

# U.S. Egg Support Beef Rejected By Harkness

By ALAN DONNELLY  
Canadian Press Staff Writer  
OTTAWA (CP) — Agriculture Minister Harkness Thursday threw cold water on heated complaints by American farm groups against Canada's proposed new egg price support program.

The complaints, he said in an interview, "are based on a complete misconception of what the program will do."

Meanwhile, official American sources here indicated that the U.S. agriculture department is not as worked up over the plan as are U.S. farm groups.

**NOT ALARMED**

"We are not unduly alarmed," a U.S. Embassy official said.

The American complaints—voiced chiefly by the farm bureau, a leading farm organization—are that the Canadian support plan might mean subsidized exports of Canadian eggs into the U.S. market.

Mr. Harkness said that view seems to be based on a fear that the program will greatly increase Canadian production.

"The effect of it, as far as we can see, will be to decrease production in line with available markets."

The new Canadian program, which takes effect Oct. 1, will replace the present scheme of government egg purchases with a

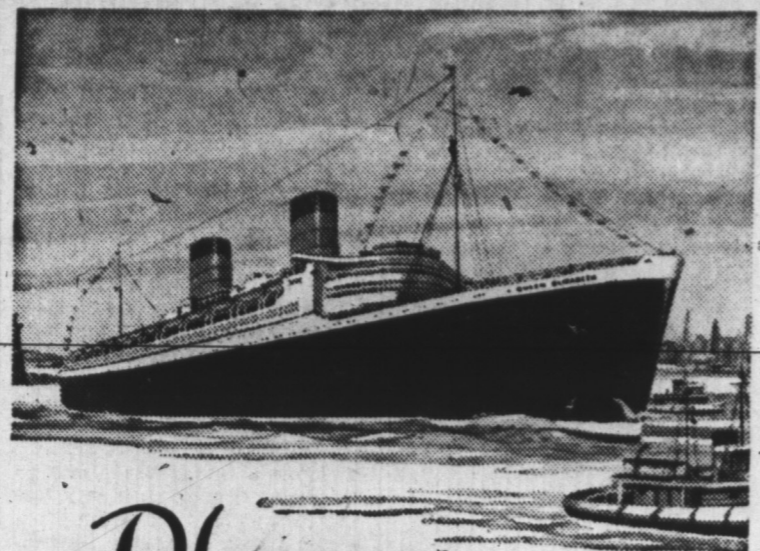
## plan of deficiency payments. FIND OWN LEVEL

Instead of buying eggs to support the price, the government will let the market find its own level and then make deficiency payments if the average return to farmers over a year falls below a stipulated floor.

But a key factor in the new plan is that payments will be limited by a quota scheme. Payments to any one farmer will be made on a maximum 4,000 dozen grade A large eggs annually.

Mr. Harkness said this quota would cover the production from a flock of about 450 to 500 hens. On any production over that, he said, a farmer either would have to sell on the open market for whatever price the eggs will bring or else reduce his egg production if the price is not profitable.

Officials here say there has been little export of Canadian eggs to the U.S. "With the U.S. price as low as it is," one said, "it's not likely there will be much shipped in the future."



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