

The following is a summary of all fruit, vegetables, plants, &c., examined at the different ports of inspection for the year ended 31st March, 1920 :—

Port of Entry.	Fruit.				Plants, Vegetables, &c.			
	Total.	Destroyed.	Fumigated.	Reshipped.	Total.	Destroyed.	Fumigated.	Grand Total.
	Cases.	Cases.	Cases.	Cases.	Packages.	Packages.	Packages.	Packages.
Auckland ..	365,171	296	4,942	25	22,641	33	..	387,812
Wellington ..	84,426	1,143	461	..	22,762	..	..	107,188
Christchurch ..	24,616	214	..	..	7,721	2	..	32,337
Dunedin ..	4,288	92	50	..	7,145	1	..	11,433
Bluff ..	1,877	16	..	..	769	..	..	2,646

VINEYARDS AND VINEHOUSES

The area under vineyards still stands at 454 acres. The season was a favourable one, and as a result a good grape crop was harvested, being considerably in excess of that of the previous year, when unfavourable weather conditions were experienced. It is estimated the yield of wine will be 60,000 gallons, which, at a conservative estimate of 6s. per gallon, represents a value of £18,000.

The number of glasshouses in the Dominion is 871, being an increase of twenty-one on the previous year's figures. The yield of fruit was up to expectations and prices good. The crop under glass is estimated at 528,779 lb., which, at 1s. 3d. per pound, has a value of £33,049. A number of returned soldiers have taken up the cultivation of grapes and tomatoes under glass as a means of livelihood, and every assistance is being given them by the Division in the way of practical advice and printed information.

BEEKEEPING INDUSTRY.

The demand for information and instruction in beekeeping has increased to a considerable extent, and the Apiary Instructors have been kept busy during the year attending to the numerous requests in this direction as well as their other miscellaneous duties. Numerous lectures and demonstrations have been given by the Instructors during the year, including a number given at the various training-farms for soldiers. The attendances have been good, and keen interest taken in the proceedings.

In the Wellington, Canterbury, Otago, and Southland districts the honey crop has been a good average one. The past season in the Auckland District, however, has been the worst experienced for some years. This was due to the exceptionally dry weather in the spring and early summer. Although the reports on the London market show rather a dull demand for honey, it is considered the prospects are still good, and the return should be satisfactory for some time to come.

Although one or two additional Inspectors were appointed during the year, further assistance is still urgently required to deal with the proper inspection of apiaries for disease, particularly foul-brood, which requires close systematic inspection to keep it under control.

Experimental work has been continued at the Ruakura and Tauranga Apiaries. Some interesting tests were carried out with aluminium comb-foundation, which promises to be of considerable value to the beekeeping industry, more particularly by facilitating the extraction of thick honey. These experiments will be continued next season.

Certificates in Beekeeping.—The demand for instruction in commercial beekeeping at the Ruakura Apiary still continues strong. Some forty-seven cadets attended last season, and of these thirty-seven duly passed the examination and gained the Department's certificate of proficiency. The classes have a very capable instructor in Mr. Trythall, the Beekeeper in charge of the apiary.

Queen-rearing Apiary, Tauranga.—This apiary is now well established, and considerable progress is being made in the work of queen-rearing, &c. During the year 459 queens were sold, comprising 346 untested, 59 tested, and 54 selected queens. The present strength of the apiary is 65 full colonies and 159 nuclei, or 244 in all. Of at least 129 laying-queens, 58 are of known purity and the bulk untested. The honey-house has now been completed, and is a valuable addition to the apiary.

Avonhead Farm Apiary.—This apiary, consisting of forty colonies, was started for the instruction of returned soldiers in October last. Mr. L. Hight was appointed Beekeeper in charge, and has been kept busy raising queens, making up new hives, and keeping the site in order. Different makes of hives are being tested, and experiments carried out dealing with South Island conditions.

Export of Honey.—According to figures obtained from the Customs Department, 9,975 cwt. of honey, valued at £34,141, was exported during the year. This represents a considerable increase on last year's figures. The following figures show the quantity and value of honey exported from the Dominion during the last five years ending 31st March : 1916, 2,390 cwt., £6,067 ; 1917, 1,572 cwt., £3,554 ; 1918, 2,819 cwt., £7,991 ; 1919, 6,619 cwt., £32,018 ; 1920, 9,975 cwt., £34,141. The bulk of the honey graded for export was of prime quality. A few lines had to be rejected on account of fermentation, rusty tins, and unsuitable cases.

Registration of Apiaries.—There are some 6,392 persons, representing a total of 69,877 hives, registered to date. The triennial registration of all apiaries from one hive upwards takes place in the current June (1920). Full publicity is being given to the requirements of the regulations, and it is hoped that any persons who previously failed to register will see that the matter is attended to without fail.

STAFF.

In concluding this report I would mention that all officers attached to the Division have by close attention to their respective duties greatly assisted in the carrying-out of the various activities dealt with by this branch of the Department.