

agreed to make this procedure as flexible as possible. The method in practice has proved thoroughly satisfactory. It has enabled the Division to obtain for the producers a reasonable return in accordance with seasonal production and production costs, and it has also enabled the Tribunal to carry out its policy in regard to obviating unduly high prices to the consumer.

In January the Department contracted with the National Commercial Broadcasting Service for a national hook-up in the "Aunt Daisy" and "Shopping Reporter's" session on advertising in connection with graded eggs, the object of the broadcast being to educate retailers and consumers to become "grade conscious" and purchase their eggs by grade. It was pointed out that each of the four grades—i.e., heavy, standard, medium, pullet—represented a given weight of egg, and that this method of buying ensured maximum value for the purchaser's money. The results of this radio propaganda were considered by the Division to be quite satisfactory, although the retail position still requires considerable investigation. For this purpose the Division already has arrangements in hand for a complete retail inspection to be made in the four egg marketing areas.

Owing to the war situation, the difficulty in regard to freezing-accommodation has limited the operation of chilled eggs. As these difficulties are overcome, the Division may be required to consider the aspect of chilling eggs as a method of stabilizing the market during the flush season and for any other cause to the benefit of economic marketing. Chilled eggs are not in great demand by the New Zealand consuming public, but when it is realized that every egg imported into Great Britain is chilled and, moreover, is eagerly sought after by the buying public, there can be no reason why the demand cannot be created in New Zealand.

In controlling such a universal and variable product as eggs and their allied products, it was realized that it would be well-nigh impossible to provide adequate cover in the original regulations over all the marketing problems. After a complete survey of the year's activities and bearing in mind certain recommendations and resolutions which have been brought forward from time to time by the local Egg Marketing Committees, it is evident that the Division may have to consider bringing forward certain amendments to these regulations.

Meanwhile the Division continues to give assistance to the industry in every possible way, and looks forward to a future which will be to the betterment of the poultry industry generally. So far the Division has not had a complete year's experience under the new regulations, but it expects in future reports to be able to give some statistics with reference to quantities of eggs going into the respective marketing areas, apart from production within the area itself.

IMPORTED-FRUITS SECTION.

The purchasing and distributing of imported fruits was carried out this year as previously. Orange purchases were made from the best available markets in Australia, the Cook Islands Group, Jamaica, and Fiji. Jamaica was able to supply during April only. Small grapefruit importations were made from Australia and, in April, from Jamaica. Bananas were imported from the usual sources of supply—namely, the Cook Islands (including Niue), Samoa, Fiji, and Tonga.

During 1940 the Government assumed control of imported pineapples and kumaras. The first shipments under Government control landed in New Zealand on 21st June and 20th October respectively. Pineapples were imported mainly from Australia and Fiji, the quantity of fruit available from the Cook Islands and Samoa being very small. This fruit was distributed through fruit-merchants who had previously imported it and was sold by auction, with a maximum to prevent excessive retail prices.

Kumara imports were from Niue, Rarotonga, and Aitutaki, these islands being in the Cook Group. The importation of kumaras from Rarotonga and Aitutaki were regulated for the protection of the New-Zealand-grown crops, the marketing season for which is approximately from mid-February to mid-August.

ORANGES.

During the year under review approximately 400,000 cases of oranges were imported from the various sources within the Empire in the following proportion:—

					Year ended 31st March, 1941.	Year ended 31st March, 1940.
					Per Cent.	Per Cent.
Australia	..	..	..	..	63·39	61·8
Cook Islands	..	..	..	..	31·79	15·5
Jamaica	..	..	..	..	2·82	22·7
Fiji	..	..	..	..	2·00	..

Owing to war conditions, importations from Jamaica this year, with the exception of a shipment in April, were avoided.

Fiji was able to supply approximately 8,000 cases, and Australian oranges were in plentiful supply, although, resultant upon increased Australian costs generally, the f.o.b. prices over the normal export season, June to December, were slightly in advance of those for 1940.

The first Australian shipment came on to the South Island markets in July, and at the end of September, after the Cook Islands oranges had finished, the distribution of Australian fruit extended throughout New Zealand. Owing to the successful crops, Australian growers were in a position to