



DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

INFORMATION SERVICE

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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FISH EXPERTS COOPERATE WITH DEFENSE COMMISSION

In connection with the President's National Defense program, R. H. Fiedler, chief of the Division of Fishery Industries of the Fish and Wildlife Service, has been designated as chairman of the Fish Committee of the General Food Survey Committee of the National Defense Advisory Commission, it was announced today by Secretary of the Interior Harold L. Ickes. Other members of the committee are L. T. Hopkinson of the Tariff Commission, C. E. Birgfield of the Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce, and E. A. Power of the Fish and Wildlife Service. Mr. Power is also a member of the Committee on Fats and Oils.

The Fish Committee, which will be directly concerned with the fishery industry, has been set up under an Interdepartmental Conference Committee along with thirteen other commodity and functional committees to deal with the nation's food supply. They are charged with the task of taking an inventory of our food resources and making recommendations for the collection of such pertinent information as may be required for defense purposes.

In carrying out the activities of the Fish Committee, information has already been assembled on the available statistical data relating to fishery products. Data were compiled for four classifications of products: fresh, frozen, canned, and cured fish.

Information has also been listed on the statistics now collected and published by the Fish and Wildlife Service, other Federal agencies, state fishery departments, and trade associations. In each instance, it is interesting to note the completeness of the data being collected at the present time. Data which are not now collected, but which may be required, are also indicated. Of these, the most urgently required at this time appear to be monthly statistics on the stocks of important canned fishery commodities. It is anticipated that the Fish Committee will recommend that steps be taken to collect these data.

In behalf of the Fats and Oils Committee, data were assembled on the domestic production of marine animal oils by States for 1939, and by type of oil for the first three quarters of the current year. The latter data show that the domestic production of fish oils during this latter period is far below the yield during the same period in 1939.

Statistics were also assembled concerning the effect of the first World War on the domestic production of fishery products. Available data show that there were marked increases in the catch of fishery products and in the production of manufactured fishery items during 1917 and 1918 as compared with the previous five-year average. The packs of canned salmon during the two War years increased 37 percent as compared with the average for the previous five-year period. The pack of canned tuna increased 77 percent and canned California sardines, 1,630 percent. The pack of cured herring also showed a large gain, increasing 622 percent, while landings by fishing vessels at Boston and Gloucester, Massachusetts, and Portland, Maine, were 8 percent greater.

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