

The following is a schedule, completed from information supplied by dairy companies and merchants, setting out the approximate quantity and value of farm production from the Hauraki Plains for the year 1946-47. For the purpose of comparison figures for the year 1945-46 are also given:—

Schedule

	1946-47.		1945-46.	
	Quantity.	Value.	Quantity.	Value.
		£		£
Butter (tons)	2,738	393,757	2,186	313,997
Cheese (tons)	4,269	346,335	3,617	294,713
Plus farm-cost allowance on above		153,410		117,087
Pigs	5,021	22,053	4,023	17,580
Bobby calves	11,539	9,457	13,337	9,556
Cattle, sheep, &c.	24,294	82,639	27,025	95,944
Total		1,007,651		848,877

The rainfall of 38.31 in. was below average and was evenly distributed throughout the year. Because of the even distribution of the rainfall no serious flooding occurred during the winter, though some tidal overflow of the stop-banks at Waitakaruru and Miranda was caused by northerly winds at times of high spring tides.

The number of men employed on the Hauraki Plains has not varied greatly from last year, and additional labour is still required. The main reasons for this shortage of labour are to be found in the high wages obtainable in private employment to-day, and the lack of accommodation for married workmen on our works at Kerepeehi. During the year one house was erected at Kerepeehi. This was built from a disused hut and a small cottage that was surplus to requirements on Opou Block runoff. Further new building has not been possible owing to difficulty in securing materials and to the fact that the small gang of carpenters are constantly employed on maintenance of existing buildings and renovations of buildings on rehabilitation blocks.

Due to shortage of labour, most of the work carried out this year comes into the category of maintenance work. The normal amount of drain-cleaning in the area covered by the Hauraki Plains Rating District has been carried out, but there still remain considerable arrears of work, such as widening and deepening of drains rendered inefficient by subsidence of the peat substrata. This is particularly noticeable in the case of outlets carrying the drainage from the western hills across the swamp to the Piako River and other main outlets. It is hoped to make a start in the near future on the reconditioning of these outlets. With the end of the programme of stop-bank improvements in sight it will be possible to divert more plant to drain improvement in the future.

Four drag-line excavators have been employed on the Hauraki Plains for the whole year. Two of these have been used for raising the stop-banks on the Piako River, one working on each bank, and between them they have completed a further 3 miles 54 chains of bank. One of these machines will have completed its job about the end of April and will then be transferred to drain-improvement work on the main drains. Another plant was working almost the whole year on Waitakaruru Stream Canal, widening and deepening the channel and raising the stop-bank on the right bank. This job was discontinued on the 2nd March last, when a further 116 chains had been improved so that the plant could be used for constructing a new drain for the Awaitei South pumping scheme. When this work is finished this machine will be transferred to work on improvements to main outlet drains. The fourth plant continued with the work of removing *Poa aquatica* from the Awaitei Canal and the improvement of the channel and berms. This plant completed this work at the end of the year, having cleared a further 525 chains of canal bank. It is now undergoing an extensive overhaul, after which it will be used for improving some of the large outlet drains on Kerepeehi Block.