

BRANCHES

AUCKLAND

This Branch, which is the largest of the branches operated by the Division, continued to administer regulations affecting the Division and carry on its various activities.

Apples and Pears.—The receipts of apples and pears in the Auckland district were less than last year by approximately 36 per cent. This was due to general weather conditions and an extension of direct consumer sales from orchards. A total of 174,701 cases were *cool-stored*, as against an estimated quantity of 227,000 cases. *Distribution* was maintained on the quota system, whilst returned servicemen setting up business were assisted as much as possible.

Agar Agar Seaweed.—Although this Branch is no longer responsible for the weed collected south of the East Cape, receipts for the period under review were 78 tons. It is intended to contact the pickers of the weed during the coming year in an endeavour to increase collection.

Butter.—The Branch continued its patting operations, and under the Auckland Zoning scheme for butter distributed 35 per cent. of the cities' requirements. The *tinning* of butter was continued, and 1,131 cases of 5 lb. tins (twelve to a case) and 23,793 cases of 1 lb. tins (forty-eight to a case) were canned. Difficulty was experienced in obtaining a constant supply of tinplate and with orders for 3,972 cases of 1 lb. tins and 50 cases of 5 lb. tins still unfulfilled steps are being taken to avoid any holdup in production through lack of cans. The *dry-fat* plant situated at the Auckland Farmers' Freezing Co.'s depot was closed down and a one-unit plant installed in the Branches premises. This plant has been adequate for the recovery of fat from butter parchment sent to Auckland, and altogether 2,201 cases, each of 78 lb., of dry-fat were manufactured.

Eggs.—Zoned deliveries by merchants have continued as in previous years in the Auckland metropolitan area. The intake for the twelve months ended 30th September, 1947, totalled 3,290,649 dozen, as against 3,966,808 dozen for the previous twelve months, a decrease of 17 per cent. During the flush period 108,220 dozen eggs were *chilled* for distribution in the off-season. *Egg-pulp* manufactured locally and placed into freezer totalled 789,340 lb.

Honey.—As mentioned elsewhere in this report, the receipts of honey for the period under review were the lowest ever received, only 51 tons of honey being blended.

Imported Fruits.—Although greatly increased quantities of these fruits have been received, it appears that the supply is still below the demand.

Storage.—The storage floor was used for the storage and despatch of apples during the season. When not fully used for this purpose the space has been utilized for dry storage.

Lemons.—The lemon-sheds at Tauranga, Keri Keri, as well as the one at Auckland are administered by this Branch. During the period covered by this report 76½ tons of peel and 5,771 gallons of lemon-juice were manufactured.

Pukekohe Processing Factory.—Canning: This factory, which is administered through the Auckland Branch, continued to operate, although on a reduced scale, during the period under review. The total of peas and beans *canned* during the season was as follows: 16 oz. peas, 12,000 cases; 30 oz. peas, 14,500 cases; 16 oz. beans, 6,600 cases; 16 oz. peas and carrots, 1,500 cases. The above canned goods were distributed throughout New Zealand, with the exception of 3,000 cases of peas and 400 cases of beans, which were sent to J Force in Japan.

Casein.—By utilizing the dehydration tunnels at the factory and setting up a processing line the Division has been able to dry casein on behalf of the Waikato associated casein companies. During the period under review 208 tons of casein have been dried, and as the result of alterations that have now been made to the plant that capacity has been doubled.