conditions in Africa led to increased departmental participation in many CIDA-approved agricultural research and development projects.

Whelan spent a lot of time in direct contact with departmental staff and is still remembered as one of the most popular and respected ministers. Whelan says, “When I arrived in 1972 I was handed one of the finest outfits in the government... Since Confederation, Agriculture had been the most decentralized department of government... we were doing it before anyone was talking about it”.

Accomplishments as Minister

- Whelan was committed to supply management and marketing boards, particularly for the dairy industry. He proclaimed the Canadian Egg Marketing Agency in 1973 and the National Turkey Marketing Agency in 1974 and created the National Chicken Broiler Agency in 1976. He was unsuccessful in achieving marketing boards for other commodities.
- The New Crop Development Fund (1973) helped develop new crops and varieties.
- A domestic feed grain policy (1974, 1976) co-ordinated the transportation and stocks of feed grains for domestic and export markets. Additional feed storage programs in 1977 increased the production and efficiency of the livestock feed industry.
- Whelan wanted to establish a farmers’ bank. Although he didn’t achieve this goal, amendments to the *Farm Credit Act* (1975, 1978) raised the ceiling for borrowing.
- The *Advance Payments for Crops Act* (1977) guaranteed loans to producers requiring advance payments for perishable crops.
- Whelan worked with farm organizations to create CANAGREX, the Canadian Agricultural Export Corporation, as a federal Crown corporation in 1983.

Worth Noting

- Whelan was one of Pierre Trudeau’s best constitutional campaigners. But in 1976, angry Quebec dairy farmers threw diluted milk on Whelan after cabinet refused to approve dairy subsidies to compensate farmers in a collapsed world market. Whelan says this refusal helped elect the Parti Quebecois in rural ridings that fall (half of Canada’s dairy farmers are from Quebec).
- Mikhail Gorbachev, as Minister of Agriculture for the USSR, visited Canada at Whelan’s invitation in 1983 — his only major trip to a western country before becoming General Secretary of the Communist party.
- Whelan, “The Great Canadian Farmer”, was made an officer of the Order of Canada in 1987.
- The Hon. Eugene F. Whelan Experimental Farm near Woodslee, part of the Harrow Research Station, recognizes his contributions.
- Whelan’s daughter Susan is now MP for Essex.



Agriculture and
Agri-Food Canada

Agriculture et
Agroalimentaire Canada

John Wise

*June 4, 1979 - March 2, 1980
and September 17, 1984 - September 14, 1988*



Canada

John Wise

(1935-)

Birthplace

St. Thomas, Ontario

Federal Constituency

Elgin (Ontario)

Education

University of Guelph (1956)

Professional Background

Fifth-generation dairy farmer; president of Elgin Jersey Breeders; director and president, Oxford and District Cattle Breeders Association (now Western Ontario Breeders); dairy cattle judge; chairman of Elgin and St. Thomas Planning Boards; director of Elgin Co-operative Services

Political Affiliation

Conservative

“In this job, the roof usually fell in on you every day. You’re dealing with Mother Nature and you never know what to expect.”

— John Wise, quoted in *The Globe and Mail* in 1988

Political Career

Wise was active in farm organizations and in municipal politics and planning for more than 15 years before his election to Parliament. He served as councillor, deputy reeve and reeve of Yarmouth Township through the 1960s and became warden of Elgin County in 1969. Three years later, he was elected MP for Elgin, a seat he held through five consecutive elections until 1988, when he did not run.

Based on his experience, Wise was a natural fit for the roles of opposition dairy and agriculture critic through the 1970s. He also served as critic for supply and services (1983-84). He developed Conservative agriculture platforms and policies and chaired his caucus’ agriculture committee in 1976. When Joe Clark’s Conservatives won the 1979 election and formed a minority government for nine months, he was appointed minister of agriculture. Four years later, he became one of the few Clark-era cabinet ministers to retain the same portfolio in Brian Mulroney’s majority government.

Wise held the agriculture portfolio through the first term of the Mulroney government but decided to retire from politics before the 1988 election. He remains active in agriculture issues and currently serves as a board member for Amtelcom and chairman of the board for the Canadian Livestock

Exporters Association and the Canadian Embryo Exporters Association. He sold his dairy herd when he was elected to Parliament, but he still lives on his farm near St. Thomas, Ontario.

Industry Issues

When Wise began his second term in 1984, the industry was experiencing some of its worst financial conditions since the 1930s. Record high interest rates and low market prices, in combination with a trade war over grains between the European Community and the United States, brought unprecedented challenges to the farm community. Record levels of government compensation for droughts, floods and poor harvest conditions—particularly the Special Canadian Grains payments in 1986 and 1987—were responses to the industry’s cries for help. Wise also had the challenge of protecting the principles of supply management while introducing his government’s free trade policies to the agriculture industry.

Departmental Developments

In 1979, the Health of Animals Branch became part of the Food Production and Inspection Branch in a reorganization designed to strengthen the regional development and marketing activities of the department. Decentralized plant and animal inspection activities were integrated with some of the plant and animal production, quarantine and racetrack supervision activities.

The same reorganization formed the Regional Development and International Affairs Branch, amalgamating intergovernmental and international services with farm development, some animal and crop production activities, and the Agricultural Development Directorate of the Policy, Planning and Economics Branch. A director of regional development was appointed in each province.

The Marketing and Economics Branch was created to increase trade promotion as part of a government-wide priority to increase international trade.

Accomplishments as Minister

The department's budget increased from \$1 billion to \$4 billion during Wise's tenure. He reflects that "we invested a lot of money".

- The *Farm Debt Review Act* (1986) established farm debt review boards in every province to help farmers and facilitate financial arrangements with creditors in times of crisis.
- Wise amended the *Farm Credit Act* and increased assistance for farmers borrowing through the Farm Credit Corporation by increasing the corporation's funding and accessibility. New programs also reduced farm interest rates, shared mortgage risks and offered commodity-based loans.
- Amendments to the *Agricultural Stabilization Act* (1985) increased the number of commodities covered, increased the level and changed the calculation of support, and allowed for regional support programs. The Tri-Partite Stabilization Program also provided a national plan for federal-provincial-industry co-operation in stabilizing farm incomes.

- The Canadian Rural Transition Program (1986) helped families who were forced to stop farming, providing assistance for retraining or offering targeted initiatives, such as the Tobacco Diversification Plan, to diversify into other businesses.
- The *Farm Improvement and Marketing Cooperatives Loans Act* (1987) offered individuals and co-operatives loan guarantees for processing, distributing and marketing products.
- The Grape Revitalization Program (1987) improved the competitiveness of Ontario and British Columbia's grape and wine industries.
- In 1986, Wise announced a new long-term dairy policy following an extensive review. The five-year program and its multi-year financial commitment brought increased stability to the dairy sector.
- Wise oversaw the establishment of new research stations and laboratories at St-Hyacinthe, Guelph, Calgary, Lethbridge, Brandon and London.

Worth Noting

- Wise is the honorary founding president of Soil Conservation Canada.



Agriculture and
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Ralph Ferguson

June 30, 1984 - September 16, 1984



Canada

Ralph Ferguson

(1929-)

Birthplace

Middlesex County, Ontario

Federal Constituency

Lambton-Middlesex (Ontario)

Education

Alvinston, Ontario

Professional Background

Farmer; charter member of National Farm Products Marketing Council; member, Ontario Federation of Agriculture; co-founder, Lambton Pork Producers Association, advocate of Ontario Pork Producers Marketing Board in late 1950s; chairman, Lambton County Egg Producers and worked to create Ontario Egg Producers Marketing Board in mid-1960s; county delegate to the Ontario Egg Board; served on county wheat, white bean and soybean associations

Political Affiliation

Liberal

Political Career

Ferguson was elected to the House of Commons in 1980 and appointed parliamentary secretary to the minister of state (small business and tourism) in March. In the early 1980s, he also served as parliamentary secretary to the minister of finance and as deputy government whip.

Ferguson was a proponent of export market expansion and participated in several trade missions. He encouraged farm organizations and the federal Liberals to create CANAGREX, the Canadian Agricultural Export Corporation, as a Crown corporation in 1983. Ferguson was appointed minister of agriculture by John Turner, who became prime minister in June 1984, and served until the Liberals' electoral defeat three months later.

Ferguson lost his seat in the 1984 general election but was re-elected in 1988. His concern over growing corporate concentration in U.S. agriculture made him a strong opponent of free trade with the United States. He served as opposition agriculture critic and assistant co-critic for international trade. His continued involvement in policy development led to the adoption of a comprehensive agriculture policy by the Liberal party in 1970. He retired from politics in 1993 but is still an agricultural activist in southwestern Ontario, a practising conservationist and a proponent of environmentally friendly, renewable fuels.

Accomplishments as Minister

Because Ferguson served for a limited period, it is difficult to identify a specific legacy for him in the department. With increasing pressure from industry for plant breeders' rights legislation, Ferguson recognized the need to protect parent seed stocks and was instrumental in establishing the first in a series of controlled environment seed banks for this purpose at the Morden research facility. He is best known for his later work and studies comparing farm gate and consumer prices and lobbying against corporate concentration in the Canadian food system.



Agriculture and
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Donald Frank Mazankowski

September 15, 1988 - April 20, 1991



Canada

Donald Frank Mazankowski

(1935-)

Birthplace

Viking, Alberta

Federal Constituency

Vegreville (Alberta)

Education

Viking, Alberta; Technical University of Nova Scotia (D.Eng. (Hon.), 1987) and University of Alberta (LLD (Hon.), 1993)

Professional Background

Owner of a car and farm machinery dealership in a farm community; separate school board trustee

Political Affiliation

Conservative

“We were aiming for a partnership with farmers and the provinces . . . trying to grow the pie rather than haggling over the size of the piece.”

— Don Mazankowski, 1997

Political Career

Mazankowski’s long and distinguished career in federal politics began with his election to the House of Commons in 1968. He was re-elected as MP for Vegreville (Alberta) in six consecutive elections and served in Parliament for the next 25 years.

When the federal Conservatives were in opposition in the 1970s, Mazankowski served as caucus chair from 1973 to 1976 and co-chair of both the 1976 leadership convention and the 1981 general meeting. He served as transportation critic and chaired the Conservative caucus committee on transportation and communications, as well as serving as the Conservative spokesperson on government operations and economic development. He served briefly in Joe Clark’s cabinet in 1979-80 as minister of transport and minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board.

When the Conservatives formed a majority government in 1984, Mazankowski was appointed minister of transport, as well as acting minister for industry, science and technology. He served in these capacities until June 1986. He then became government

House leader and president of the Privy Council, roles he filled until 1989 and 1991 respectively. In 1986, he was also appointed deputy prime minister, a position he held until his retirement from federal politics in 1993.

Mazankowski served as president of the Treasury Board (1987-88), minister responsible for privatization and regulatory affairs (1988-91) and minister of agriculture (1988-91). His final portfolio was finance, which he held from 1991 until his retirement. Throughout his career in cabinet he served on powerful committees such as priorities and planning, operations, expenditure review, Treasury Board, Canadian unity, and security and intelligence. Over time, Mazankowski was nicknamed the “Minister of Everything”. He was awarded the title Right Honourable in June 1993.

Since his official retirement from public life in October 1993, Mazankowski has been named to the board of directors of 11 major corporations involved in international trade and commerce. He also serves on the board of governors of the University of Alberta and is currently the agriculture and rural development sector facilitator for an Alberta government task force on economic growth.

Industry Issues

Mazankowski reversed the interventionist tendencies of previous subsidy programs. He aimed for a market-driven approach to agriculture policies that focused on adding value. Trade issues dominated his term as minister. The Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement was implemented to improve access to American markets and eliminate tariffs while protecting Canadian supply management systems.

Canada also participated in the Uruguay round of negotiations on the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), calling on member countries to implement comprehensive agriculture reforms and reduce trade-distorting measures for agricultural commodities. The Canadian industry had to agree to phase out its support systems over the course of the multilateral trade negotiations. This development advanced Mazankowski's free market ideology but was controversial with producers and farm organizations.

Departmental Developments

In 1989, as a result of an industry task force review, the department developed a new comprehensive policy called *Growing Together: A Vision for Canada's Agri-Food Industry*. It was based on four pillars for Canadian agriculture in the 1990s: market orientation, regional diversity, greater

self-reliance and environmental sustainability. A parallel mission review was underway in the department, which evolved into a comprehensive regulatory review and industry consultation process to consolidate and refine departmental activities in the years to come. Risk assessment studies related to food safety set departmental priorities for food sampling. Evaluations of Canadian trading partners' practices laid the groundwork for future improvements in food inspection.

The 1991 Budget created a special operating agency to manage the department's racetrack supervision responsibilities.

Accomplishments as Minister

- The *Farm Income Protection Act* (1991) promoted economic stability in the agriculture community by bringing together elements of previous farm safety net programs into a comprehensive, whole-farm strategy. The Gross Revenue Insurance Program (GRIP) offered price supports and yield protection while the Net Income Stabilization Account (NISA) helped producers secure a steady farm income.
- The Canadian Agri-Food Development Initiative (1989) funded industry diversification and innovation, such as the development of apple chips for market in British Columbia.

- The Domestic Dairy Product Innovation Program of the Canadian Dairy Commission (1989) added flexibility to the national system for managing industrial milk supply by providing an amount of milk additional to provincial milk quotas to introduce innovative products on the domestic market.
- National soil conservation program agreements were signed with almost every province to encourage federal-provincial co-operation in improved soil management.
- Amendments to the *Crop Insurance Act* (1990) increased maximum coverage levels and offered greater flexibility in average yields and support payments.
- New plant breeders rights were established to guarantee protection and royalties for new and innovative plant varieties and to encourage private sector research and development.



Agriculture and
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William Hunter McKnight

April 21, 1991 - January 4, 1993



Canada

William Hunter McKnight

(1940-)

Birthplace

Elrose, Saskatchewan

Federal Constituency

Kindersley-Lloydminster (Saskatchewan)

Education

Elrose, Saskatchewan

Professional Background

Farmer

Political Affiliation

Conservative

“In 1977 and 1978, I got disgusted . . . I wanted to make a change for my province, for Canada I guess, and I decided I was bloody well going to run.”

— Bill McKnight, 1988 interview

Political Career

After three years as president of the Conservative Party of Saskatchewan from 1974 to 1977, McKnight was elected MP for Kindersley-Lloydminster in 1979. He was re-elected in the next three federal elections.

When the Conservatives took office in 1984, McKnight was appointed minister of labour and minister responsible for the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation. In 1986, he switched portfolios and became the minister of Indian affairs and northern development. He added to this assignment the role of minister responsible for western economic diversification in 1987.

McKnight left these portfolios for defence in 1989 and switched assignments yet again in 1991 when he succeeded Don Mazankowski as minister of agriculture. McKnight had a reputation as a straightforward, competent and down-to-earth minister.

His final cabinet assignment was as minister of energy, mines and resources from January to October 1993. He retired from federal politics before the 1993 general election.

McKnight currently serves as chair of NAFTA Trade Consultants Inc. and Anvil Range Mining Corp. He is also on the board of directors of five different commercial enterprises and served as the honorary consul to Ecuador in 1995.

Industry Issues

Trade issues, particularly those arising from North American Free Trade Agreement and General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade negotiations and specific commodity disputes, continued to affect international market development.

Industry groups consulted with government officials to find ways to streamline government operations and harmonize federal and provincial regulations while still providing agri-businesses with the support they needed to compete internationally.

Departmental Developments

During McKnight's time as minister, the department continued to focus on the four priorities established during Mazankowski's tenure: market orientation, regional diversity, greater self-reliance and environmental sustainability. Extensive industry consultations continued to shape program and regulatory reviews within the department.

Accomplishments as Minister

The Trade Opportunities Strategy, announced in November 1992, funded market development initiatives introduced by industry, especially for value-added products. Regional trade contacts across Canada co-ordinated information to help External Affairs and International Trade Canada resolve international trade disputes. Agri-food specialists based at Canadian embassies in strategic international markets worked to improve access for Canadian exports and to provide market intelligence.

An export advisory committee led by industry offered suggestions on trade strategy and the integration of government resources for trade policy and market development. In partnership with the Canadian meat industry, the department developed new international training programs to increase foreign customers' awareness of and demand for Canadian red meat products.

McKnight introduced "check-off" legislation into the House of Commons to allow commodity groups to collect levies on domestic sales and imports to fund their commodity research and promotional activities.

The National Farm Business Management Program provided \$10 million in annual federal funding, matched by provincial funding, to improve farm sector competitiveness by training producers in marketing and promotion, accounting and computer technology.

Agriculture Canada contributed \$7 million in research and development funding to the federal Ethanol Action Plan to reduce the cost of ethanol production and establish a potential growth market for renewable fuels made from agricultural commodities.

McKnight also worked to implement the federal Green Plan Sustainable Agriculture Initiative. This initiative provided \$170 million over six years for programs to promote environmentally sound practices in the agri-food sector. The provinces shared the costs of these programs with the federal government.

Worth Noting

- McKnight shared an apartment with Don Mazankowski during their time as fellow MPs and cabinet ministers in Ottawa.



Agriculture and
Agri-Food Canada

Agriculture et
Agroalimentaire Canada

Charles James Mayer

January 4, 1993 - November 4, 1993



Canada

Charles James Mayer

(1936-)

Birthplace

Saskatoon, Saskatchewan

Federal Constituency

Portage-Marquette/Lisgar-Marquette
(Manitoba)

Education

University of Saskatchewan (B.Sc., 1964)

Professional Background

Mixed farmer; president of Manitoba Beef Growers Association; member of Manitoba Farm Bureau, Canadian Cattlemen's Association; member of Manitoba Institute of Agrolologists, Agricultural Institute of Canada

Political Affiliation

Conservative

"I don't think the Canadian consumer/taxpayer is aware of the strength of this industry. We need better salesmanship and communication."

— Charlie Mayer, 1997

Political Career

Mayer was elected to the House of Commons in 1979, representing Portage-Marquette. He was re-elected in 1980 and 1984 for this riding and in 1988 for the riding of Lisgar-Marquette. As an MP, he worked with Minister of Agriculture John Wise as an advisor on agriculture policy and chaired the Manitoba Progressive Conservative caucus.

Mayer's path to becoming minister of agriculture led him through a variety of junior cabinet positions, all of which dealt with agricultural policy in some way. In 1984, he was appointed minister of state for the Canadian Wheat Board and minister responsible for liaison with Canada's co-operative sector. He changed assignments slightly in 1987 when he was appointed minister of state for grains and oilseeds. In 1989, he added to these responsibilities those of minister responsible for western economic diversification.

In January 1993, Mayer was appointed minister of agriculture, small communities and rural areas. After new prime minister Kim Campbell's cabinet shuffle in June 1993, his position was renamed minister of agriculture and agri-food.

Mayer was defeated in the 1993 federal election. He continues to be active in the agriculture industry and serves as chair of the Manitoba Crop Insurance Corporation and on the board of Canada Bread.

Industry Issues

Incorporating agricultural products into the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) required a tremendous amount of work on the part of the department and industry groups. Canadian farmers depended on exports for their prosperity, so trade negotiations were a top priority. Mayer described the goal of the GATT negotiations as ensuring farmers "competed on quality and price, not on the size of their government's treasuries".

Departmental Developments

The mandate of the department was officially revised and expanded to reflect ongoing regulatory and program reviews. At the same time, government spending restraints and a 10-per-cent departmental budget cut necessitated a climate of restraint.

In consultation with industry, the department conducted an extensive regulatory review and revised obsolete regulations. Eight pilot projects found ways to reduce duplication between federal and provincial inspection agencies. The Food Safety Enhancement Program promoted new international standards, known as HACCP (Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points) inspection systems, at federally registered plants. The department reduced its seven branches to five to streamline overhead. It also cut levels of management and launched a regional review to improve service to departmental clients nationwide.

Food inspection activities and personnel formerly under the jurisdiction of the departments of Consumer and Corporate Affairs and Industry, Science and Technology merged with those of the Food Production and Inspection Branch after June 1993. The department was given a new name, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, to reflect its new emphasis on working with the food industry as well as primary producers.

Accomplishments as Minister

Mayer believed there was too much government regulation in some areas of the industry. He changed grain marketing policy and announced that farmers were free to sell barley outside the Canadian Wheat Board. While this departure from accepted procedure was eventually reversed, at the time it meant that farmers were free to market their products to American clients.

Mayer appointed the Producer Payment Board to recommend ways to transfer grain rail subsidies to farmers. The railways received \$520 million annually in Crow Rate benefits. Because the government couldn't afford to invest new money in grain subsidies, it sought alternate means of supporting farmers.

The Canadian Rural Opportunities Initiative provided \$25 million over three years for counselling, training and business development assistance for farm families with below-average incomes.

Mayer also worked to update and expand the mandate of the Farm Credit Corporation to include funding for diversified farm operations, value-added processing and part-time producers.



Agriculture and
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Ralph Goodale

November 4, 1993 - June 11, 1997



Canada

Ralph Goodale

(1949-)

Birthplace

Regina, Saskatchewan

Federal Constituencies

Assiniboia, Regina-Wascana (Saskatchewan)

Education

University of Regina (BA, 1971), University of Saskatchewan (LLB, 1972)

Professional Background

Called to the Saskatchewan bar in 1973, member of Law Society of Saskatchewan; special assistant to the minister of justice and attorney general (1973-74); operated family farm until 1975; worked for CBC News and Public Affairs (1968-72)

Political Affiliation

Liberal

Political Career

Goodale was elected to the House of Commons in 1974 for the large rural constituency of Assiniboia. Over the next five years, he occupied a variety of positions, including parliamentary secretary to several ministers, among others minister of transport, minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board, president of the Privy Council and deputy prime minister.

As parliamentary secretary to the minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board, Goodale piloted the Western Grain Stabilization Program through Parliament in 1976. Between 1974 and 1979, he was also vice-chairman of the House of Commons standing committee on agriculture, vice-chairman of the special joint committee on the northern gas pipeline, deputy government whip and chairman of the government's prairie caucus.

In 1981, Goodale was chosen leader of the Saskatchewan Liberal Party. He was elected MLA for Assiniboia-Gravelbourg in the 1986 Saskatchewan election. He resigned from provincial politics to run as the Liberal candidate for Regina-Wascana in the 1988 federal election but was defeated.

For the next five years, Goodale took a break from politics and worked as director of regulatory affairs and corporate secretary of Pioneer Life Assurance Company and

Pioneer Lifeco Inc., both Regina-based financial institutions, and as corporate secretary of Sovereign Life Insurance Co.

When he was re-elected as MP for Regina-Wascana in October 1993, he was appointed minister of agriculture and agri-food. After the January 1996 cabinet shuffle, he also was appointed chairman of the cabinet committee on economic development policy.

Goodale was re-elected in 1997 and transferred to the natural resources portfolio. He is still the minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board.

Industry Issues

Goodale's term as minister coincided with government budget cuts to programs and services, as well as a rapid expansion of export markets and information technology for the agriculture sector. The Liberal government's focus on restraining spending and cutting the deficit reduced the level of financial and administrative support the department could offer producers and processors. Fortunately, strong world grain prices reduced the need for government support.

"Team Canada" trade missions and enhanced market information available through new online support services helped create new opportunities for innovative production and marketing. The Uruguay round of the

General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade was completed in December 1993 and implemented in August 1996. The creation of the World Trade Organization (WTO) helped Canadian producers and agri-businesses secure access to world markets.

Departmental Developments

The 1995 Budget announced that federal government food inspection services would be consolidated into a new agency called the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA). The department rose to the challenge of transforming its current inspection services, administered by the Food Production and Inspection Branch, into a consolidated agency that would also include inspection responsibilities and personnel formerly under the jurisdiction of Health Canada and the Department of Fisheries and Oceans.

In 1995, in co-operation with Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada, the department created the Agri-Food Trade Service (ATS) to give exporters easy access to government programs, market information, trade regulations and other types of support. The industry set a goal of \$20 billion in annual agricultural exports by the year 2000. In 1996 the sector exported \$19.95 billion worth of agri-food products.

The Rural Secretariat was established to coordinate the work of federal departments and agencies focused on the economic renewal of rural communities.

Accomplishments as Minister

- The *Agricultural Marketing Programs Act* (effective 1997) replaced four previous programs. It provides more efficient administration of interest-free cash advances to help producers market their products.
- The end of both the “Crow Rate” subsidies for prairie grain transport (the *Western Grain Transportation Act*) and the feed freight assistance subsidy to livestock producers outside the Prairies (1995) encouraged efficiency and self-sufficiency in the grain and livestock sectors. A one-time payment of \$1.6 billion, with an additional \$300 million in adjustment funds over the next three years, helped former beneficiaries adapt and invest in new opportunities.
- The Western Grain Marketing Panel consulted industry and offered suggestions to modernize the governance of the Canadian Wheat Board (CWB), provide greater flexibility in CWB operations and services, and offer farmers a wider range of grain marketing options. As the minister responsible for the CWB, Goodale continues to work on amendments to the *Canadian Wheat Board Act* based on the panel’s July 1996 recommendations.
- Goodale provided leadership during the Canadian government’s successful defence of supply management principles against an American challenge through a North American Free Trade Agreement dispute panel. The panel upheld Canada’s right to apply tariffs to certain U.S. imports.
- The Canadian Adaptation and Rural Development Fund (1996) provides \$60 million annually for national and local rural development and community diversification programs.
- The Matching Investment Initiative (1995) allows the department to match, one for one, industry contributions to collaborative scientific research projects. By mid-1997, more than 1,000 agreements on projects totalling more than \$42 million in research and development had been established.

