

So far as can be seen, the swede crops show every promise of providing sufficient feed for the coming winter, while an ample supply of hay and ensilage exists on most of the blocks.

It is not yet possible to give final weights of wool for the past year as, owing to difficulties of transport and handling by the brokers, a considerable amount has yet to go forward for appraisal.

Despite a curtailment of manure, the improvement to pastures with age has allowed for a further increase in stock this season, and a careful examination of the position has warranted a further extension of the breeding flocks and herds.

Since the beginning of the war the numbers of ewes and breeding-cows have been doubled, with the result that this winter forty thousand ewes and three thousand run cows will be carried, in addition to dairy herds and dry stock needed for control.

*Control: Commissioner of Crown Lands, North Auckland.*—Work on Batten's Block, of 1,524 acres, which is the only area under development in this district, has had to be curtailed owing to the prevailing supply position. The block is an abandoned Crown security.

*Control: Commissioner of Crown Lands, New Plymouth.*—Three abandoned Crown securities, containing 1,388 acres, are the only development areas under the control of the Commissioner of Crown Lands, New Plymouth, and they are being held and farmed with a view to future disposal.

The past year has proved somewhat better than the previous year owing to slightly improved weather conditions. The lack of adequate top-dressing is becoming evident in the pastures, but on the dairying area a considerable dressing of lime has been applied with beneficial results. The scourge of contagious abortion in the dairy herd has been somewhat allayed, resulting in an increase in butterfat returns as compared with the previous season. Labour shortage has been acute, thus making it impossible to do any work other than general farm husbandry.

*Control: Commissioner of Crown Lands, Napier.*—Four areas in this district are under development—Kakariki, Kaheka, Waihou, and Parinui Blocks, some 31,798 acres, and the Ahuriri Lagoon, of 7,753 acres.

The season has been a good average one, but owing to labour shortage and the difficulty of obtaining sufficient supplies of top-dressing fresh development work could not be undertaken, and the operations have been mostly confined to maintenance of present pastures.

On the areas not top-dressed, scrub reversion is occurring, and must continue to do so owing to the shortage of labour with which to deal with this problem.

So far as the Ahuriri Lagoon is concerned, development operations have been limited by shortage of labour and the necessity to conserve manure-supplies. Some 75 acres previously in crop have been laid down in permanent pasture. Grass has been harrowed and top-dressed, and crops of field pumpkins and mangels have been planted. A trial is being made of growing blue lupins for seed with the idea of using this plant as a soiling crop. Arrangements have also been made for the supply of a small amount of sweet blue lupin seed, which it is hoped will be developed into a satisfactory feeding-crop.

The lucerne stands have provided a good supply of ensilage and hay, and the reserve of feed is very satisfactory. New ground has been broken up for barley crops.

The policy of shutting up areas of untreated land to seed down has been continued, and there has consequently been a good increase of natural cover of aster and melilot, which has very greatly reduced run-off and also greatly restricted the necessity for pumping on the southern area. An untreated area of approximately 500 acres at the northern end has been allowed to seed down, and there has been a very satisfactory increase in the growth of natural cover.

Trouble has been experienced with weed growth in the drains, which has at times seriously affected pumping operations, and it has necessitated the provision of further weed-traps.

The yield of asparagus from a 2½-acre section has shown a satisfactory increase, and there will be a light cutting from an additional five acres next season.

*Control: Commissioner of Crown Lands, Gisborne.*—The Te Wera Estate, of 9,922 acres, is the only development block under the control of the Commissioner of Crown Lands, Gisborne. It was acquired in 1927, since which date it has been developed and run as a station. Since acquisition about 1,900 acres of bush have been felled and grassed. The stock carried thereon comprise thirteen thousand sheep and two thousand head of cattle. The use of cobaltized salt over the past few years has shown a very beneficial effect on the sheep carried. The surplus stock are keenly sort after by the Waikato buyers. Unfortunately, the top-dressing programme has been curtailed owing to the short supplies of manure available. Labour shortage is also making it difficult to maintain the stock in its present high standard. A standard flock is carried, and both the progeny and the class of wool derived therefrom is evidence of the advisability of purchasing good rams from outside districts.

*Control: Commissioner of Crown Lands, Wellington.*—In this district experimental development has been undertaken on an area of 100 acres of Crown land at Tangimoana.

The area is still holding the pastures, and increased numbers of stock are being carried this year. During the present season the ewes and lambs did not do as well as last year, and, although the percentage of lambs born was greater, a lesser number of "fats" has been sold up to the present. At time of writing, appearances do not indicate that 100 per cent. will be sold fat. Mortality in the ewes was extraordinarily high after lambing. For next season younger ewes have been secured and better results will be looked for.

*Control: Commissioner of Crown Lands, Blenheim.*—Two properties are under the control of the Commissioner of Crown Lands, Blenheim, the first being a fully-developed orchard property of 68 acres and the other the Molesworth-Tarndale Station, containing 239,500 acres.

The Torode's Estate Orchard is fully developed, and operations were confined to seasonal work.