

previous year. No less than 2,792,051 bushels were received under the mutual-aid arrangements at no cost to the Dominion, the Canadian Government providing not only this quantity of wheat, but the ships in which it was carried, free of cost. Of the 5,061,191 bushels of Canadian wheat received during the year, 3,591,327 bushels came to the North Island and 1,469,864 bushels to the South. In all, 4,049,407 bushels of imported wheat went to the mills and 1,011,784 bushels to the poultry industry. Because of the difficult shipping position which prevailed in the earlier part of the year, importations were relatively small during the first half, with the greater portion coming to hand in the second half of the year, and particularly in the last two months.

An innovation to New Zealand was the acceptance on our part of several cargoes constituting part bulk shipments of wheat, all of which were discharged at Auckland. This was made possible by the co-operation of and arrangements worked out by the two Auckland mills in conjunction with the Auckland Harbour Board, and sincere appreciation is recorded of these efforts and of the resultant success achieved. By utilizing grabs at the wharf and transferring the wheat into specially constructed hoppers it was possible to discharge loose wheat into lorries for ultimate transfer to the mills. An appreciable quantity was handled in this way, and because of the arrangement we were able to receive wheat from Canada at a time when the limitations in both bags and bagging equipment there, combined with the aggregation of shipping for world markets at Canadian ports, may otherwise have seriously interfered with the supply of wheat to this country.

New Zealand Wheat.—The New Zealand crop totalled 6,992,204 bushels from 183,886 acres, representing an average yield of 38.02 bushels per acre. The main features were the poor acreage and the high yield by comparison with the figures over a number of years. The unfavourable weather conditions which prevailed undoubtedly had a marked effect on the acreage. The price was 6s. 6d. per bushel f.o.b. grower's nearest port, equal to 6s. 2d. on trucks or 6s. 0½d. on farm.

Wheatgrowers' Compensation Scheme.—Because of the extreme weather conditions, the claims on the Insurance Fund were heavy, insurance payments totalling £15,243, as compared with £2,037 in the previous year. The number of claims met were 130, as against 19 last year. The worth of the scheme as a safeguard to the interests of the wheatgrowers against the unseasonable factors of damage from frost, hail, or flood can be gauged from the amount of compensation paid this year.

Flour Importations.—During the year 15,359 tons of Australian flour were imported, of which 3,186 tons were landed in the North Island and 12,173 tons in the South Island. This flour was mixed with New Zealand flour at the mills as a means of offsetting the effects of damage resulting from sprouted wheat.

Flour-mills.—The same number of mills, 43, continued to function throughout the year. The excellent record of the mills in meeting all requirements in the face of difficulties inherent in conditions of war and its aftermath is a matter for record.

Wheaten Stock Foods Control Notice 1945.—This Notice was gazetted on the 14th March, 1945, and was designed to conserve supplies by making it an offence to feed wheat and wheaten products to stock other than poultry, except under the special written authority of the Wheat and Flour Controller.

Bread-baking Industry.—The number of bread-baking units on the register at 31st January, 1946, was 567, which is the same figure as at 31st January, 1945. When the Bread-making Industry Control Notice was gazetted (27th June, 1940), the proportion of bread-bakers per head of population was 1 to 2,242 persons; at 31st January, 1946, the proportion was 1 baker serving 3,050 people.

Immediately after cessation of hostilities the Delivery Emergency Regulations (1942) were revoked, and as a consequence there is to-day no official bar to the resumption of house-to-house deliveries of bread.

Man-power.—From a recent survey of the man-power position and covering 559 of the 567 bread-baking units, the following information was gained:—

Bread-baking units employing labour	..	..	..	..	506
Bread-baking units not employing labour	..	..	..	..	53
Staff, including working proprietors—					
Males	..	..	..	..	2,242
Females	..	..	..	..	641
Ascertained staff shortage (allowing for anticipated staff outflow and inflow)—					
Males	..	..	..	..	195
Females	..	..	..	..	31

Skilled tradesmen shortage is recorded as 121 males.

Rehabilitation of Ex-servicemen as Bread-baking Proprietors.—During the latter portion of the control period, arrangements were made to accord to ex-servicemen a priority both in taking up new bread-baking opportunities and in securing transfers of existing bread-making establishments. The following is a summary of the results achieved:—

(a) Ex-servicemen rehabilitated into bread-bakeries in their own right	..	..	46
(b) Ex-servicemen in partnership with civilian bakers	..	..	14
(c) Ex-servicemen bread-baking partnerships	..	..	5 (11 men)
			65 (71 men)