

EGG SECTION

Since the cessation of hostilities, the work of the Egg Section has been confined to a certain extent in reviewing previous year's operations and preparing for the post-war period.

It was anticipated, however, that the world cereal shortage would have an effect in regard to the supply of essential poultry-feed, and although a standard poultry mash is to be manufactured, poultry-farmers are experiencing considerable difficulty in arranging for regular and suitable supplies of poultry-food. This has brought about a drop in the annual egg yield per bird, which, in its turn, has been reflected in the reduced intake of eggs through organized marketing channels. It is difficult at this stage to give any information backed by actual facts as to whether there has been a decline in the total New Zealand bird population. While it appears that there has been a fall in the actual bird numbers in the South Island, particularly in Canterbury, it would also appear that there has been an increase in the North Island.

It is thought, however, that there is no material difference in the total flock strength between this year and last, and that the decline in the quantity of eggs available through the official channels is attributable to a certain extent to the poultry-feed situation.

The intake of eggs through approved egg floors during the period 1st April to 30th September is illustrated by the following figures :—

1946. Dozen.	1945. Dozen.	Decrease (1946). Dozen.
5,011,959.	5,569,566	557,607

DISTRIBUTION

The six months under review has seen the continuance of an equitable distribution system of eggs week by week, either on a percentage basis or related to butter registrations. It has still been necessary to maintain priority rationing whereby children under five, nursing and expectant mothers, invalids, and hospitals receive special allocations in relation to their actual requirements. The demand from Armed Forces has decreased almost to the point where it is no longer a factor to be considered in the main distribution programme, but, on the other hand, supplies for shipping still remain a difficult problem. The Division has also maintained its programme in regard to transferring eggs from production areas to consuming areas, and by far the largest quantities have been transferred to Wellington, which is relatively a non-producing area :—

Eggs transferred to Wellington from other Floors

From	Six Months ended 30th September,	
	1946.	1945.
Auckland	138,165	43,950
Christchurch	108,900	148,410
Hamilton	6,600	5,400
Tauranga	18,270	20,955
Gisborne	30,471	48,780
Hawke's Bay	65,377	80,320
New Plymouth	72,000	81,347
Wanganui	60,164	67,970
Manawatu	39,632	51,481
Carterton	82,362	85,367
Blenheim	34,452	34,225
Nelson	7,110	14,385
Ashburton	..	6,780
Timaru	25,275	31,770
Totals	688,778	721,140