

For the year ended 30th June, 1935, the frozen lamb exported amounted to 2,796,037 cwt., of a declared value in New Zealand currency of £8,832,289, the corresponding figures for the previous year being 2,548,898 cwt. and £7,358,435. The killings for the ten months ending 31st July, which enable a better comparison between seasons to be made were 8,828,487 in 1934-35, compared with 8,742,972 in 1933-34. The average weight of lambs killed for export up to 30th June was 32·7 lb., the lowest average weight during the past ten seasons and attributable to the unfavourable summer conditions. During the ten months ended 31st July, 1935, there were killed for export 948,259 wethers and 1,192,996 ewes, the figures for the corresponding period in the previous season being 841,242 wethers and 988,122 ewes. The average weight of wethers killed for export for the nine months ended 30th June, 1935, was 53·3 lb. and that of ewes 53·4 lb. The average weights in the 1933-34 season were wethers, 54·7 lb.; ewes, 54·4 lb. The increases in the killings of wethers and ewes are reversals of what took place in 1933-34, and it is noteworthy that the number of ewes killed for export during the ten months to the 31st July, 1935, exceeds that for any other season since 1923-24, except that of 1931-32, when the prices obtainable for wool and for all classes of meat were abnormally low.

The data available are not indicative of any appreciable change in the position relative to beef-production. The interim live-stock statistics indicate a falling-off in the number of cattle other than dairy cows as at 31st January, 1935, of approximately 28,000 in comparison with the previous year. It is probable that any rapid substantial future change in the beef position is dependent upon developments in the chilled-beef trade to which reference has been made above.

HORSES.

There has been a slight decrease in the number of horses. In general, the market for draught horses for farm work continues to be strong, and there is some evidence of a tendency towards an expansion in the amount of horse-breeding. The present good market for farm horses may be attributed mainly to a decline over a series of years in the number of horses in the Dominion, coupled with a general upward movement in the total acreage in arable crops, which rose from 1,645,000 in 1925-26 to 2,064,000 in 1933-34. Some significance, however, may attach to the fact that in the intervening period the number of agricultural tractors has increased from 1,026 to 5,062, slight increases in the number in the two latest years for which returns are available replacing a previous decrease. Though there was an increase in the number of draught horses exported to Australia, the export trade is relatively small.

QUALITY OF PASTORAL PRODUCE.

The quality of pastoral produce continues to receive much attention, and apart from the satisfactory results in regard to dairy-products, to which reference has been made already, it is gratifying that the normal high quality of New Zealand meat has been well maintained in the year under review; this does not overlook the fact that because of the dry summer there was a fall in the average weights of lambs, and this resulted in the number of lambs graded second being somewhat higher than in a normal season. Though there seems to have been less comment about the quality of products than in recent previous seasons, this is no justification for any slackening in systematic endeavour to produce goods of the quality and type suited to the markets that it is desired to supply.

FRUITGROWING.

The area in commercial orchards in the Dominion is practically stationary at 27,000 acres, any planting of new areas being offset by certain other areas becoming unprofitable and going out of production. A heavy yield in the 1933-34 season, combined with continued dry weather during the fruiting period, resulted in the past season's apple crop in the majority of commercial fruit-growing areas being a light one. Pear and stone-fruit trees were not affected so materially by the dry conditions, and yielded good average crops. As a result of the seasonal conditions the 1935 season's export was the lowest since 1929, the total quantity exported being 1,063,420 cases, comprising 942,296 cases of apples and 121,124 cases of pears. The total quantities of apples and pears exported from the Dominion during the previous four years were—1931, 1,349,895 cases; 1932, 1,596,058 cases; 1933, 1,430,513 cases; 1934, 1,574,912 cases.

Of the quantities exported in the 1935 season, 703,770 cases of apples and 94,159 cases of pears went to the United Kingdom, 80,164 cases of apples to the Continent of Europe, 67,747 cases of apples to North America, 42,579 cases of apples to South America, 47,028 cases of apples and 26,965 cases of pears to Sweden, and 1,008 cases of apples to the East—indicative of exploitation of a range of possible markets. Recently an endeavour has been made to improve marketing