

ROCK OYSTERS

A total of 5,693 sacks were picked. Picking started on 24th May and finished on 7th August.

The yield of oysters in sacks from each of the various areas was as follows: Bay of Islands, 2,242; Whangarei Harbour, 226; Coromandel, 368; Great Barrier Island, 240; Kaipara Harbour, 1,027; Manukau Harbour, 54; Hauraki Gulf, 1,536.

The quantities from Hauraki Gulf were obtained from the following areas: Pomui Island, 627; Waiheke Island, 592; Rakino Island, 95; Takatu to Gull Point, 94; Crusoe Island, 49; Noises Islands, 42; Motutapu Island, 25; Pakatoa Island, 12.

Oyster-cultivation for the Year Ended 31st March, 1949

Area.

II. Whangarei Harbour: 134,200 borers and 769 pupu destroyed, 48 square yards of rock cleared of dead shell. Cost, £61 4s.

V. South Shore: 146,000 borers and 42 pupu destroyed, 63 square yards of rock cleared of dead shell. Cost, £4 14s. 3d.

XIII. Waiheke: 392,000 borers and 111 pupu destroyed, 146 square yards of rock cleared of dead shell. Cost, £14 17s. 3d.

XIV. Ponnui: 185,000 borers destroyed and 314 square yards of rock cleared of dead shell. Cost, £5 16s.

XVI. Great Barrier: 1,485 square yards of rock cleared of dead shell and 318 square yards cleared of grape weed. Cost, £34 3s.

Total for all areas: 857,200 borers and 922 pupu destroyed, 2,056 square yards of rock cleared of dead shell, and 318 square yards cleared of grape weed. Cost, £120 14s. 6d.

DREDGE OYSTERS: FOVEAUX STRAIT, 1948

The total catch of 94,444 sacks shows an increase of 12,926 sacks over last year's total and constitutes an all-time record.

One vessel which was under overhaul for practically the whole of the 1947 season operated throughout 1948, bringing the number of vessels oystering up to ten.

August showed the highest landings. Nearly two-thirds of the oysters taken came from the East Bed and from other beds in the vicinity of Ruapuke Island. The weather throughout the season was fair to good. In view of the high catch in 1948, the dredge size has been restricted to 11 ft. in length for the 1949 season. This will not only assist conservation, but should ensure better culching of the oysters on the part of some of the oystermen, who tend to become careless when the daily catch is too high.

The totals for the last six years are set out below:—

Year.	Sacks.
1943	73,119
1944	63,949
1945	76,038
1946	89,356
1947	81,518
1948	94,444

TOHEROAS

The Ninety-mile Beach toheroa-beds are not yet showing any signs of recovery.

On the other beaches the toheroa stocks are holding in spite of heavy abstractions by increasing numbers of the public. Surveys during the year indicate that any further increase in abstractions by the public is likely to have a marked adverse effect on the toheroa population on most beaches.