

MARKETING OF THE APPLE AND PEAR CROP

The Government again this year purchased the major portion of the apple and pear crop at prices agreed upon between the Government and representatives of the industry.

Production of fruit for the 1942 season was as follows:—

Apples	..	..	..	..	2,152,677 cases (bushel).
Pears	..	..	..	..	255,521 „

No apples were exported other than those for the armed forces overseas. The production in the aggregate of apples and pears for the 1943 season is expected to be greater than that of the previous season.

CITRUS FRUIT

The following are the estimated Dominion totals for citrus production for the calendar year 1942: Lemons, 54,900 bushels; New Zealand grapefruit, 34,400 bushels; sweet oranges, 11,200 bushels.

STANDARDIZATION OF GRADES OF APPLES, PEARS, AND LEMONS

Apples and pears, which are being accepted for marketing by the Internal Marketing Division during the current year (1943), as was the case during 1942, are being confined to two grades—viz., “Fancy” and “Commercial”—the “Fancy” grade including both “Extra Fancy” and “Fancy,” as set out in the New-Zealand-grown Fruit Regulations 1940.

In the case of lemons the above statement also applies, except that “Minimum” grade lemons, due to the acute shortage of lemons, were temporarily permitted to be included in “Commercial” grade.

COOL STORAGE

The cool-storage space made available for apples and pears was 765,000 cases capacity, a reduction on the space available during the previous year.

FRUIT PROCESSING (DRYING AND CANNING)

The dehydration of fruit has been given every encouragement, with the result that fruit-drying factories at Roxburgh and Alexandra were extended to cope with an increased programme of stone-fruit drying, and worked to full capacity. Considerably over 100 tons of stone-fruit and pears have been dried at these places. The plant at Motueka worked to full capacity while apples were available. Fruit-canning factories in Nelson, Hawke's Bay, Auckland, and Dunedin have also been kept busy.

NURSERIES

During the year 584 nurseries were registered, a decrease of 21 on last year's total.

MARKET-GARDENING INDUSTRY

The market-gardening industry again faced a difficult year. The labour shortage caused difficulty to growers in maintaining or extending their present areas. Some have not been able to cultivate as much land as formerly. The supply of vegetables, due to this and seasonal conditions, has accordingly been rather restricted, and prices in consequence have been high.

A closer contact is now being made with market-gardeners, especially tomato-growers, in order to encourage production and to deal with problems of diseases affecting crops. Tomato-growing for processing has been stimulated in most districts.

In March of this year the Market Gardens Registration Act, 1943, was passed by Parliament. Steps are now being taken by the representatives of the industry to place the organization of the industry on a better footing than previously.

VITICULTURE

Wine and Cider Making.—The area under grapes has been maintained. No construction of additional glasshouses has been made. The pests and diseases of vines and grapes have been kept satisfactorily under control.

The construction of wineries and the installation of modern plant were continued during the year. It is expected that these improvements will result in a marked improvement in the quality of the wines produced. Two further distillation licenses were issued by the Customs Department.

During the period under review there has been a phenomenal demand for New Zealand wines. A number of inquiries have been received from overseas for shipments of wines of approved quality.

Te Kauwhata Horticultural Station.—This Station has continued to function satisfactorily, and several improvements have been made in the buildings, plant, vinery, and water-supply.

A successful year was experienced in the sale of wines produced at Te Kauwhata, and the demand exceeds the mature wine available.

TOBACCO INDUSTRY

The area is being maintained at about 3,000 acres, which may be regarded as satisfactory. On account of the labour shortage and the large amount of casual labour necessary for harvesting the leaf, expansion has been restricted. Growers are being well served by the tobacco-manufacturing companies, which provide an instructional service to their respective growers, and arrange financial assistance when required. The Tobacco Board has also assisted materially in stabilizing the industry.