

Poplar Timber for Butter-boxes and Cheese-crates.

Department of Agriculture, Industries, and Commerce (Dairy-produce Division),
Wellington, 8th April, 1913.

YOUR memo. 13/438, of 3rd instant.

As the result of some correspondence which took place between Mr. H. M. Reader, of Have-lock, and this office early in 1911, a large poplar tree was obtained in that district through Messrs. Robertson, timber-merchants.

This tree, which yielded 500 ft. of timber, was cut into suitable lengths and sizes, and forwarded to Wellington. After allowing some months for the timber to become thoroughly seasoned, six butter-boxes and six cheese-crates were made up by the Wellington Cooperage Company. In December of 1911 two of the boxes were filled with butter at the Konini Factory, the butter from two separate churnings being used. From each churning one poplar and one white-pine box were filled with butter.

After storing the produce for over two months the butter was examined for flavour, having previously been graded before being stored. At the first grading the flavours in all the boxes were similar. At the time of regrading the only noticeable difference in the flavour was that that of the butter near the sides of the poplar boxes was hardly as good as in the white-pine boxes. The difference, however, was very slight. Had the poplar boxes been first covered with paraffin-wax inside, it is probable that the flavour of the butter at the sides of the poplar boxes would have been as good as that in the white-pine boxes.

Poplar timber as compared with white-pine is whiter in colour, lighter in weight, and not so close in grain. In the boxes tested the nails did not hold so well as in the white-pine, but this little drawback could no doubt be easily overcome.

The timber made up into cheese-crates gave a satisfactory package, but it was not considered necessary to test the wood for holding cheese, as the crates are of an open nature and would not be at all likely to damage the cheese, provided the timber were thoroughly seasoned before being used.

No difficulty was experienced in working up this timber into boxes and crates. Of course, the cost in this particular case was rather high, but this could not be taken as any criterion under the circumstances.

D. CUDDIE,

Director of Dairy-produce Division.

The Secretary of Agriculture, Industries, and Commerce.

No. 10.

Department of Lands and Survey (State Forests Branch), Canterbury,
Hanmer Springs, 9th April, 1913.

SIR,—

I enclose herewith information *re* trees growing in this district, which I trust will be of some use to you.

The figures refer to the State plantations, trees growing at St. Helens homestead, and trees that were planted in the "Spa" grounds thirty years ago.

The photos enclosed herewith are of damage done by red deer to the native forests in close proximity to Hanmer, and not more than two miles from the township. The trees damaged are *Nothopanax Colensoi*, many hundreds of which have been stripped of bark to a height of 9 ft. from the ground, the trees being now dead or in a dying condition. Within a space of less than 20 yards square I counted no less than fifteen trees damaged in the manner described, and the whole of the bush of this variety of *Nothopanax* was more or less stripped of bark by the deer. The damage was done during the heavy snowfall last winter. Note the marks of the teeth on the trees; the trunks had the appearance of having been scraped with a knife.

Many larch were damaged in a like manner in the State plantations, and in one instance a *Pinus Laricio* was completely stripped of bark.

Four sets of antlers were picked up during the spring inside the plantation-area, and one deer was shot. There is no doubt that much damage will be done in the future by these animals unless means can be devised to keep them outside the planted area. Fencing of so large an area would be out of the question. Shooting would "meet the bill," I fancy, as, after being shot at and disturbed for a season or two on the Hanmer side of the range, the deer would probably give the locality a wide berth.

I have, &c.,

W. G. MORRISON,

Nurseryman in Charge, Hanmer Springs.

The Chairman, Forestry Commission, Wellington.

No. 11.

DEAR SIR,—

Leslie Hills, Culverden, 7th April, 1913.

In reply to your inquiry *re* forest-trees grown on Leslie Hills.

In 1860 my late father brought several kinds of trees from South Australia with him; amongst them were the blue-gum, oak, ash, sycamore, elm, walnut, wattle, and flowering or prickly acacia.