

PHORMIUM TENAX

With the payment of a guaranteed price, more interest is being taken in the *Phormium tenax* industry and a considerable increase has been made in production, which for the year ended 31st January, 1949, was as follows:—

						Tons.
Fibre	..	..	..	..	..	1,820
Tow	..	..	..	..	..	320
Unscutched fibre (straw)			..	..	..	3,028
Slipper strips	..	..	..	..	..	365
						5,533

Production for the year ended 31st January, 1948, was 4,643 tons, so that there has been an increase of 860 tons for the year under review. Government loans to millers to assist phormium production are still available and three applications for assistance have been investigated.

From 1st March, 1949, the Division took over control of the Moutoa and Makerua Estates from the Department of Industries and Commerce. A management committee under the chairmanship of the Director-General has been set up to supervise the development work and to assist officers of the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research in research work on yellow leaf and other problems at Moutoa.

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION

The supplying of information to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations has been continued by the Statistical and Economic Section of the Extension Division, though the expanding scope of the work has required at times the co-operation of specialist officers of other Divisions, as well as of other State Departments and relevant organizations.

The major work in connection with FAO is the preparation of the annual progress and programme report, in which details are given of current production and nutritional levels, estimates for the immediate future, and an indication of long-range production programmes. In addition, factual detail is supplied of research, the application of research findings, extension and advisory services, and any other work which will assist in implementing production programmes.

FAO now issues a monthly *Statistical Bulletin*, and this involves the completion of a monthly questionnaire on the latest live-stock, crop, production, and price statistics. During the year food balance-sheets were prepared for a pre-war period and 1947 for inclusion in a special FAO study on nutrition in selected countries. Information was also supplied on a number of other topics, including fertilizers, regulations regarding the importation of plants and plant products into New Zealand, cattle-breeding in New Zealand, and the possibility of establishing a world catalogue of genetic plant stocks.

The improvement in the world food situation over the year has resulted in a considerable curtailment in the activities of the International Emergency Food Council, which is now a council of FAO, but questionnaires on the production and utilization of cereals and oils and fats were completed during the year as well as information on grass and clover-seed production and requirements.

The Division has continued to act as a link between FAO and other Departments, especially the State Forest Service and the Marine Department, with which FAO has to make contact. It has also been responsible for the dissemination of information from FAO, principally through the distribution of reports and documents prepared by the Organization and through statements and articles in the *New Zealand Journal of Agriculture*.