

The satisfactory results obtained in the operations conducted on Morikau Station have been maintained during the past season. The wool-clip of 368 bales, although lighter in weight owing to the wet season, was of outstanding quality and was favourably commented upon by the brokers. Good prices were obtained from surplus stock, and in a fleece competition a first award was obtained for hoggets. Live-stock carried at 31st March, 1942, were 691 run cattle, 5,718 breeding-ewes, 10,107 dry sheep. Due to shortage of labour, bushfelling operations were restricted, but an area of 37 acres was cleared. The beneficial owners have made substantial contributions to the Dominion's war effort, and during the past year an amount of £2,000, representing profits available for distribution, were invested in the National Savings Account, with donation of interest for war purposes. This, together with previous investments or donations, brings the owners' total to date to £4,000.

The following table indicates the measures of assistance granted from Maori Land Board funds to individual Native farmers for the purpose of developing their lands :—

Board.			Total Advances to Native Settlers under Mortgage as at 31st March, 1942.	Number of Mortgagors.
			£	
Tokerāu	..	..	2,415	1
Waikato-Maniapoto	..	..	20,496	19
*Waiariki	..	..	4,888	23
Tairāwhiti	..	..	58,323	95
Aotea	..	..	30,648	56
Ikaroa	..	..	30,943	50
South Island	..	..	5,878	9
Totals	..	..	153,591	253

* In addition, £73,269 is invested in farm properties (Taheke, Tihiotonga, and Waikawa).

EAST COAST NATIVE TRUST LANDS.

The East Coast Native Trust lands, which range from Tolaga Bay in the north to Wairoa in the south and extend to Mahia Peninsula, are controlled by the East Coast Commissioner. Under section 7 of the Board of Native Affairs Act, 1934–35, these lands were brought under the control of the Board as far as the operations of the Trusts relate to the expenditure or investment of any moneys or to the giving of mortgages over any property vested in the Commissioner are concerned. The original purpose of the Trust was the salvaging of large areas of Native land which were in danger of being lost to the Maoris. This object has been achieved, and the Trust in now in a thoroughly sound financial position and self-supporting, no Government moneys being involved. The aim of the Trust at present, besides providing a return to the Maori beneficiaries, who number approximately 7,500, is to use the lands as far as possible as a training-ground for Natives. The Commissioner has his own officers and staff with headquarters at Gisborne.

The total area of the Trust vested in the Commissioner comprises 224,909 acres, divided into two portions—the East Coast Native Trust lands containing 116,000 acres, and the Mangatu Trust embracing 108,909 acres. Sheep and cattle farming is undertaken by the Commissioner on a large portion of the Trust which is divided into twenty-three stations aggregating 132,703 acres, an area of 72,000 acres is cut up into some twenty-five farms which are leased, and there is approximately a balance area of 20,000 acres still undeveloped.

During January and February last the Commissioner resumed occupation of 25,000 acres in respect of which the leases had expired, and this area, which comprises four stations—Te Hua, Mia, Maungahaumi, and Komihana—is now being farmed by the Trust and is carrying 42,000 sheep and 5,100 head of cattle.

In view of the shortage of potatoes a special effort was made during the year to meet the market, and 1,200 sacks beyond the requirements of the stations were grown. Arrangements are being made to materially increase the crop during the coming season.

After taking into account the four stations occupied during the year, the live-stock returns at 30th June, 1941, show an increase over the previous year's tallies, the figures, with those for June, 1940, given in parentheses, being as follows: 143,410 (99,206) sheep and 18,358 (12,880) head of cattle. The wool-clip of 2,765 bales for the past season also shows a considerable increase in comparison with 2,369 bales for the 1940–41 season. Each station is in charge of a resident manager who is under the control of the farm supervisor.