

demanding by export buyers were shipped towards the end of the year. Substantial shipments were also made to the Continent, where it is anticipated a market should be found for some years.

Mechanical damage to red clovers, &c., was less marked, except for Wairarapa-grown lines, where headers were used extensively for the first time. Many lines of lupins, however, were severely damaged.

Perennial Rye-grass.—Neither the 1945 nor the 1946 season has been favourable to the production of rye-grass, either perennial or Italian, mainly through the high incidence of blind-seed disease. The increasing concern of growers and merchants in Canterbury, Otago, and Southland regarding the future of rye-grass seed production is understandable in the light of their experiences during the past four years, and it is to be feared that many growers will seriously consider the abandonment of rye-grass seed production.

It is possible, of course, that four unfavourable seasons could be followed by four excellent seasons, but the fact remains that only in a few favoured areas—North Canterbury, Hawke's Bay, and Poverty Bay—can crops of perennial rye-grass of high germinating capacity be anticipated with any degree of certainty in three seasons out of five.

Successful control would appear to lie only in the direction of the breeding of strains resistant to blind-seed disease, but it is believed that attempts in this direction have proved to be not very promising.

Nevertheless, with the prospective overseas markets in sight, an inability to produce export quality in the majority of seasons must be regarded seriously and be accepted also as a strong incentive to the prosecution of investigation into the question of resistance.

The substation set up at Timaru in January, 1946, examined and reported upon 1,159 green sheaves, and 125 were received at Palmerston North. This service has been widely appreciated, and has undoubtedly been the means of preventing the harvesting of much unsaleable seed. It is anticipated that this service will be extended in coming seasons.

Seed Prices.—Prices during 1945 for all seeds rose to what were then regarded as fantastic levels, but, with the exception of cocksfoot seed, prices this season have continued to advance. For perennial rye-grass North Island values have remained fairly steady, but in the South Island the competition among growers for pedigree seed has forced prices of seed of mediocre quality up to and over 60s. per bushel, with corresponding firming of lower grades, in which permanent pasture at 45 per cent. can be bought under 10s. to 12s. per bushel.

Spectacular returns have been received by growers for clovers, especially for cow-grass. In Marlborough £120 per acre gross from light second-class land is not an unusual return, while for uncertified Montgomery red clover over 4s. has been paid. In the light of these prices, the North Island retail buyer will have to meet record high values brought about largely by high export parity plus frantic buying by forward sellers.

Seeds Purchasing.—The total value of seed purchased for Government Departments was approximately £75,000, covered by 493 requisitions. Full use was made of the opportunity to relieve growers of substantial quantities of low-germinating perennial rye-grass at favourable prices.

General.—Visits from farmers, seed-growers, and educational and commercial bodies have been received in increasing number.

SERVICES' VEGETABLE-PRODUCTION

Services' vegetable-production was established in 1942 with the object of supplying much-needed vegetables to the Armed Forces in New Zealand. With the advent of large numbers of Forces from the United States of America, the demand for fresh vegetables changed greatly in respect of both quantity and type.