

A comprehensive survey of foul-brood in New Zealand apiaries carried out during the year by officers of the Division showed that 1.7 per cent. only of the hives inspected were diseased and that 10 per cent. of the apiaries inspected contained some disease. Every endeavour is being made to reduce foul-brood to a minimum.

Ex-servicemen Beekeepers.—Thirty-six beekeepers under rehabilitation to the end of March, 1949, have been given instruction and guidance in modern apiary practices by Apiary Instructors of the Division.

Wasps in New Zealand.—Four seasons have passed since wasps (*Vespa germanica*) were first noticed in New Zealand in the Waikato district. These wasps appear to thrive in New Zealand and have become a decided nuisance to farmers, orchardists, housewives, beekeepers, and to manufacturers of sweet foodstuffs.

These wasps are a menace, and every effort is being made to keep them down to a minimum. During the year ended 31st March, 1949, 50,000 pamphlets covering the life-history and habits of these wasps and control measures in operation have been distributed, in addition to posters placed in schools, post-offices, and other public places. Arrangements for the payment of a bounty on all queen wasps caught and destroyed before the nesting period at the end of December, 1948, brought in a total of 118,251 queen wasps, for which £1,478 2s. 9d. was paid by the Department. This work was followed by a free distribution of D.D.T. chemical powder for the destruction of wasp nests, and part-time workers were engaged to destroy any nests reported on unoccupied lands. Up to the end of February, 1949, a total of 379 nests was reported and dealt with. It is considered impracticable to exterminate these pests because they nest in inaccessible places and are spread over the country by the movement of goods in which hibernating queens may be resting. In this way wasps have spread from the Waikato to the Auckland district, the King-country, Taranaki, and Hawkes Bay, where a few nests have been found this year. A concentrated effort by research officers of the Department to find suitable methods of dealing with wasps on the wing wherever they appear is proceeding, in addition to intensive field-work for the destruction of nests.

OVERSEAS VISITS

The Horticultural Superintendent, Nelson, visited Tasmania to investigate hop culture there compared with New Zealand, and the Orchard Instructor, Auckland, visited Raoul Island to determine possibilities of citrus development on the Kermadec Islands.

RETIREMENT OF DIRECTOR

Mr. W. K. Dallas, after ten years as Director of the Division and forty years' continuous service with the Department, retired at 30th November, 1948.