

The substantial increase in butterfat-production maintained by the Rangitaiki Plains Dairy Co. over past years was not maintained this year, and the production fell by 10 tons, from 3,703 tons to 3,693 tons. However, the Arawa Dairy Co., which draws part of its supply from the Rangitaiki Plains, manufactured 764 tons, an increase of 146 tons over last year's total. The drought conditions experienced during the early summer no doubt considerably affected the production.

Although steady progress continues to be made with the improvement of the pastures on the settled lands, settlers have, on the whole, contented themselves with maintaining present pastures rather than increasing their grass-areas.

Of the areas held for flax-cultivation, totalling approximately 7,000 acres, one area totalling 1,500 acres was disposed of for grazing-purposes. Milling was commenced on a small area west of the Tarawera River late in the year. On the balance of the areas maintenance work only was carried out.

Rainfall.—The rainfall, totalling 54.53 in., was fairly evenly distributed, rain falling on seventy-six days during the year. The wettest month was June, with a fall of 11.08 in., and the driest, December, with a fall of 1.35 in. The average fall for the past seventeen years has been 51.66 in.

Maintenance.—The hand drains throughout the area were maintained, and several lengths of dredged canals were cleared of growth by hand and with the Sanderson weed-cutting launch. The flood-gates throughout the area have received periodical attention, and several lengths of stop-bank have been repaired and raised. A wooden flood-gate on Allen's drain was replaced with a 4 ft. barrel flood-gate with a steel door.

Dredges.—The light Bay City walking dredge was in commission throughout the period, and was engaged on raising the west bank stop-bank near the Rangitaiki River mouth, Kopeopeo Canal maintenance, and the deepening of several lengths of low-level hand drains. The distance dredged throughout the year was 372 chains, and a total of 25,980 cubic yards of spoil was moved. The Monighan dredge was employed on the Waihi drainage area for a short period.

Drains in Operation.—The total length of drains shows a small increase over last year, and is now as follows :—

							Miles ch.
Dredge canals	..	..	..	..	..	..	68 28
Main outfall drains	..	..	..	..	..	..	115 4
Road drains	..	..	..	..	..	..	30 46

Of these, 105 miles 20 chains are maintained annually by the Department. The growth was removed by hand or with the Sanderson weed-cutting launch from 18 miles of machine-excavated canal.

Plant and Machinery.—This consists of two Priestman dredges, one Bay City drag-line, one Monighan, one Priestman pontoon, two coal-punts, an oil-launch, and two small boats and punts.

Summary of Work done :—

					Miles ch.	Cubic yd.
Drains deepened by hand	..	..	..	..	1 15	2,850
Drains cleaned by hand	..	..	..	..	98 20	..
Canals cleaned by hand	..	..	..	..	14 10	..
Canals cleaned by weed-cutter	..	..	..	..	11 30	..
Spoil dredged	..	..	..	..	4 52	25,980
Stop-banks repaired and raised by hand	..	..	..	..	1 35	7,350
Flood-gates erected	..	..	..	..	One.	..

Drainage Rates.—Rates struck for 1934–35 totalled £13,558 19s., and £5,421 1s. 7d. was collected.

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The Under-Secretary for Lands, Wellington.

Chief Drainage Engineer.