

PLANT QUARANTINE

During the past two decades a considerable number of new insect, fungous, virus, and bacterial diseases have been recorded in New Zealand. The large majority of these have been introduced from overseas, and the diseases recorded have arrived as stowaways with the host plants with which they have been associated. Well-known examples are the white butterfly, the red-legged earth-mite, the European wasp, and citrus canker. During the Second World War, in the Pacific area plant quarantines broke down in many places, and the advent of regular air transport has increased the likelihood of new unwelcome arrivals in New Zealand. The Division administers the plant quarantine regulations through an inspection service at the principal ports and carries out fumigation to a limited extent. The Division is securing more adequate premises in which vacuum fumigators are to be installed. At the same time the existing Acts and regulations thereunder will be reviewed to provide a more efficient plant quarantine service without undue interference with international trade in plants and plant products.

BEEKEEPING

Beekeeping in New Zealand is expanding steadily as new country is opened up for ordinary farming purposes and as essential beekeeping equipment becomes available.

A pleasing feature of this trend is the installation of modern plant where possible and the practice of up-to-date methods of apiary-management.

Following is a summary of apiary registrations at 31st March, 1949, showing the number of beekeepers in groups according to the number of hives kept:—

Group.	1 to 5 Hives.	6-20 Hives.	21-50 Hives.	51 Hives and Over.
Beekeepers	4,017	1,502	422	546
Apiaries	4,112	1,727	763	4,767
Hives established ..	9,406	16,000	14,004	134,976

This table shows that full-time and semi-commercial beekeepers are of major importance in the industry in terms of hive holdings and production.

Statistics show a falling off by 803 in the number of domestic beekeepers with 1 to 5 hives each from June, 1947, to 31st March, 1949. On the other hand, there has been an increase of 62 commercial beekeepers each operating over 50 hives and an over-all increase of 19,878 in the number of hives kept during the same period.

Production of Honey.—The estimated production of honey and commercial beeswax for the 1948-49 season ended 30th April, 1949, is 4,190 tons and 113,700 lb. respectively. This estimate of production was less than the previous year by some 560 tons of honey and 5,050 lb. of beeswax because of low rainfall, strong drying winds, and/or comparatively low temperatures at critical periods in important honey-producing areas. Districts most affected by adverse weather conditions were Auckland, Hawkes Bay, Canterbury, and parts of Otago.

Production of honey in domestic apiaries included in the foregoing figures for 1948-49 season is estimated at 400 tons.

Assistance and Protection of Beekeeping. The number of divisional apiary districts in New Zealand was increased from eight to eleven during the year by readjustment of district boundaries in important beekeeping areas to enable the Division to give the maximum assistance to beekeepers. Field officers of the Division made 2,999 visits to beekeepers and apiaries for instruction and disease-control and also gave a total of 104 lectures covering a wide range of beekeeping subjects at organized meetings of producers.