

be shown on a label attached to the container, and in order not to create undue hardship on account of stocks on hand the products which would not scour out have been given limited approval for a period of twelve months. In addition, it has been made an offence to use any substance other than an approved wool-marking preparation for wool-branding, or to mix with or add to an approved preparation any substance other than a clear volatile solvent that has no injurious effect on wool. It is hoped that within the next two or three seasons the position in regard to the use of deleterious wool-marking substances should be greatly improved. New Zealand is the first country in the world to take legislative action to restrict the sale and use of harmful preparations.

Another project which is being considered is the establishment of a testing-house for wool in New Zealand primarily for the determination of wool yields, but which can later be extended to cover other factors such as moisture content of scoured wool, percentage of seed, contamination of wool, &c. A service to give rapidly the yields of greasy-wool samples would be of considerable assistance to the wool-appraisers and later, with the return of the auction system, the wool-buyers. Testing-houses have long been in operation in Great Britain and on the Continent, and three such units have recently been successfully established in Australia.

During the year a number of other activities have been undertaken, including the taking of topical photographs of sheep-farming operations to be used later for illustration purposes or for slides and/or film strip. Some work has been done in helping to perfect the tools used for meat-marking under the present meat-grading scheme, and a new projector to handle standard lantern slides, miniature lantern slides, or film strips has proved an advance on the old system. There has been close co-operation with the Secretary of the New Zealand Wool Board on several projects.

Present indications are that the wool-clip for the 1945-46 season will not be as attractive as last year, nor will the quantity of wool produced be as great as that grown last year, which was a record for New Zealand. Reasons for this are apparent when we realize that seasonal conditions, good or bad, are always reflected in the growth of wool. Climatic conditions in the South Island during the winter months of 1945 have been exceedingly bad. Canterbury, Otago, and Southland experienced one of the worst winters for many years, with the inevitable result that the wool-clip suffered. The most noticeable feature about the clip was its lack of colour, style, and length of staple. Cotted fleeces were fairly common, and in some districts tender wools were prevalent.

The North Island has also suffered from adverse weather conditions. The drought conditions in the North Auckland, Hawke's Bay, and Poverty Bay Provinces from September, 1945, until the present time have also had a bad effect on the wool, which has been light in condition—i.e., grease content—deficient in length, and inclined to tipiness, with numerous cotted fleeces in the clips. Tick stain is still bad in some districts, but the position is improving as Derris again becomes available in dips. Water stain has been noticeable on bellies and pieces from Auckland, southern Hawke's Bay, and Wanganui.

Although no figures are yet available for the 1945-46 season, the following provides a brief comparison of quantities and prices over the last four years:—

Season.	Number of Bales sold.	Net Weight.	Gross Value.	Average per Bale.	Average per Pound.
		lb.	£	£ s. d.	d.
1941-42	985,350	335,949,068	18,172,748	18 8 10	12·98
1942-43	950,607	327,321,380	19,916,828	20 19 0	14·60
1943-44	930,694	316,152,540	19,424,253	20 17 5	14·74
1944-45	1,038,019	357,606,520	22,013,258	21 4 1	14·77

The Government Statistician gives the estimated greasy-wool production for 1944-45 as 372,000,000 lb., a record.

RABBIT NUISANCE

During the year under review there has been no noticeable decrease in the rabbit population; in fact, in certain districts, particularly outside Rabbit Board control, an increase has been observed. The season was generally favourable to breeding, whereas, on the other hand, conditions experienced in a number of districts precluded satisfactory "kills" from poisoning. Strychnine, which is the principal killing agent employed, was in short supply during the early part of the main poisoning season, due to import difficulties, and this aspect, combined with a general shortage of suitable labour, affected the overall position.

A total of 101 Rabbit Boards have now been established under the Rabbit Nuisance Act, 1928, compared with 74 as at the 31st March, 1941. This is a very substantial increase in spite of the handicap of war conditions, and is further satisfactory evidence that Board control is being recognized and accepted as the best means of controlling and eventually