

The stock tallies (with the previous year's figures shown in parentheses) on the farms financed by the Department were : cows milked during the season, 40,093 (39,044) ; other dairy stock, 21,117 (23,808) ; run cattle, 30,935 (31,256) ; breeding-ewes, 173,363 (169,279) ; and 101,783 (121,979) dry sheep.

Horticulture

Practical assistance in the growing and marketing of vegetables has been given to Maoris, and approximately 15,000 bushels of maize and over 240 tons of kumara, onions, potatoes, and other vegetables have been marketed on growers' accounts in addition to the quantities sold direct by the growers. The new tomato-growing project in Northern Hawke's Bay has been an unqualified success, and the factory pay-out of £2,500 in the Wairoa area, in addition to considerable sums from open-market sales, gives some indication of the value of this effort to a small community. When it is realized that practically all of these growers are new to tomato culture, the value of the effort can be more fully appreciated. New asparagus plantations now being grown for canning purposes are making phenomenal progress, and success is assured. A special effort in maize production has resulted in the sowing of an additional 2,000 acres, approximately, of new or deteriorated land.

The Department's tree nurseries have been satisfactorily maintained and extended. Two and a half million trees were bedded out in the nurseries this year, and a quantity approaching this number was utilized last year for shelter-belts and farm plantations. From the fruit-tree nursery, 1,500 pip, stone, and citrus trees were supplied last year to Maori homes. Special attention is being given to citrus culture, which, besides being of commercial value, will, it is hoped, help to offset any deficiency in average Maori dietary range.

Utilization of waste land by afforestation for the prevention of erosion and the reclamation of sand-dune areas continues, and the development of the existing plantations demonstrates the potentialities of this form of attack on these problems.

Ahuchenua Trophy

The annual competition for Viscount Bledisloe's trophy for the most progressive Maori farmer was this year won by Wiremu Matene Naera, of Waiotemarama (who was placed third in last year's competition). The second prize was won by John Savage, of Opoutere.

The Right Hon. Viscount Bledisloe, the donor of the trophy, very kindly undertook the presentation on 25th March last of the trophy and medal won in the previous year's competition by Henare Paraone, of Clevedon.

Maori Land Boards and Native Trust Office

The seven Maori Land Boards and the Native Trust Office remain in a sound financial position. Details of the funds held, investments, and office reserves are shown in Table A of G.-9 (Report of the Native Department). The Board of Native Affairs controls the investments of these bodies, which total £1,460,658, comprising mortgages, £552,668 ; Government securities, £701,167 ; and advances to farming and primary production undertakings carried on by those bodies, £206,823. The total funds held for beneficiaries was £1,000,764.

In conclusion, the Board desires to express its appreciation of the loyal support and co-operation of officers of the Native Department, who, in spite of heavy demands, have willingly devoted their best energies to furthering the work of the Board.