

RUATAHUNA.

This scheme, situated in the valley at the head of the Whakatane River near Te Whaiti in the heart of the Urewera country, is traversed for the greater part of its length by the Rotorua-Waikaremoana-Wairoa highway. The land is grazing country suitable for sheep-farming, and at 31st March carried 2,900 sheep and 1,020 lambs.

A foreman's cottage and community wool-shed were erected during the year in addition to eight miles of fencing, clearing, and roadwork, &c.

The Natives here have had a particularly difficult time on account of lack of work, but this scheme has provided them with a means of sustenance.

There are nineteen units on the scheme, members of the Tuhoe Tribe.

WHAKATOHEA OPAPE.

Of the 2,036 acres comprising this scheme there are approximately 949 acres unimproved. Except when prolonged dry spells are experienced a satisfactory water-supply is obtained from streams and springs. The pastures vary from a well-balanced sward on the alluvial flats to second-class pasture of ratstail, paspalum, and danthonia on the higher lands. It is not anticipated that the area at present undeveloped can be economically brought into production, and future work will be confined to the improvement of the land already under development. On some of the alluvial flats it is possible to carry up to a cow to an acre, but on the higher country three to four acres are necessary for each cow.

There are twenty-seven units belonging to the Whakatohea Tribe on the scheme, and the majority take a keen interest in development-work. Although the living-quarters are not all that could be desired, an average state of health is maintained by the occupants. Provision is being made, however, to have the existing shacks replaced by small cottages.

At the 31st March, 1935, the following stock was on the area: 31 bulls, 533 cows, 213 heifers, 43 horses, and 5 working bullocks.

The butterfat-production reached 64,726 lb. for the year, an average of 176.8 lb. per cow milked.

WHAKATOHEA (HINAHINANUI).

The total area of this scheme is 410 acres, of which 170 acres are in grass, the balance being unimproved.

Run cattle have been used to crush and consolidate the area in grass, which was top-dressed during the year under review. One unit will be established milking this coming season.

WHAKATOHEA (WAINUI).

The blocks in this scheme were previously administered by the Ringatu Church Trustees and contain an area of 600 acres, of which 250 acres are in grass, the balance being unimproved.

Three units have been established, and their live-stock returns are as follows: 72 cows, 35 heifers, 3 bulls, and 7 horses. Butterfat-production for the year amounted to 9,225 lb.

OPAPE BASE FARM.

This scheme, of an area of 1,072 acres, is situated eight miles from Opotiki on the coast road to Cape Runaway. It was taken over as a base farm for the breeding of dairy stock for the Oape Block, subdivisions of the Whakatohea schemes. There is a natural water-supply sufficient for the needs of the scheme, and in spite of the dry season the farm looks exceptionally well. The pastures gave good feed right through the year and the returns have been quite satisfactory. In addition to the dry stock and the 110 cows milked, the property carried 194 ewes. The ewes did very well and helped in improving the pastures. Five cuts were taken off the lucerne, and the 40 acres of young grass sown, where the fern was cut, has been well crushed with heavy cattle from Hinahinanui.

At the 31st March, 1935, the following stock was held on the scheme: 7 bulls, 114 cows, 33 heifers, 36 heifer calves, and 199 sheep (mixed sex).

The butterfat-production for the year reached 23,121 lb.

The farm-manager is assisted by three boys, who do the milking and general farm-work.

TORERE.

This scheme, which covers 3,508 acres, is subdivided into thirty-two units and provides a means of livelihood for 107 adults and 111 minors. The people, who are good workers, belong to the Ngaitai Tribe and are keenly interested in development. 1,692 acres still remain in an unimproved state. Excellent water is obtained by ram supply from a permanent stream. It will be necessary, however, at a later date to install two small additional supplies. Carrying-capacity varies from one cow to 1½ acres on the flat to one cow to 4 acres. With the more systematic grazing and the heavier top-dressing that has been recently carried out the pastures have greatly improved, but a good deal of work still remains to be done before the area can be classified as good dairying country.

During the year 80 acres were stumped, cleared, and sown into new pasture, 70 acres were cleared and sown in catch crops, 50 acres were cleared and surface-sown, and a further 150 acres were cleared of rushes and second growth. In addition, the units erected 435 chains of new fencing and effected repairs to a further 725 chains. One new house and a new cow-shed were erected and three other houses were completed.