

REPORT ON FISHERIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH, 1948

Attention is drawn to the fact that all fisheries statistical data in this report is for the calendar year ended 31st December, 1947.

The estimated total quantity and value of the principal classes of fishery products marketed in the year 1947 are as follows:—

	Quantity.	Value. £
Wet fish	438,300 cwt.	802,496
Whitebait	7,056 cwt.	79,027
Oysters—		
Dredged	81,518 sacks	61,138
Rock	5,280 sacks	9,240
Mussels	16,261 sacks	5,563
Crayfish	18,052 cwt.	42,134
Toheroa (canned products)	43,400 lb.	2,871
Whale-oil	640 tons	25,000
Total values		<u>£1,027,469</u>

The detailed landings are summarized in Tables I to IX (pp. 36 to 46).

The total landings of wet fish show an increase of 57,979 cwt. over the previous year's total of 380,321 cwt., while the total value has increased by £142,400. The quantity of oysters dredged from Foveaux Strait has decreased by 7,838 sacks, but there is a slight increase of 177 sacks of rock oysters. The crayfish total is up by 1,286 cwt., and the quantity of mussels is up by 5,693 sacks.

In the most important group, the "wet fish"—i.e., all the ordinary fishes caught by all methods of sea fishing—the annual totals for successive years are as follows:—

	Total Quantity. cwt.	Total Value. £
1934-35	331,415	294,267
1935-36	363,448	313,106
1936-37	363,128	360,406
1937-38	355,687	413,516
1938-39	356,114	424,643
1939-40	339,231	416,480
1940-41	328,594	440,308
1941-42	326,863	458,393
1942-43	311,971	442,976
1943-44	294,445	489,268
1944	308,237	522,954
1945	331,773	558,404
1946	380,321	660,096
1947	438,300	802,496

The total weight of wet fish, 438,300 cwt., is the highest recorded total and represents a continuation of the rise shown last year. It is the cumulative result of the three principal factors listed last year—viz., (1) the return of several large catching units after war service; (2) re-engining and replacement of many vessels after the war; (3) exceptionally fine weather prevailing in most of the fishing-grounds, especially during the period of seasonal congregation of some of the more important types of fish, coupled with the comparative rest period imposed by the war years. It is a result that was expected and is a normal reaction in a fishing industry at this phase of getting into its stride after war years. The same result has been shown in other fishing-grounds elsewhere, and in some cases the peak has been reached in a much shorter period.