

STANDARDIZATION OF PIP-FRUITS

Three standards embodied in the New-Zealand-grown Fruit Regulations 1940, and amendments thereto, are in operation—viz., Fancy, Commercial, and Minimum—and over the past three years' production an average annual percentage of 81 per cent. Fancy, 18 per cent. Commercial, and 1 per cent. Minimum has been maintained. The operation of standard grades for pip-fruits has proved of immense practical value to the producers, auctioneers, retailers, and consumers, and has simplified marketing considerably.

From observations made in the main fruit and produce markets of the Dominion it is evident that there is ample scope for improvement in the marketing of stone-fruits, small fruits, and vegetables by the introduction of standard grades for these products.

FRUIT COOL STORAGE

The cool-storage space available throughout the Dominion has a capacity of 1,105,100 bushel cases, and is distributed as follows :—

				Public Cool Storage.	Growers' Private Cool Storage.	Total.
				Bushel Cases.	Bushel Cases.	Bushel Cases.
North Island ..	..	..		743,980	72,620	816,600
South Island ..	..	..		214,644	73,856	288,500
Totals	..	..		958,624	146,476	1,105,100

The stocks of pip-fruit held in cool store on 30th June, 1945, amounted to :—

							Bushel Cases.
Apples	..	..	..	..	..	..	628,347
Pears	..	..	..	..	..	..	101,538½
Total	..	..	..	..	..	..	729,885½

The quantity held in shed storage in orchards was 47,120 bushel cases of apples.

A number of stone-fruit growers in Central Otago have erected in their orchards small pre-cooling chambers ranging in capacity from 200 to 1,000 bushel cases, the total capacity of the stores being 4,500 cases. In the coming season a further increase in the number is contemplated, and several of the present store-owners are considering extensions to their plants.

During the year most of the fruit cool stores throughout the Dominion were visited by the Cool Storage Officer, and advice given in connection with improvements and alterations to the cooling systems and equipment.

PLANT NURSERIES

Throughout the Dominion for the year 660 nurseries were registered, an increase of 17 compared with the previous year. Each nursery has been inspected at least once during the year. Generally, they are being maintained in a satisfactory condition and reasonably free from disease.

The demand for ornamental trees, shrubs, forest trees for farm planting, and bedding-out plants has greatly increased in recent years. The present position is such that active, well-trained young men should be able to make a good living in meeting the demand for public and private tree-planting.

There is an ever-increasing demand for trained gardeners in the Dominion, due to the young men of the past fifteen years who might have been expected to take up the nursery trade as a profession having entered other trades offering better opportunities.