

MAIZE

The final clearances of the crop harvested in 1945 were made during the early part of the period under review, and the total quantity marketed through the Maize Marketing Committee during that period amounted to 65,437 sacks.

For the current year's harvest now being marketed, reservation of the whole crop, with the exception of limited quantities released as seed for cob-production, green-feed production, and maize for chick-raiser manufacture, has been made by the Primary Industries Controller as a constituent for the manufacture of standard poultry-mash. Allocations by the Committee on this basis at present total 51,722 sacks, and it is estimated that there may be further quantities ranging from 5,000 to 10,000 sacks still available for allocation. Although the area planted last year was greater than that of the previous year, the estimated total yield is less owing to the extremely dry weather experienced in both Poverty Bay and Bay of Plenty during the growing season and to crop pests.

For the year 1947 a subsidy of 1s. 6d. per bushel has again been approved by the Government on the recommendation of the Economic Stabilization Commission, and it is hoped that there will be a fairly substantial increase in area during the coming year. Active steps have been taken by the representatives on the Maize Marketing Committee, the Division, and the Department of Agriculture to interest growers and farmers throughout all districts where maize-growing is considered commercially possible in increasing their areas. In this connection the introduction of special strains of Pfister Hybrid seed maize by the Department of Agriculture and commercial firms in Poverty Bay is likely to prove very helpful. This variety showed a very substantial increased yield per acre over other varieties during the very adverse weather conditions experienced last year. Meetings have been held, with very encouraging results, at all centres where any increased area could be considered a possibility.

HOPS

As was indicated in the Division's last report, the hop crop in the Nelson district this year has suffered very severely indeed from wind and drought conditions, with the result that the yield was the smallest ever recorded, the final total being 1,829 bales, compared with the customary average crop of about 3,000 bales. This quantity proved quite insufficient to meet New Zealand brewers' requirements, and it was necessary for the Hop Marketing Committee to arrange through its marketing agents the importation of some 300,000 lb. of hops from the United States to meet requirements. In view of the disastrous weather conditions and the very poor yield obtained, special consideration was given by the Price Tribunal to the price payable to the growers. For the current year's crop an increase of 6d. per pound was agreed upon by the Tribunal, Hop Marketing Committee, and the representatives of the New Zealand brewers.

It is too early yet to make any forecast with regard to the coming season's crop, but with a normal season they should at least be sufficient for our own internal needs.

RASPBERRIES

The area planted is being gradually extended, and the acreage to be harvested during the coming season will be larger than has been the case for the past two years, although it is too early yet for the new plantings to affect the total picking to any extent. Weather conditions until harvest-time will be the governing factor in the yield, which it is hoped will substantially exceed the disastrously small quantity harvested last year, although it will be a year or two yet before any material crop increases can be expected from the additional areas being planted.

The Raspberry Marketing Committee meets regularly throughout the year and members of the Committee are anxious to increase production, and to that end meetings have been held in the growing centres of the Nelson district, which cover in the main the Riwaka-Motueka area and also the Tadmor-Tapawera districts. Greater production takes place in the latter area, which is not affected by disease to the same extent as is the case in the Motueka district.