REPORT ON PEA CANNERIES

During the 1913 season there were seventy-five factories canning peas in the state of Wisconsin. The recent development of this industry in Wisconsin is shown by the fact that the oldest plant in the state was established in 1893 and only four of the sixty plants reporting date of establishment were in existence before 1900. In the five years since 1908, twenty-one plants were established, and three were built in 1913.

The total output for 1913 was 3,088,875 cases, an average of 41,185 cases for each plant. The size of the plants varies from an output of 1,853 cases to an output of 137,844 cases during the season. The total acreage planted for the pea canneries was 45,520 acres. Of this total, 39,960 acres of peas were actually canned; 2,860 acres were left for seed because of congestion or inability to handle the crop, and 2,700 acres were planted expressly for seed purposes.*

The last United States Census reports that 5,901,703 cases of peas were packed in the United States during 1909. The value of this product was placed at $10,247,363. It is thus seen that probably over 50% of all the peas of the United States are canned in this state, and the value of the 1913 crop may be placed at almost $6,000,000.

* These figures are based on the complete report from 68 plants and an estimate for the remaining seven.
To handle the crop of 1913, 8,036 persons were employed in the seventy-five plants. Of these, 5,010 were men, 2,688 women and 438 children between 14 and 16 years of age.

**Study made by the United States Bureau of Labor.**

During the summer of 1912 investigators of the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics made an extensive statistical study of the hours of labor of women employees in the Wisconsin Pea Canneries, based on data covering operations during the years 1908, 1909, 1910 and 1911, in about half of the canning factories in the state.* This study was made for "the purpose of discovering the relation between the problem of pea-cannery administration as presented in Wisconsin and the working hours of women employed in the pea-canneries in the state." An effort was made to show the relation between the acreage planted and the equipment, number of workers, and daily duration of work; also the possibility of harvest control by proper soil selection, distribution of planting, and study of weather conditions. This bulletin also contains data in regard to the length of working days, labor supply, possible causes of shortage of labor, the abuses that have resulted from lack of restriction of hours, and the cost of female labor.

Although the data obtained by the investigators of the U. S. Bureau of Labor are in many respects incomplete, the report shows the conditions that existed in pea canneries before the present regulation of hours became effective. A comparison of the hours and conditions of labor of female employees in Wisconsin canneries, as shown in the Bureau of Labor report (pages 22, 26–27), for the years 1908–1911, inclusive, with the conditions prevailing in 1913 (tables II and III following) shows what has been and what can be done in the solution of this problem. Some of the conclusions of the federal report have not been borne out in the present investigation, yet in studying the results of the present regulations, the information given in that report is of much value.

**Purpose of this investigation.**

It is not the intention of the present study to go into the questions of acreage, harvest control, soil selection, planting,

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