

*Hastings District*

A large pool of seasonal labour is required in this district to handle the volume of work offering in freezing-works, orchards, cool-stores, market gardens, fruit and vegetable canneries and pulping, &c. Between the months of October and January seasonal industries other than farming absorbed more than 900 additional male workers. Difficulty was experienced in providing sufficient casual labour to harvest the record fruit crop. In order to overcome the shortage of available labour a pool of workers who were prepared to work on harvesting the crop during week-ends was established.

Unemployment reached a peak in June, when 49 males were enrolled for employment due to the cessation of work in several major seasonal industries; of these men, 43 were placed in employment during the ensuing month. The Hastings Borough Council works scheme and the freezing-works building programme were delayed by shortages of essential materials and were thus not able to absorb their usual quota of seasonal workers. A public-works drainage project (main highways) was opened up to absorb surplus seasonal labour.

Notified vacancies for males at 31st March, 1949, were 115 and 62 for females, as compared with 187 and 98 respectively at 31st March, 1948.

*New Plymouth District*

Although dairying and other farming, together with allied seasonal industries, predominate, secondary industries are well represented and offset considerably the instability of seasonal employment.

During the past winter surplus seasonal labour was absorbed without much difficulty. Cable-laying projects by the Post and Telegraph Department were of assistance in this respect.

Production of butter and cheese was phenomenally high in the 1947-48 season, and staffing of factories was satisfactory. Local shortage of labour was in part overcome by the recruitment of Maori workers from Rotorua. Greater attention is now being paid by dairy companies to the provision of permanent accommodation for employees, and this is reflected in the improved staffing position.

Notified vacancies for males at 31st March, 1949, were 200 (195 at 31st March, 1948), including 87 skilled and 69 unskilled adults. Female notified vacancies fell from 95 at the 31st March, 1948, to 39 at 31st March, 1949.

*Wanganui District*

The total population of the Wanganui Employment District has remained stationary around (or slightly below) the 60,000 mark for the past two decades. The past four years have seen some expansion of manufacturing industries, but the total number employed in factories in 1948 (4,714) is still slightly less than the number employed twenty-two years ago, when the figure was 4,811.

Seasonal fluctuations in employment are marked. During the peak of the season dairy factories, freezing-works, and wool-stores absorb nearly 700 additional workers. The demand for male labour, particularly during the winter months, is comparatively limited, and until the non-seasonal industries increase their capacity to absorb this fluctuation in labour-supply the Department will be confronted with a difficult placement problem. Unemployment reached a temporary peak in May, 1948, when 59 males were disengaged.

Notified vacancies for both males and females have declined over the past twelve months. Male vacancies fell from 343 to 260 and female vacancies from 217 to 135 at the 31st March, 1949.