

which delayed the loading of our ships. Serious hold-ups in Auckland were experienced with two cargoes on the s.s. "Mountpark," which vessel was the subject of a waterfront dispute concerning the weight and handling of the hatch covers. These circumstances necessitated continuation of the various controls over the use of wheat and wheaten products. Supplies from the New Zealand crop were so directed as to ensure that the country mills in the South Island received the maximum quantity possible. This avoids the extra expense that would be entailed in railing imported wheat inland. Port mills in the South Island were allocated about 50 per cent. of their requirements in New Zealand wheat. South Island poultry-keepers were allocated either New Zealand or Australian according to supplies available. Shipments of Australian wheat arrived throughout the year, and were used to supply the balance of South Island needs and almost the whole of the North Island requirements.

The year was characterized by a small locally grown crop (4,539,017 bushels) and by heavy importations (6,636,973 bushels). Wheat entering into international trade was allocated by the International Emergency Food Committee, Washington, whose allocations were only sufficient to meet the needs of importers. Our imports included wheat of under-milling quality, which was the only type we were permitted to import for feed purposes. We imported more than the 4,500,000 bushels stipulated as the maximum delivery for a crop-year under the contract arrangement between the Australian and New Zealand Governments, and of the 6,636,973 bushels imported a portion was carried over from the previous year's quantity, which had not all been lifted in 1947, and a portion was wheat drawn in advance from the 1949 quantity because the Australian Wheat Board advanced the date for commencement of delivery ex the 1948-49 crop to 1st November, 1948, instead of the 1st January, 1949.

The under-grade wheat imported for feed was found to contain an excessive quantity of saffron thistle (*Carthamus lanatus*) seeds and objections were made by United Wheatgrowers and other farming organizations. Badly affected lines were machine-dressed before being distributed to poultry-keepers.

(b) INTERNATIONAL WHEAT AGREEMENT

Because the United States failed to ratify the agreement negotiated early in 1948, that agreement did not come into force. However, another agreement was negotiated by the International Wheat Conference held at Washington, United States of America, from 26th January to 23rd March, 1949, and this requires formal acceptance by signatory Governments on or before 1st July, 1949, if it is to come into force as from the 1st August, 1949, for a period of four years. There are five contracting exporting countries (Canada, United States of America, Australia, France, and Uruguay), and their undertaking is to make available when required by the importers 456,000,000 bushels each year in return for an undertaking by the contracting importing countries that they will take when required by the exporters 456,000,000 bushels each year at prices determined as provided for in the agreement. New Zealand's guaranteed quantity is 125,000 metric tons (or 4,592,964 bushels) per year. Under conditions ruling at 1st March, 1949, the equivalent in New Zealand currency for f.o.b. prices of Australian f.a.q. wheat per bushel under the agreement would be as follows:—

				Minimum Price.		Maximum Price.	
				s.	d.	s.	d.
1949-50	..	..	..	..	7 2·8	8	11·1
1950-51	..	..	..	..	6 8·8	8	11·1
1951-52	..	..	..	..	6 2·9	8	11·1
1952-53	..	..	..	..	5 8·9	8	11·1