

and extremely high cost of wire, posts, and other materials. Nevertheless, it is hoped that an increase of approximately 40 acres will be planted this spring, the present area being 727 acres. Prices have been reviewed by the Price Tribunal in the light of the increased costs which have taken place during the past year, and have been increased to 3s. per pound, of which 1d. per pound is to be set aside to establish a research fund to be administered by the Scientific and Industrial Research Department with a committee consisting of Chairman and Secretary of the Department, the Director of the Cawthron Institute, three representatives of the brewers, and three representatives of the growers. Investigations are to be made by responsible scientific officers under this committee, which it is hoped will have the effect of ultimately improving both the quality and yield of hops in the course of the next few years.

RASPBERRIES

Last year's crop proved rather better than that of the previous two years, but the quantity that went to jam-manufacture did not show any material increase, due to the very substantial increase in the bucket trade, for which many growers are now catering especially. With quicker means of transport, particularly by air, and with the general shortage of stone-fruits which has been apparent during the past two or three seasons, there is every indication that the bucket trade in raspberries will continue to grow, the demand at present being much greater than the quantity available to meet it. Shortage of suitable tins or other containers is one of the main difficulties in supplying the increasing demand. Indications for the coming season's crop are that it should be rather better than that of last year, and the area shows an increase of approximately 28 acres.

FERTILIZERS

The Division has continued to import the necessary requirements of sulphate of ammonia, sulphate of potash, and muriate of potash, and supplies have been coming forward regularly to meet market-gardeners' and farmers' requirements. Sulphate of potash is still in very short supply throughout the world and is still only available as fertilizer for tobacco, but substantial shipments of muriate of potash have come forward from America and latterly from Palestine.

Sulphate of ammonia has only been available from Canada, and sufficient has been imported to meet consumers' requirements. The position regarding the world's supply of sulphate of ammonia is still very difficult, as is also that of muriate of potash.

MOLASSES

During the year the balance of the Division's supply of molasses was sold, and it is not intended to make any further importations, supplies being available through customary trading sources in sufficient quantities to meet farmers' needs.

APPLE AND PEAR SECTION

FRUIT MARKETING COUNCIL

The Fruit Marketing Council continued to act during the period under review, the members being Mr. R. P. Fraser (Chairman), Hon. R. Eddy, Messrs. Wm. Benzie, W. K. Dallas, and F. B. Stephens (Government representatives), with Messrs. M. A. Cruickshank, J. Hainsworth, L. B. Robinson, H. R. Sampson, and A. C. Ward representing the growers. Towards the end of 1946 two grower members on the Council were due to retire, and the selection was made by ballot resulting in the retirement of Mr. A. C. Ward, member for Hawke's Bay, and Mr. L. B. Robinson, representing Nelson. Mr. Ward was returned unopposed, while Mr. Robinson was the successful candidate