

IMPORTED FRUIT.

The following figures supplied by the Customs Department show the quantity of fresh fruit and fruit products imported into New Zealand during the year. The previous year's figures are quoted for comparison.

	1918-19.		1917-18.	
	Quantity.	Value.	Quantity.	Value.
		£		£
Fruit, fresh, dutiable	1,381,061 lb.	20,249	3,239,090 lb.	33,537
„ „ free	18,808,525 lb.	135,464	21,420,386 lb.	143,457
„ bottled and preserved	147,380 doz.	59,821	237,672 doz.	75,660
„ dried	8,070,001 lb.	221,105	11,026,996 lb.	288,502
Lemon and orange peel in brine ..	115,626 lb.	2,100	484,228 lb.	3,623
Fruit pulp and partially preserved fruit ..	67,686 lb.	1,532	162,494 lb.	2,978
Totals	..	440,271	..	547,757

This shows a big falling-off in the importations, due chiefly to the disorganization caused by the Great War.

INSPECTION OF IMPORTED FRUIT, PLANTS, AND VEGETABLES.

The Fruit Inspectors stationed at the ports of inspection—Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch, Dunedin, and Bluff—report that the bulk of the fruit, vegetables, &c., came to hand in good condition. Several lines, however, from Fiji, Cook Islands, and Australia arrived in more or less bad order. Bananas from Fiji especially have been of very poor quality, in many instances being only half-grown. There has again been a big decrease in the total number of packages imported at all the ports with the exception of Wellington, which shows an increase as compared with the previous year. The reduced figures are due to war conditions, and also to the influenza epidemic, which greatly disorganized shipments from the islands. A great improvement is noticeable in the quality and packing of the fruit from the Cook Islands, particularly bananas, the cases being well filled and honestly packed. The condemnation of fruit for fly infection was confined to only one or two lines. A number of consignments infected with scale and mealy bug required to be fumigated before being allowed to land.

The following is a summary of all fruit, vegetables, plants, &c., examined at the different ports of entry during the year, the previous year's figures being also quoted for comparison:—

Port of Entry.	Fruit.				Plants, Vegetables, &c.			
	Total.	Destroyed.	Fumigated.	Reshipped.	Total.	Destroyed.	Fumigated.	Grand Total.
1918-19.	Cases.	Cases.	Cases.	Cases.	Packages.	Packages.	Packages.	Packages.
Auckland ..	345,816	145	106	20	51,518	2	..	397,334
Wellington ..	103,716	626	243	..	60,417	..	..	164,133
Christchurch ..	27,389	55	130	..	468	8	..	27,857
Dunedin ..	9,764	114	207	..	6,876	1	..	16,640
Bluff ..	6,328	..	84	..	941	..	..	7,269
1917-18.								
Auckland ..	446,507	55	2,868	3	19,189	2	6	465,696
Wellington ..	93,429	929	178	126	28,650	11	1	122,079
Christchurch ..	34,882	18	40	..	1,563	18	200	36,445
Dunedin ..	20,944	184	61	..	7,722	1	..	28,666
Bluff ..	6,531	25	33	..	796	..	..	7,327

VINEYARDS AND VINEHOUSES.

There has been no alteration in the area under vineyards, which stands at 454 acres. The Acting Vine and Wine Instructor reports that owing to unseasonable weather experienced the vintage in all parts of the Dominion was quite a month late. Although the grape crop was lighter, the fruit was in fine condition owing to the favourable autumn experienced, and should result in a good sample of wine being made. It is estimated the yield of wine will be 48,000 gallons, about one-fifth less than that of 1918. At a conservative estimate of 4s. per gallon this represents a value of £9,600.

The number of glasshouses in the Dominion is 850. The inclement weather experienced during the growing season has also affected the grape crop under glass, which is estimated at 457,405 lb., a considerable decrease as compared with the previous year. This crop, based on 1s. 3d. per pound, represents a value of £28,588.

Inspection of vineyards and vinehouses has been carried out during the year.