

determined from year to year by the Council. For the 1944 season this procedure returned an average of 7s. 5d. per bushel case to growers, and approximately the same will be paid for 1945.

The usual procedure in paying growers is, first, to make an advance payment fortnightly during the harvesting period; secondly, to follow with a further payment according to the fruit supplied by each grower up till the end of May; and, third, to make a final payment for the season when market returns can be assessed with reasonable accuracy. This payment may result in a small debit or credit balance when the accounts are actually finalized, which is carried forward to the following year. During the war years growers have usually been paid on the basis that fruit has been packed in accordance with a set standard, premiums or deductions being made if the standard of packing actually adopted by the individual grower was higher or lower than the official standard. In 1945 this basis was changed so that the initial payment to the grower was given on fruit packed bare into the case, and premiums only were given according to the type of packing which was adopted. This varies in different districts because it is only where fruit has to be transported long distances that the maximum amount of packing is called for. Since packing material must be conserved, different instructions are issued to the growers in, for example, Canterbury, where the orchards are near their market from those issued to the growers in, for example, Nelson, where most of the fruit needs protective packing to travel as far as perhaps Auckland or Dunedin.

CROP

The 1945 crop was approximately 335,000 cases below that of 1944 (see district details in table). Its schedule of distribution indicates, however, that the domestic market obtained very nearly the same quantity in both years. When it was realized that the crop would be considerably less, other allocations were reduced to protect the New Zealand consumer, and accordingly the quantity supplied to United States Joint Purchasing Board fell from 506,000 to 330,000.

With the very much smaller crop, rationing of wholesale quantities was introduced fairly early in the season. The demand for apples and pears remains strong, and if it were met fully would leave very little fruit available beyond the end of August. Rationing of quantities is therefore introduced in May or June to make stocks last out until November, or even December if the condition of the fruit warrants. This naturally creates a danger of wastage. Nevertheless, it still generally leaves two months when fresh apples are not available. In future it may be possible to meet these two months' demand with dehydrated apples should the plant, which so far has processed specifically for the United States Joint Purchasing Board, be continued. An indication of the demand for apples and pears has been the number of applications for agencies received from various parts of New Zealand. Except for Hokitika, these applications have been declined because it was felt that the other districts from which applications have been received are being adequately served under present methods.

During the year an offer received from the British Ministry of Food for 75,000 cases of apples was declined, despite the desirability of maintaining export connections, in order to ensure sufficient fruit for New Zealand consumers, since one-third of a million cases had already been provided for the Pacific Forces. The Council has since discussed prospects for 1946 with Mr. Harry Turner, formerly London representative of the New Zealand Fruit-export Control Board (which was responsible for the export of all fruit prior to the war), who visited New Zealand in December, 1944. Indications are that a quantity up to 500,000 cases would be acceptable to Britain.

One of the Division's main difficulties during 1945 was again lack of transport. With so many demands on rail and shipping it has been extremely difficult to move the fruit from the production districts to the districts where it is consumed. (The table showing transfers of stock between districts will indicate just how much fruit is moved within the Dominion.) This difficulty has been intensified by the fact that most fruit