

Main Weeds reported in Order of Importance.

(669 circulars were selected from the 800-odd. The remainder were of no particular value.)

South Island.				North Island.			
328 Replies.		Times reported.		341 Replies.		Times reported.	
1. Californian thistle	..	262		1. Blackberry	..	304	
2. Couch-grass	..	150		2. Californian thistle	..	249	
3. Fat-hen	..	133		3. Gorse	..	179	
4. Yarr	..	130		4. Ragwort	..	162	
5. Sorrel	..	99		5. Ox-eye daisy	..	141	
6. Sweetbrier	..	94		6. Pennyroyal	..	123	
7. Gorse	..	93		7. Foxglove	..	70	
8. Docks	..	82		8. Piripiri	..	56	
9. Ragwort	..	80		9. Winged thistle	..	42	
10. Blackberry (27 Nelson)	..	60		10. Sorrel	..	39	
11. Broom	..	51		11. Variegated thistle	..	37	
12. Yarrow	..	48		12. Buttercup	..	32	
13. Wild turnip	..	45		13. Bathurst burr	..	23	
14. Ox-eye daisy	..	36		14. Fat-hen	..	21	
15. Shepherd's purse	..	30		15. Inkweed	..	20	

It will be noted that ten of the main fifteen weeds of the South Island are arable-land weeds and five pasture-weeds, while in the North thirteen of the fifteen main weeds are pasture-weeds. This is, of course, to be expected when the difference in farm practice between the two Islands is considered.

The Main Weed Districts and Main Characteristic Weeds.

Districts.		Weeds.
1. Southland, South Otago	...	Californian, yarr, ragwort.
2. Central and North Otago	...	Californian, fat-hen, sorrel.
3. Canterbury	...	Couch, Californian, fat-hen.
4. Kaikoura, Blenheim	...	Californian, sweetbrier, gorse.
5. East Nelson, South Wellington	...	Blackberry, foxglove, Californian.
6. Wairarapa	...	Gorse, Californian, winged thistle.
7. Manawatu, Rangitikei	...	Californian, pennyroyal, blackberry.
8. Forty-mile Bush	...	Californian, blackberry, ragwort.
9. Taranaki	...	Blackberry, Californian, ragwort.
10. Hawke's Bay	...	Blackberry, Californian, variegated thistle.
11. King-country	...	Blackberry, Californian, inkweed.
12. Waikato	...	Blackberry, Californian, gorse.
13. Tauranga	...	Blackberry, Californian, ragwort.
14. Auckland	...	Blackberry, gorse, pennyroyal.

A very noticeable feature was that the same weeds were over very large areas, provided the soil and climatic conditions were similar, and indicates the futility of local bodies having the power to add weeds. A weed when gazetted should be a noxious weed over the whole of the district where the conditions are suitable for its spread. The replies show that many if the weeds have a well-marked local distribution.

Methods of Control.

The circulars require very careful tabulation with regard to suggested methods of control, and also need careful consideration. Many of the answers to any one knowing the country are manifestly impracticable, but in other cases much useful information is given. I have appended here my notes on Californian thistle as gathered from a careful study of the circulars, and also from my own personal knowledge.

In Southland and South Otago Californian is ranked as the most serious weed, but there appears to be a general consensus of opinion that on grass land it is not particularly serious. The value of cutting is difficult to ascertain, some declaring such procedure valueless, while others assert that patches weaken under the process. It is noteworthy that many report laying down in permanent pasture as the most satisfactory method of dealing with thistly land. On arable land the general practice is to plough in autumn and work the land till into the new year, sowing down with turnips or swedes in ridges, and continue with a horse-hoe until the early autumn; follow this with spring ploughing, early summer cultivation, and a second crop of turnips, followed perhaps in the next year with rape and grass, a liberal seeding of clover being included in the mixture. Quite the most significant feature of thistle-control in Southland is the attempt to introduce conditions unfavourable to the development of the weed during its growth period, and at the same time fully utilize the land during the long period the thistle