

As the above figures include honey from two seasons, the following is a brief summary from each season :—

1st April, 1945, to 30th November, 1945 (balance of 1944-45 season)—

					Tons.
Bulk honey	..	..	..	..	322 (6,241½ cases)
Packed honey	..	..	..	..	39½

1st December, 1945, to 31st March, 1946 (portion of the present season)—

					Tons.
Bulk honey	..	..	..	..	50½ (961 cases)

In the above figures it will be noticed that the price paid to the beekeeper is ½d. per pound more than in the report of the previous year. Actually, ⅓d. per pound was paid on the previous season's honey after our last report, and this additional ⅓d. per pound has been carried on for the present season.

The average grade for the year as at 31st March, 1946, is 93.50. This, compared with the previous year of 91.99, shows an increase and a return to the grading of two seasons ago. Last year, owing to the very small quantity the Honey Section received, it was found necessary to import for tobacco-manufacturers 43½ tons of Australian bulk honey. This was sent direct to Messrs, W. D. and H. O. Wills and Messrs. Godfrey Phillips, Ltd.

VEGETABLES

The Division, being responsible from the latter end of 1943 for the procurement of both fresh and dehydrated vegetables for consumption by the Armed Forces at home and in the Pacific Area, found it necessary, in view of the mounting tempo of the Japanese War in 1945, to increase greatly its procurement arrangements for 1946. The termination of hostilities occurred before all the 1945 produce had been harvested, but the potential increase in contract growing for 1946 is shown in the following table :—

Year.				Number of Contracts.	Area, in Acres.	Estimated Tonnage.
1945	..	..	..	951	5,599	63,653
1946	..	..	..	1,114	8,522	95,684
Potential increase				163	2,923	32,031*

* 50-per-cent. increase.

Details for 1946 are as follows :—

Vegetable.				Number of Contracts.	Area, in Acres.	Estimated Tonnage.	Percentage Tonnage Increase.
Cabbage	..	..	..	430	4,386	50,796	87
Carrots	..	..	..	443	2,990	36,862	15
Beetroot	..	..	..	157	699	3,802	..
Cauliflower	..	..	..	84	447	4,224	73
				1,114	8,522	95,684	50

The above figures do not include anticipated production by the Department of Agriculture under its Services Vegetable Production Scheme, produce which, on maturity, would have been handled by the Division.