

Diamond-back moth and white butterfly have given trouble in some commercial vegetable gardens, especially where proper methods of control were not thoroughly carried out.

Bacterial Spot of Plums.—This disease has been discovered in many orchards affecting Japanese plums, particularly the Omega variety. The Plant Diseases Division, Auckland, has done much experimental control work, and has obtained promising results from the use of Bordeaux mixture.

"Ripe Spot" of Apples.—This disease has caused apple-growers, particularly in the Nelson district, concern for the past four years. The Plant Diseases Division, Auckland, reports that satisfactory control may be obtained by the application of Bordeaux mixture prior to picking during the months of January and February.

ORCHARD AND NURSERY INSPECTION

The inspection of orchards, as in the previous year, has been somewhat restricted owing to the need to economize in tires and petrol, also because of the staff shortage and the necessity to give first attention to matters connected with the war effort. While the attention given was largely confined to orchards in commercial areas, fireblight and citrus-canker inspection, however, was not neglected. The annual inspection was made of all nurseries, which, generally, were reported to be in good condition.

FRUIT AND VEGETABLE INSTRUCTION SERVICE

Instruction in all phases of orchard work has been carried out where practicable, but had to be curtailed somewhat in order to make closer contact with commercial growers of vegetables, who have been given advice by visit and by letter, especially on the matters of production and the control of pests and diseases.

EXPERIMENTAL WORK

Owing to war conditions the restriction on field experimental work has continued, only a few existing ones, such as root-stock investigations, variety trials, filbert-nut trials, and ripe-spot-control investigations, being proceeded with in association with the Plant Diseases Division.

One important experiment this year was the dipping of stone-fruit in a fungicidal solution with the object of inhibiting the development of brown-rot. The results are not yet available.

Experiments in connection with storage of fruit are being carried out in co-operation with the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research.

Trials in the dry-heat storage of onions in the Canterbury district were again undertaken with successful results, and the experiments are being developed further.

MARKETING OF APPLE AND PEAR CROP

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

Production of fruit for the 1943 season was as follows :—

					Bushel Cases.
Apples	..	..	..	..	.. 2,261,000
Pears	..	..	..	..	.. 414,000

No apples were exported other than those for the Armed Forces overseas.

For the 1944 season the Dominion production of apples and pears, according to estimates supplied by officers in the respective districts, is likely to be less than that of the previous season owing to unfavourable weather conditions.

CITRUS FRUIT

The following are the estimated Dominion totals for citrus-production for the calendar year, 1943 : Lemons, 108,300 bushels ; New Zealand grapefruit, 50,100 bushels ; sweet oranges, 9,800 bushels. This production was above normal. The New Zealand grapefruit industry is expanding and likely to exceed the production of lemons in the course of a few years.

STANDARDIZATION OF GRADES OF APPLES, PEARS, AND LEMONS

During the current year (1944) three grades—viz., "Fancy," "Commercial," and "Minimum"—are being accepted by the Internal Marketing Division. The "Fancy" grade includes both "Extra Fancy" and "Fancy" as set out in the New-Zealand-grown Fruit Regulations 1940. Price Orders cover the sale of all apples and pears.

The marketing of New-Zealand-grown lemons has continued to be administered by the Internal Marketing Division. A Price Order covers all lemons, whether sold wholesale or retail.

Apricots, peaches, nectarines, and raspberries are covered by wholesale and retail Price Orders.

COOL STORAGE

The cool-storage space available for apples and pears during the current season is 941,000 cases : this is an increase on the space available during the previous year. Additional space is also available for short-term storage.

FRUIT PROCESSING (DRYING AND CANNING)

The quantity of stone-fruits dehydrated in Otago Central has been considerably curtailed this year owing to brown-rot infection. However, a fair tonnage of apples were dried. In Nelson, Auckland, and Hawke's Bay districts the established factories have worked to full capacity in processing fruit and vegetables, and additional quantities of tomatoes, peas, beans, &c., were grown for this purpose. Considerable success has been achieved in the dehydration of apples and several varieties of vegetables. Additional dehydration factories are in the process of construction in the Auckland, Motueka, and Canterbury districts.