

## NELSON.

(A. F. WATERS, Commissioner of Crown Lands.)

The season 1935-36 has been remarkable for the amount of summer rain, there being an absence of the usual hot, dry spell. Settlers engaged in dairying and sheep-farming have had abundance of feed through the summer, and adequate provision has been made for winter feed.

Wool-prices have shown a marked increase on the preceding season. Lambs have sold exceptionally well, and store sheep offered at the autumn sales in many cases met with a very keen demand, this being due, perhaps, to the flush of autumn feed.

A heavy hailstorm in the early summer caused damage to tobacco fields, but, generally, the growers had sufficient margin to fulfil their contracts.

The wet summer was not particularly suited to hop-growing, the crop in many cases being lighter than previous years. With an overseas market for surplus hops, it has been possible to clear each season's produce fairly promptly and maintain sales at a profitable level.

The apple export shows an increase over the previous off-season, but will probably not exceed 800,000 cases. It was hoped to reach the million mark again as in 1934, but the wet summer has caused a fair amount of oversized and faulty fruit.

## MARLBOROUGH.

(P. R. WILKINSON, Commissioner of Crown Lands.)

The higher prices recorded for wool and lamb this season, coupled with a generous rainfall, has brought forward a demand for store sheep with a consequent hardening in prices. Generally speaking, the sheep men have had a good year, but in most of the danthonia country the much welcomed rains have produced a rank growth, and a lack of bloom is evident in the flocks.

Those engaged in agricultural farming, despite a most promising season, have by no means reaped the reward they expected. Harvesting of peas and clover was made very difficult with continual showers, and heavy reductions in the original estimates of yields, from these two crops in particular, have had to take place.

Many cases of hardship have been reported owing to the intermittent cold snaps that came at most unexpected periods of the summer months; the foregoing, combined with a wet shearing season and high westerly winds during harvesting, has harassed the farming community quite a lot.

The fruit season opened well, but gales have taken their toll on some orchards and will, no doubt, have its effect on the crops.

## WESTLAND.

(G. I. MARTIN, Commissioner of Crown Lands.)

The past season has been a very favourable one for the farming community.

Climatic conditions were excellent throughout the whole year. There was an absence of any extremes, and a well-distributed rainfall and ample sunshine were reflected by an ample growth of pasture. The same conditions have continued right up to the end of the year, and indications are that there should be ample reserves of feed to carry the stock through the winter.

Although it is too early to quote exact figures, it is apparent that there will be a substantial increase in butterfat-production throughout the district, and the price received by the suppliers has been more satisfactory.

Surplus cattle were in good condition and most grades were sold at prices ranging up to £1 per head in advance of the previous season. Good dairy cows were in keen demand, but very few were offering.

Lambing percentages were excellent, and prices received for fat lambs were very satisfactory. In the sheep section there was an outstanding increase in prices for two-toothed Romney ewes. One line of 120 two-toothed ewes sold for £2 1s. 9d. each. There was a correspondingly satisfactory increase in prices received for all other classes of ewes and wethers.

## CANTERBURY.

(J. F. QUINN, Commissioner of Crown Lands.)

During last year, generally speaking, the climatic conditions have been more favourable than the previous year, though the heavy rains in February and March were most disheartening for those engaged in cropping.

A decided improvement has been shown in the position of the pastoralists in the higher country. Wool-prices have shown a decided appreciation, and sheep and lambs have realized much better prices.

Lambing percentages have been well up to the average, though difficulty has been experienced in many cases in fattening owing to the extraordinary growth of feed in the early part of the season. Fortunately no heavy losses were experienced by snowfalls during the winter. With present ruling prices there are many inquiries for the higher pastoral areas.

Cereal crops gave promise of exceptionally good yields, but the heavy downfalls of rain during the harvest seriously damaged a large proportion of crops, though, fortunately, the loss did not turn out as heavy as at first anticipated.

As the provisions for revaluation of holdings have been revived, a large percentage of the lessees are taking advantage thereof, and applications are being dealt with at present.