

Hong Kong for the British Pacific Fleet. The Navy Office states that all the produce, except tomatoes, arrived in excellent condition despite the long voyage across the tropics and discharge in a tropical port. It is therefore apparent that, given a market and the required transport, shipping New Zealand vegetables overseas presents no outstanding problem :—

					Tons (Trimmed).
Potatoes	..	..	..	..	868
Carrots	..	..	..	..	118
Beetroot	..	..	..	..	100
Onions	..	..	..	..	101
Cabbage	..	..	..	..	113
Tomatoes	..	..	..	..	3
					1,303

As the war was responsible for the Division becoming associated with vegetables in a practical manner, its vegetable operations have virtually ceased with hostilities. It is, however, still in contact with the industry through its own officers and the Vegetable Marketing Advisory Committee, which commenced to function in January, 1945, and is available for consultation and service as circumstances may require.

IMPORTED FRUIT SECTION

ORANGES

During the year under review the equivalent of 182,637 export cases of oranges have been imported, slightly less than last year. Owing to lack of shipping from Australia, the Division could import only 97,999 cases of the 143,800 cases allocated to New Zealand by the Australian Government. The Island supply was better, as a special steamer was sent to the Cook group and brought back 21,000 cases which the "Maui Pomare" could not have carried. Jamaica was able to make two shipments, but, on account of fruit quality, had to cancel a consignment of 20,000 cases which was to have left at the end of January, 1946. Although the Division has not been able to supply all New Zealand's requirements, a full supply has always been available for hospitals. Importations for the last two years were as follows :—

Source of Supply.	Year ended 31st March, 1945.		Year ended 31st March, 1946.	
	Cases.	Per- centage.	Cases.	Per- centage.
Australia ..	129,786	70.82	97,999	53.66
Cook Islands ..	42,776	23.34	69,161	37.87
Jamaica ..	10,708	5.84	15,467	8.47
	183,270	..	182,627	..

BANANAS

The cessation of Pacific hostilities and the return of the Islanders to production enabled the Division to import in 1945 more than double the 1944 quantity of bananas. However, though the Islanders have made large additions to their plantings, the quantity that can be brought into New Zealand will still be short of the demand until another steamer is available to supplement the "Matua." Pre-war the "Maui Pomare" used to bring approximately 9,000 cases a month in addition to the "Matua" cargo, but the "Maui Pomare" is now engaged in the Cook Island trade and unable to call at Samoa, the main banana-producing group.