

Sugar Consumption - 1927-1937

In a recent number of their Circular the Czar-nikow-Rionda Co. of New York give a useful survey of the recent vicissitudes of World Consumption, and show which countries have been responsible for the largest increases during the last ten years. We summarize this below.

According to F. O. LICHT'S figures and estimates, world consumption of sugar after being held back during the depression years of 1931-35 has, during the past two years, been materially larger. Indeed, the estimate of 28,335,500 tons for 1936-37 represents a record. This can be appreciated from the following figures, in tons raw value.

	World Consumption.	Increase.	Decrease.
1936-37	28,335,500	64,639	.....
1935-36	28,270,861	2,288,654	.....
1934-35	25,982,207	1,111,167	.....
1933-34	24,871,040	595,389	.....
1932-33	24,275,651	.....	850,511
1931-32	25,126,162	.....	973,709
1930-31	26,099,871	924,036	.....
1929-30	25,175,835	.....	537,640
1928-29	25,713,475	1,112,164	.....
1927-28	24,601,311	1,188,329	.....

The net increase during the last ten years has amounted to 4,923,018 tons, nearly half of which took place in 1935-36. The increases in recent years must to a large extent reflect economic recovery all over the world. Some of the increased consumption may also be explained by tense political situations, in which the accumulation of food supplies, including sugar, must have played a part.

In analysing world consumption, two outstanding factors must be taken into account. One is the varying figure of consumption in Russia and the other is the large steady increase in consumption in British India. Details for these two countries are as follows, in metric tons for the past seven years.

	RUSSIA			INDIA		
	Consump- tion.	Increase.	Decrease.	Consump- tion.	Increase.	Decrease.
1936-37	1,800,000	.....	573,622	3,614,000	121,000	.....
1935-36	2,373,622	1,024,674	.....	3,493,000	390,000	.....
1934-35	1,348,948	214,644	.....	3,103,000	88,000	.....
1933-34	1,134,304	254,488	.....	3,015,000	219,000	.....
1932-33	879,816	.....	588,099	2,796,000	142,000	.....
1931-32	1,467,915	.....	340,393	2,654,000	32,000	.....
1930-31	1,808,308	669,805	.....	2,622,000	194,000	.....

It is interesting to look at world consumption after eliminating Russia and India. The following result is then obtained, in tons.

WORLD CONSUMPTION EXCLUDING RUSSIA AND INDIA.

	Total.	Increase.	Decrease.
1936-37	22,921,500	517,261	.....
1935-36	22,404,239	873,980	.....
1934-35	21,530,259	808,523	.....
1933-34	20,721,736	121,901	.....
1932-33	20,599,835	.....	404,412
1931-32	21,004,247	.....	665,316
1930-31	21,669,563	60,231	.....

1929-30	21,609,332	.....	497,274
1928-29	22,106,606	1,233,148	.....
1927-28	20,873,458	872,540	.....

This last table shows increases and decreases in the same years as for the whole world, but they seem to afford a better medium for analysis. The net ten-years increase is, in that way, reduced from 4,923,018 tons to 2,920,582 tons. This latter increase (which excludes Russia and India) is made up as follows:

	Tons.
Europe	1,702,082
North America	357,000
South America	144,500
Africa	215,000
Asia	481,000
Australasia	21,000
Total	2,920,582

It is thus evident that the largest increase in consumption during the last ten years took place in Europe excluding Russia. Notable among European importing countries are the increases of about 650,000 tons in the United Kingdom, and about 250,000 tons in France. The combined increases in the other importing countries of Switzerland, Finland, Norway, Greece and Malta amounted in ten years to about 90,000 tons. The exporting countries show a combined increase for the same period of about 475,000 tons, in which Germany has the largest share, amounting to about 300,000 tons. The balance in Europe is made up from the self-supporting countries, outstanding among which are Holland, Denmark and Sweden.

For the open world market only importing countries are of real importance. For Europe the question arises whether Great Britain, France and the other smaller importers can continue to increase their consumption.

In the Far East China does not consume any more sugar now than ten years ago. Japan has increased her consumption by about 250,000 tons during that period, but that means nothing to the open world market. Some smaller oriental destinations have taken about 200,000 tons more, mostly of Java sugar, but an expansion of consumption in the Far East among these importing units can hardly show notable results within a short time. As a matter of fact the tendency in China might eventually work out in the same direction as in India, namely of producing enough sugar at home to satisfy local needs.

All things considered, it is not possible to make any reliable forecast as to the future trend of world consumption. Recent increases, as above stated, reflect economic recovery all over the world, and there is no reason to believe that for the time being world consumption will experience any considerable setback, because the economic prospect would not warrant such an assumption. On the other hand, it is well to guard against too much optimism in expecting further large increases in the near future. And those that will count most will be such as draw on the open world market for their requirements.