

Wine Grapes.—The crop of wine grapes in the Waikato and Henderson areas was far below that of the previous year. The adverse weather seriously affected production in these areas, and considerable losses, amounting in some vineyards to 50 per cent., were experienced.

In the Hawke's Bay area the crops were good and ripened well, being, in general, considerably better than last year. Slight frost damage occurred in the Hawke's Bay and the Gisborne districts in the early part of the season.

WINERIES AND VINEYARDS

Large extensions were made to wineries in the Henderson and Hawke's Bay areas. These were mainly the erection of storage tanks and the installation of concrete fermenting-vats. A number of additional distillation units were also erected during the year.

Diseases.—*Under Glass* : Very little trouble was experienced from fungous disease. Mealy bug, however, continues to do considerable damage, but the improved fumigation methods introduced by the Department of Agriculture in co-operation with the Plant Diseases Division of the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research have proved effective.

The Plant Diseases Division is still conducting fumigation experiments in the experimental glasshouse at Mount Albert to ascertain the correct dosage for the fumigation of vineries during the winter season.

Outdoor : Where effective spray schedules were maintained, downy mildew, powdery mildew, and black-spot caused no trouble. There was little loss, except in the Henderson and Waikato areas. It appears inadvisable on the part of the wine-grape growers in the Auckland and Waikato areas to plant varieties of grapes which are susceptible to these diseases. The Franco-American hybrids, which are more resistant to disease, are far better suited to the damp, humid conditions experienced in these areas.

Insect Pests.—Less damage occurred this year than formerly. Brown beetle, which caused considerable damage in 1944 in the Havelock North vineyards, did not make its appearance this season.

Wine-production. The approximate area under outdoor grapes grown for wine-making is 700 acres, 200 acres of which have not yet come into production.

The production of the 170 winemakers licensed was approximately 357,000 gallons of wine, mostly of the sweet red and sweet white type.

The approximate total quantity of wine produced and consumed in New Zealand since 1940 is as follows :—

						Gallons.
1940	..	..	..	..	..	185,000
1941	..	..	..	..	..	186,000
1942	..	..	..	..	..	207,000
1943	..	..	..	..	..	309,000
1944	..	..	..	..	..	348,000
1945	..	..	..	..	..	357,000

During the year instruction was given to grape-growers on all phases of viticulture. Winemakers were given technical advice in connection with winemaking and also in respect to improvements of plant and buildings.

CIDER-MAKING

Throughout the Dominion 32 cider-makers were recorded, the production of cider being 87,000 gallons.

ROYAL COMMISSION ON LICENSING

Early in the year under review evidence was given before the Royal Commission on Licensing on every phase of viticulture and winemaking in New Zealand, and the prospects of further development of the industry.