

TIHIOTONGA

Three miles of internal roading have recently been completed in this area to enable manure to be carried to the back areas and give better results in the future. The scheme, which lies partly at the back of Rotorua, gives rise to admiration from visitors to the town, as its perpetually green hills stand out as an indication of the excellent farming possibilities of the pumice lands of the Rotorua district.

WAIKAUKAU

This scheme is in the Horohoro area about eleven miles from Rotorua. The area is well advanced, and consideration is now being given to subdividing it for settlement by returned soldiers.

WAIARIKI DISTRICT UNITS

The unit properties in the Waiariki District suffered very severely from the severe drought conditions which were experienced during the summer—particularly in January and February of this year. The extensive effect is reflected in the butterfat-production, which was approximately 200,000 lb. less for the year than for the corresponding previous period. Further than this, many units have had to reduce the size of their milking herds in order to run some sheep in an effort to combat the ragwort menace, as this, in parts, is serious.

The shortage of man-power throughout the area has reduced the number of Maoris seeking employment with the Department, and as a result only general maintenance work has, for the most part, been carried out.

TAIRAWHITI NATIVE LAND COURT DISTRICT

The Tairawhiti District extends from Potaka in the Wharekahika Valley in the north to the Mohaka River in the south, and includes 31 stations, 219 active dairy and sheep unit sections, besides many sections under mortgage to the Maori Land Board and Native Trustee. The area under development has been increased by a further 2,789 acres, which have been gazetted for development during the year. Activities in the Tairawhiti District received a severe setback by the summer drought, which was unprecedented in its incidence. The previous season was very dry and was followed by an exceptionally rainless winter. In the Gisborne district, garden hoses were used for watering urban gardens in mid-winter. The result was that little moisture was retained in the subsoil as a reserve for the summer period, October to April, and the effect was disastrous: paddocks, although closed as usual for hay, failed to produce sufficient growth to warrant cutting, while in others, if the hay was cut, little or no growth followed. Normal sowings of supplementary fodder such as turnips and rape were made, but the lack of rain prevented growth. To supplement local saving, 400 tons of hay has been ordered from the South Island.

Cattle suffered heavily early in the season, as all the rough feed, the control of which usually requires every available cattle beast to ensure healthy feed for sheep, was consumed. Those farmers who had spare feed for grazing were able to let it at a premium, and soon all that, in addition to rank feed on roads and river-beds, was cleared up. Stock prices dropped to little more than the price of hides, and in some cases whole herds of cows had to be put down the chute at the works for only the value of hides. The normal losses occasioned through deaths were accentuated by the fact that the whole northern half of the North Island was in the throes of drought and the annual sales of stock to the Waikato were greatly restricted by lack of