

Reports by Divisional officers show that diseases play an important part in reducing the quantity of vegetables produced. Eelworm is still a serious pest of tomatoes in glass-houses. Growers are being urged to sterilize their soil in glasshouses by steam or by chemical means to control pests and diseases and to eradicate weed seeds.

BULB-GROWING INDUSTRY

The best bulbs produced in New Zealand compare favourably with those grown overseas, but unfortunately many bulbs of poor quality are offered for sale. A number of problems of bulb-growing need investigating, such as the effect of cutting flowers from tulip and daffodil bulbs grown for sale and the effect on bulbs of different systems of spacing and manuring.

REHABILITATION OF EX-SERVICEMEN

Officers of the Horticulture Division have kept in close touch with the ex-servicemen who have been established or are engaged in horticultural activities. Officers of the Division have also inspected properties for the Rehabilitation Department and reported on their suitability for rehabilitating ex-servicemen.

TOBACCO INDUSTRY

The tobacco-growing industry continues to expand. The comparative figures for the 1946 and 1947 harvesting years are :—

	1946.	1947.
Acreage cropped	3,405	3,933
Poundage of leaf sold	4,080,135	4,706,723
Number of licensed growers	553	661

HOP INDUSTRY

The 1947 yield of hops was greater than that of 1946, when unfavourable weather conditions caused production to be very low. In 1946, 1,828 bales were produced, and in 1947, 2,511 bales.

PLANT NURSERIES

The number of plant nurseries registered throughout the Dominion during the year was 810, an increase of 58 over that of the previous year. Special attention was paid to inspecting the trees and plants in the nurseries. Generally the standard of the plants was good and the nurseries were well maintained. In cases where diseases were found, the nurserymen concerned were required to treat the trees to the satisfaction of Inspectors before the trees were distributed to purchasers.

In general, nurserymen are finding it difficult to meet the demand for fruit-trees, ornamental trees, shrubs, trees for farm planting, and bedding-out plants.

DISEASES OF HORTICULTURAL CROPS

The majority of growers have continued to give close attention to disease and pest control.

Brown-rot of Stone-fruits.—This disease still causes serious losses to growers in the Auckland district. Apart from Hawke's Bay, brown-rot was not of great importance in other districts.

Fireblight.—Fireblight infection has not been much in evidence this season, except in some of the domestic orchards at Hastings.

Silver-leaf.—This disease is becoming a major problem to stone-fruit growers in the Gisborne and Hawke's Bay districts.