

(c) *Orchard Work and Vegetable-growing.*—With the peak period of activity and the consequent demand for pickers, graders, and packers coming towards the end of March it was possible for orchards to absorb a considerable amount of unskilled labour immediately following termination from the freezing-works. The cessation of hostilities has resulted in the cancellation of the vegetable-growing contracts and the closing-down of the dehydration plant in Hastings.

(d) *Building and Sawmilling Industries.*—There has been a steady demand for skilled tradesmen in the building industry, although the return of a number of servicemen to pre-service employment has eased the position somewhat. The sawmilling industry in the district, in addition to some shortage of skilled men, has been affected by the destruction of the Pohukura Timber Co.'s mill by fire (employing approximately 20 men).

(e) *Female Labour.*—Shortages of female labour have been most apparent in hospitals, hotels, and restaurants. The position of the hospitals has been most difficult and, although some relief has been obtained, the shortage of domestic staff still remains a problem.

(f) *Returned Servicemen.*—No undue difficulties have been encountered in the placement of fit ex-servicemen, though after March, 1946, with the slackening off in demands for labour, the position may become more difficult, particularly in placing men fit only for light employment, of which there is a dearth in the district.

New Plymouth District

461. Vacancies notified for males have exceeded the numbers of disengaged persons by approximately $3\frac{1}{2}$ to 1 on an average over the period, and the employment position has been reasonably buoyant. Enrollees, particularly fully-fit men, have been readily absorbed into existing vacancies. This closely-settled dairy-farming district has a considerable absorptive capacity during the off-seasonal period for casual farm labour. Nevertheless, work offering, particularly for unskilled or only semi-fit labour, during the months of May to August inclusive is not plentiful.

462. No difficulties have been encountered in effecting placements of disengaged female labour. Some shortages of female labour have been in evidence in this district, though of only comparatively small numbers due to the limited development of any secondary industries. Shortages are mainly confined to hotels, restaurants and hospitals.

(a) *Farming (largely Dairy-farms).*—A recent survey of the labour position on farms in this district has shown that the overall farm-labour content has increased within a period of twelve months by 600 or more men. This has been due mainly to discharges from the Armed Forces. Consequently, although many demands for suitable farm labour have been received throughout the period under review, the vacancies offering show a diminishing trend. A certain amount of casual work is likely to be available during the off season and no unemployment of any significant magnitude is expected.

(b) *Dairy Factories.*—The large number of cheese and butter factories in this district requires, over a period of approximately eight or nine months of each year, a seasonal intake of approximately 500 men. Although some initial difficulties were experienced in finding sufficient suitable labour to meet the demands of this industry, the great majority of the vacancies notified were satisfied.

(c) *Freezing-works.*—With a seasonal intake of approximately 350 men, the Waitara works was able to absorb by January all fit men available. Although the full complement of men who could have been absorbed was not attained, the total number of men engaged was only a few less than the previous year's peak figures, and a record daily output for the works was reached.

(d) *Building and Engineering Industries.*—An average of approximately 30 unsatisfied vacancies (all for skilled tradesmen) notified in these two industries indicates a steady demand for, and a shortage of, suitable tradesmen.

(e) *Returned Servicemen.*—The placement of ex-servicemen who have registered for employment has proceeded satisfactorily, though in some cases it has not always been possible to place the men immediately in the occupations desired. Such cases have, however, been kept under review with the object of transferring the men as and when more suitable positions become available.

Wanganui District

463. In this district notified vacancies for males have exceeded on an average the numbers of disengaged males seeking employment by approximately 5 to 1 over the period, and, generally speaking, very little difficulty has been experienced in placing fit men, particularly during the period of peak seasonal employment. On the other hand, men only semi-employable or fit for light work only have not been so readily placed. During the off-seasonal period vacancies for unskilled workers are not easy to locate.

464. In the cases of females, with not more than one seeking employment at any one time as compared with notified vacancies ranging from 41 to 76, a marked shortage of female labour has been apparent. This is due, in the main, to the establishment, during the war years, of a number of new factories, including textile, boot and shoe, and oilskin manufacturing.