

IMPORTED FRUIT SECTION

ORANGES

This year approximately 171,000 export-size cases were imported—a decrease of 163,000 cases (approaching 50 per cent.) on last year, viz. :—

—					Year ended 31st March, 1943.	Year ended 31st March, 1942.
					Per Cent.	Per Cent.
Australia	..	..	..	..	70·95	64·2
Cook Islands	..	..	..	..	29·05	35·7
Fiji	..	..	..	..	..	0·1

Greater importations were impossible owing to Jamaican and Californian sources being closed by war conditions and to the lightness of the Australian Valencia crops. Moreover, 20 per cent. of all Australian Valencia and Navel oranges have been requisitioned for juice-manufacture for the Armed Forces. Only 50,000 cases—against a normal 120,000—were exported from the Cook Islands, whence the one available vessel could carry only 11,000 cases per trip, against previous arrival of 30,000 cases per trip. Cook Islands fruit, however, showed a further improvement in quality and landed in excellent condition. Unfortunately, next year's prospects show no improvement owing to the recent reduction by some 50 per cent. of the Cook Islands crop by hurricane, and to the unprecedented requirements within Australia for Armed Forces and essential civilian needs. Every effort will be made to procure the maximum quantity from both sources.

BANANAS

This year 22,036,500 lb. were imported, against 23,817,660 lb. for last year—a decrease of 1,811,160 lb., or 7·5 per cent. Importations were as under :—

—					Year ended 31st March, 1943.	Year ended 31st March, 1942.
					Per Cent.	Per Cent.
Samoa	..	..	..	..	35·96	51·25
Fiji	..	..	..	..	34·85	18·92
Tonga	..	..	..	..	20·00	27·03
Rarotonga	..	..	..	..	4·41	2·08
Niue	..	..	..	..	4·78	..

The decrease has been due to much greater demand for fruit in most of the islands that normally export to New Zealand, to the employment of some Natives upon war work to the detriment of their plantations, and to lack of transport both to and from the ports of shipment. Comparable supplies are expected for next year.

GRAPEFRUIT

Since the Australian Government required a large proportion of the crop for juice, only 1,767 cases were exported to New Zealand in place of the normal 4,000 cases. Jamaican and Californian supplies were unobtainable. The Cook Islands shipped 963 cases of good quality—100 cases more than last year.

NEW ZEALAND LEMONS

Again the Division has distributed and marketed commercially-grown lemons throughout New Zealand. Increased importations from Australia have partly offset a lighter local crop—61,500 $\frac{3}{4}$ -bushel cases, against last year's 80,043 cases.

Schedule of Lemon-supplies

—			Year ended 31st March, 1943.	Year ended 31st March, 1942.
New Zealand	..	..	61,500 cases <i>-i.e.</i> , 79·7 per cent.	80,043 cases <i>-i.e.</i> , 91·9 per cent.
Australia	..	..	14,316 cases— <i>i.e.</i> , 18·5 per cent.	6,724 cases— <i>i.e.</i> , 7·7 per cent.
Cook Islands	..	..	1,370 cases— <i>i.e.</i> , 1·8 per cent.	318 cases— <i>i.e.</i> , 0·4 per cent.
			77,186 cases	87,085 cases