

no reason why the purebred herds at the various farms should not be sold off, with the exception of the Weraroa Holsteins, the Illawarra breed, and the milking Shorthorns, which are worthy of further trial.

FRUIT.

One extraordinary fact was noted by our member who reported upon this subject—viz., that none of the fruit-farms was in a fruitgrowing district, except Arataki and perhaps Tauranga. Weraroa, for instance, could scarcely be called a fruitgrowing district in the same sense as Nelson is, but a large sum of money has been spent upon the fruit-farm there. The Overseer, however, states that in his opinion neither the soil nor the climate is suitable for apple-growing, giving as his reason that the high winds, sometimes laden with salt, are deleterious to fruit generally, and that there is not sufficient sun to give the bright attractive colour which is so necessary for export apples. Pears, however, are said to do well.

At Moumahaki much has been done, although latterly this section has been somewhat neglected.

At Ruakura the Overseer has this portion of his work well in hand, but our information is that, with the exception of pears and peaches, the land is quite unsuitable for fruit-culture.

At Arataki the orchard is in very fair order, being well cultivated and the trees well pruned and sprayed, and it is thought that this orchard, worked as a practical experimental orchard, would be of immense benefit to surrounding districts, as it is in the midst of a very fine orchard district. With the exception, therefore, of Arataki, as the land is not particularly suitable for fruitgrowing, and is not in districts where fruitgrowing is the staple industry, it is thought that it is a waste of money and energy for the Government to encourage the cultivation of fruit in dairying and grazing districts, as what constitutes a good climate and soil for one branch of agriculture does not necessarily for another. The aim of the Government should rather be to the encouragement of fruitgrowing in districts which are unsuitable for grazing but which make ideal land for the production of the very best of export fruits.

Again, at Waerenga there seems to be no move among the farmers of the district to develop fruitgrowing, as dairying seems to be the object they have in view. As with the other farms, mistakes have been made here in the past, but with regard to the trees now being planted the Department seems to have benefited by the lessons learnt. It is quite certain, however, that elsewhere in the Dominion there are districts where fruitgrowing is becoming the staple industry, and it is in these districts that experimental fruit-farms should be. At such farms experiments of all kinds could be carried out under exactly the same conditions as those under which the commercial growers are working. Then and then only will experimental fruit-farms be of any real value to growers, but they must be managed and organized better than at present, and the fruitgrowers' associations should be consulted as to their scope.

It was noted that records in fruitgrowing have not been kept, and it was thought that such reports are of just as great value in this branch of agriculture as in any other, and for that reason we would like to emphasize the fact that immediate steps should be taken to collect what records are available, and for the future a thorough system should be maintained.

RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING FUTURE OPERATIONS.

Ruakura. (914 acres.)

The Board is of opinion that the whole of this property should be retained and the farm placed under the management of a trained professional man; that the stud sheep should be sold; that the Illawarra and milking Shorthorn breeds be specialized there; and the stud sheep replaced by commercial sheep for the carrying-out of the ordinary experiments in connection therewith. The present work in connection with grain-selection should be continued, as it is of great value.

The cadet system might be extended and worked in conjunction with the high-school pupils, who might camp at the farm for the purpose of practical instruction, and opportunity should also be given to the Education Department to hold teachers' summer schools there.

It must always be remembered that there is a great difference between the cadet who goes on a farm merely to gain knowledge of the practical work and the student whose aim is the scientific side of agriculture, combined with practice, and for whom the motto of the Royal Agricultural Society of England would be appropriate—viz., "Science with practice."

Tauranga. (97 acres.)

This horticultural station might well be retained, as it has not yet been proven whether that district is suitable or not for fruitgrowing.

Moumahaki. (585 acres.)

The area of this farm is greater than is required for experimental purposes. The homestead and 200 acres should be retained for that purpose, and the balance sold.

Here again the stud stock should be sold. The purebred Ayrshire cattle of good class, however, might be transferred to any farm which might be established in a neighbourhood where this breed is more suitable. An ordinary dairy herd should be retained. The Leicester sheep should be sold. The sheep of the Ryeland breed should be concentrated either at this farm or at Ruakura, and retained for some time to ascertain whether they are suitable for producing fat lambs or as wool-growers. The pigs are of good quality and should be retained. As the land seems to be suitable for potatoes, experiments with these tubers should be continued. The grass-selection work should be extended. There is an immense field in this direction for