

been recorded in previous reports to point to the fact that a very large portion of Native copra has been allowed to rot on the plantations. It is difficult to estimate the quantity lost in this manner, but it undoubtedly represents a very considerable tonnage.

Licenses in connection with the copra-buying industry have been issued as hereunder :—

	Savai'i.	Upolu.	Total.
Green-copra buyers' licenses	1	10	11
Ordinary-copra buyers' licenses	61	119	180
	<u>62</u>	<u>129</u>	<u>191</u>

Quality.—Although the quality of copra bought by traders has not yet reached the standard aimed at by the Administration, it shows improvement as compared with previous years. This improvement is reflected in the number of convictions recorded for breach of the regulations, which during the period amounted to only sixteen, with fines and costs totalling £64 7s., as against thirty-seven convictions with fines and costs amounting to £244 12s. for the previous year.

During the past year the Administration, in its efforts to raise the standard of quality, and incidentally to command higher prices, shipped on behalf of Samoan producers 171 tons of first-grade sun-dried copra. The net prices obtained by the Natives were £15 18s. 1d. and £16 18s. 1d. respectively for two parcels.

MARKET REPORTS.

The following table shows the estimated total all-in cost per ton of high-grade copra up to the time of landing in the United Kingdom or on the Continent :—

	£	s.	d.
Advance at, say, Mulifanua at 3½ cents per pound per ton	15	13	7
Handling, bagging, and loading	0	5	6
Freight to Apia at 10s. 6d. per 1,000 lb.	1	3	7
Shrinkage before landing at Apia (2½ per cent. on £17 2s. 8d.)	0	8	7
Expenses and insurance in Apia	0	5	0
Shrinkage in Apia prior to shipment (5 per cent. on £17 16s. 3d.)	0	17	10
Export duty	1	0	0
Lighterage, 6s. ; carting and shipping, Apia, 3s. 6d.	0	9	6
Sacks and twine	0	18	6
F.o.b., Apia	21	2	1
Freight to European port	3	10	0
Weighing and landing charges	0	1	6
Marine insurance	0	2	7
Brokerage	0	2	6
Shrinkage (2½ per cent. on £21 2s. 1d.)	0	10	7
Exchange (1¼ per cent. on £21 2s. 1d.)	0	5	3
New Zealand Reparation Estates commission (5 per cent. on £21 2s. 1d.)	1	1	0
	<u>£26</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>6</u>

Prices for copra have been fairly well maintained, reaching as high as £28 12s. 6d. during January, 1928. Advices received towards the end of March show the market to have eased, the price quoted being £27 17s. 6d., with a tendency to firmness. The average price of Samoan Native copra in London for the year 1927 was £26 2s. 6d., while the average price paid throughout the Territory by merchants was £10 6s. 11d. per ton.

The cacao market has remained fairly steady during the January–March quarter, the latest quotation being at the time of writing £87 10s. per ton, which figure represents the average price paid in London for Samoan cacao for the year 1927.

Rubber prices for the first half of last year were well maintained at round about 1s. 7d. per pound. Towards the latter half of the year the price gradually declined, to again recover during December. Latest advices, however, show a rapid fall to 1s. per pound, with prospects of a further fall.

NATIVE PLANTATIONS.

- The indifferent attitude adopted by the people with respect to their own interests is remarkable. Already many thousands of young palms and bananas have been choked out with weeds, thus rendering void to a very great extent this important branch of the Department's work of the past two years.

The rhinoceros-beetle is undoubtedly increasing throughout both islands, and it is anticipated that if the present conditions of Native inactivity obtain much longer we shall once more have to face a situation such as existed during the years 1915–17, when the depredations of the pest threatened the very life of the copra industry. It is no exaggeration to state that the outlook to-day with regard to the copra industry is very disquieting.

From the reports of the District Inspectors it is estimated that the copra crop prospects for 1928, assuming that the Native plantations receive immediate attention, are even better than the past year, but whether the Samoans will take full advantage of the fact is at present highly problematical