

CIDERMAKING.

While in some districts the quantity of cider produced was below that of the previous year, other localities show an increased output. The total quantity manufactured was approximately the same as that of last season—namely, 50,000 gallons, representing a value of £12,500. The making of good-quality cider is a profitable means of utilizing large quantities of otherwise unsaleable fruit.

TE KAUWHATA HORTICULTURAL STATION (LOWER WAIKATO).

Good headway was made during the year with the various operations dealt with at this Station. The main features of the work consist of the carrying out of tests with fruit and other trees, vines, grape-growing for winemaking, testing spray compounds, &c.

A good supply of feed was available for stock during the winter and early spring. Twenty acres were prepared and sown in permanent grass and 18 acres in rape. A further 4 acres of wattle plantation were brought into cultivation and sown in oats.

Sheep: The stock kept for utilizing the surplus feed did well. Owing to a large number of the ewes purchased not proving to be in lamb the lambing percentage was considerably lower than usual. The total receipts from this branch of the farm was £1,076.

Plantations: Owing to a decrease in wattle-bark available, very little was stripped during the year. A quantity of timber was cut on a royalty basis, and waste timber sold for firewood. The revenue received from this source amounted to £811.

Vineyard and cellar: The weather proved favourable for the development of the grape crop, and this, with the better cultivation methods adopted in the vineyard during the past two or three years, resulted in a heavy crop of wine grapes. As a result the vintage was a record one for the Station, over 16,000 gallons of wine being obtained. The three new fermenting-tanks installed during the year have proved invaluable in dealing with the year's crop. Wine sales have been well maintained, 11,310 gallons being sold, which realized £5,585.

The financial position of the Station is quite satisfactory, receipts exceeding the expenditure for the year by £2,707.

ORCHARD REGISTRATION AND ORCHARD-TAX.

Regulations under the Orchard and Garden Diseases Act, 1908, provide for the registration, during the month of January in each year, of all orchards from which fruit is sold or those planted for the purpose of eventually selling fruit therefrom. Under the Orchard-tax Act, which was renewed in 1927, tax is payable at the rate of 1s. per acre with a minimum tax of 5s. Orchards consisting of less than 120 trees are exempt from tax. The total number of orchards registered during the year was 3,906 taxable and 3,670 non-taxable. The amount payable in tax is approximately £1,352. The frequent changing of orchard properties often entails a considerable amount of detail work in tracing the responsible persons. A number of prosecutions for non-registration, and also for non-payment of tax, took place during the year. The tax collected is paid over to the New Zealand Fruitgrowers' Federation, Wellington (less cost of collection), to be utilized in furthering the interests of the fruitgrowing industry of the Dominion in accordance with the requirements of the regulations under the Orchard-tax Act.

REGISTRATION AND INSPECTION OF NURSERIES.

This work is proceeding satisfactorily, the bulk of the nurseries in the Dominion being kept in good condition and comparatively free from disease. A slight increase is noticeable in the number of nurseries registered, the total being 704 as against 695 for the previous year. £704 was collected in registration fees. Nurserymen have in the past contributed very materially to the development of our fruit industry by introducing and raising new varieties of fruit, thereby improving their standard of production, and they are still contributing valuable service in this connection.

NEW ZEALAND INSTITUTE OF HORTICULTURE.

Good progress has been made by the New Zealand Institute of Horticulture. Matters connected with nomenclature, improvement of economic plants by selection and hybridization, and training of young men and women in all branches of horticulture are some of the main features of the work of the Institute. The Institute has full legal authority under the New Zealand Institute of Horticulture Act, 1927, to grant diplomas in horticulture to those qualified and passing examinations during the course of a special training. A number of persons have already received the diploma in question.

A cup known as the Loder Cup has been presented by Mr. Gerald Loder, England, for competition throughout the Dominion in a class dealing specially with New Zealand native plants. This will no doubt be highly appreciated not only by horticultural bodies in New Zealand, but also by keen individual horticulturists—amateur and professional—within the Dominion, particularly those interested in our New Zealand native plants.

IMPORTED FRUIT, PLANTS, ETC.

All imported fruit, plants, bulbs, &c., are examined at the gazetted ports of inspection—Auckland, Wellington, Lyttelton, Dunedin, and Bluff—prior to being allowed entry into the Dominion. The Inspectors report an increase in importations as compared with the previous year's figures. The majority of the consignments arrived in good condition, and the quantity condemned for disease