

indicated requirement, and the fact that, generally speaking, he can get good crops without the use of lime; and, secondly, to the extreme difficulty of getting lime without giving long notice—in some cases up to six months. That liming is a beneficial practice there is no question. There is plenty of evidence to show that it has a good effect on pastures and with most crops. That the practice of liming is growing in favour is shown by the increase in the number of companies producing agricultural lime. The Te Kuiti Lime Company is now putting out 2,000 tons per month, most of which is supplied directly to farmers. While manures were so high in price during the year the farmers' attention was directed to the use of lime. Another evidence of the increased interest in lime is the number of limestone-samples sent forward to the Chemist for analysis.

Plant-diseases and Insect Pests.—*Rhizoctonia medicaginis* in lucerne was the most serious disease noted during the year. Experiments are in progress with the object of finding out methods of control. Brown rust in barley has been noted. Soft rot in turnips has been observed in the Raglan district, and dodder in red clover and lucerne has been recorded in several areas in the province. Rust in cereals is not uncommon in the North, as might be expected.

Weather.—The rainfall at Auckland for the year was 51.66 in. The autumn rainfall was good, and feed throughout the province was adequate. The winter was comparatively mild, but there was a good deal of frost in July. The early spring was promising, but a dry spell set in during October and checked the root crops, particularly soft turnips. A dry spell again set in in the autumn. It was particularly bad immediately south of Auckland and through the Waikato. Dairy-farmers on small areas who had lucerne were very fortunate, as it enabled them to manage better than those who depended on grass entirely or supplemented with turnips alone. Dairy-farmers who had to depend very largely on the turnip crop were troubled with turnip-flavoured cream, which in turn produced inferior butter. In North Auckland the season was, on the whole, better than that south of Auckland.

North-west Wellington, Taranaki, Hawke's Bay, and Poverty Bay: J. W. Deem, Fields Instructor and Supervisor of Subsidized Demonstration Farms, Wanganui.

Weather.—The year was, on the whole, an unfavourable one from the farmer's point of view. The winter was the coldest for a great many years, with more frost than usual. This was followed by a wet spring on the west coast, with high winds right up to December. The rain then ceased, but the wind continued. Conditions were getting very dry early in January, but a good rain about the middle of the month saved the cereal and root crops. In Hawke's Bay practically no rain fell after October, and some of the oldest settlers state that it has been the driest season for forty years. Pastures have suffered severely, and feed has been scarce in many parts.

Crops.—The area of wheat sown was the smallest for many years, but the average yield was good; all the crop was spring-sown. The area under oats on the west coast was much about the same as last year, and in Hawke's Bay rather more. The Hawke's Bay crops were good, being well headed and saved in excellent condition. On the west coast they were not so good as last year, but were well saved. The bulk of the crop is being cut into chaff, and should average about $2\frac{1}{4}$ tons per acre. There was not very much barley grown, and most of it was in Hawke's Bay. The yields have been good, but prices were low, with a very slow sale.

In Taranaki the soft-turnip crops have been up to the average. South of Wanganui, where turnips are grown for sheep-feeding, the crops suffered from the dry weather, and the yield was light. Club-root has also been bad where the turnips followed a previous brassica crop. The area in swedes is about the same, but the yield will be very much below last year's, except in central Taranaki, where the crops are good. The dry weather at sowing-time made them slow in starting; then as the season advanced the aphids and moth were bad. Club-root has been prevalent in second crops, and dry-rot is making its appearance, but not nearly to the same extent as last year. Tap-root disease was also in evidence. The mangold crop is getting more attention, and the area sown should be greater than last year's. Many farmers are growing them in preference to swedes in districts where the latter is a risky crop. Last spring, when the swede crop rotted badly, the value of the mangold was very pronounced, especially in the August–October feeding of dairy cows and ewes. The season has not been good for mangolds, and the crop will not be heavy.

The season was only fair for kales, the second growth being poor. Rape, on the whole, has been light, but where medium crops were grown the feeding-quality was good. There has been very little second growth.

Lucerne is coming more and more into favour, and the dry season has done a lot to convince the sceptics of its value. The majority of dairy-farmers between Manaia and Wanganui either have areas in or are getting them ready to sow, and scarcely a day passes without our receiving some inquiry about lucerne. Hawke's Bay has had a great lesson in the value of lucerne this year, especially during the past three months of severe drought, and I anticipate a big increase in the lucerne areas of this province. There are parts of my district where lucerne has not yet been a success, and attempts to establish it in these localities are being carefully watched.

The general hay crop was the best for several years. In many districts the quantity saved was double that of last year, and in addition most of it was secured in good condition.

The maize crop was good in Hawke's Bay and Gisborne districts, but on the west coast very little was sown, and the crop was light. There were eight entries in the Hawke's Bay maize-growing competition, and the crops should average nearly 100 bushels per acre. The varieties are very mixed, and there is room for a lot to be done in seed-selection, which should increase the yield considerably. Growers state that they have great difficulty in getting good seed. Japanese millet is still grown for cow-feeding, particularly in north Taranaki, but there has been no extension of the area. A little ensilage has been made in these districts, but farmers generally consider the labour too great.