

Since 31st March, 1935, 246 chains of new fencing have been erected, and 108 chains of existing fences repaired. As far as possible the fencing has been planned to suit future occupation by individual settlers. Other activities undertaken during the year include 290 acres of scrubcutting, 65 acres of stumping and logging, and 60 acres of ploughing. The heavy floods which occurred during the early summer resulted in much damage to the fences and pastures, and the programme of development-works laid down for the year has consequently been somewhat hindered.

Poutu Area.

On the Poutu Peninsula in the Kaipara district are some 9,000 acres of light sandy land known as the Poutu Area, of which only 1,400 acres are considered capable of being successfully developed. On an area of 350 acres sown in grass, 358 sheep are being grazed, from which 11 bales of wool were obtained and realized £105. The work of the past season consisted of 420 chains of new fencing, 238 chains of draining of the gum swamp lands, 60 acres of ploughing, and 70 acres of scrubcutting. Included in the scheme are 400 acres of gum swamp land which, it is hoped, will eventually be developed to carry one cow to 1½ acres. Generally, excellent progress has been maintained, exemplifying the commendable enthusiasm of the Natives employed on the area.

SUMMARY OF BASE FARMS.

Name.	Area.	Particulars of Live-stock.					Returns for Year.		
		Dairy Cattle.	Run Cattle.	Sheep.	Horses and Bullocks.	Pigs.			
	Acres.						£	s.	d.
Motatau	780	131	65	431	4	29	1,292	7	0
Tautoro Bush	1,607	..	329	1,627	2	..	1,802	12	11
Waima Bush	1,414	..	262	1,793	1	..	2,797	12	8
Panguru	297	79	13	210	..	..	732	19	2
Manukau	830	1	99	..	..	..	165	8	3
Poutu	1,400	..	..	558	18	..	105	18	5
	6,328	211	768	4,619	25	29	6,896	18	5

WAIKATO-MANIAPOTO MAORI LAND DISTRICT.

In general, Native land development in this district can be divided into two portions, comprising firstly, the Waikato Proper (from Auckland to the vicinity of Te Awamutu in the south), and secondly, the King-country area (the ancestral domain of the Maniapoto tribe, stretching roughly from Kihikihi in the north to Taumarunui in the south).

Development in the Waikato area is handicapped by the scant land holding of the Waikato people, but this is to a great extent counterbalanced by the enthusiasm with which the tribe and its leaders—among whom special mention may be made of the Waikato Chieftainess, Te Puea Herangi—devoted themselves to the task of developing the lands which were available. The result to-day may be seen in the settlements at Waipipi, Kaihau, Waahi, and elsewhere, fuller details of which are set out in this report. The developed lands are in all cases in occupation by “units,” some of whom are skilled and able farmers. Certain administrative difficulties, tenure for example, require adjustment, and will receive attention when legislative authority is available. The best tribal influence in the Waikato is strongly in favour of development.

Within the bounds of Maniapoto, development has taken a different course and there is land in comparative abundance. Improvement of large areas was undertaken at Waimiha and Mahoenui, and these erstwhile neglected areas have been converted into farming country, which bears every prospect of permanent establishment. Elsewhere in the district smaller blocks have been dealt with and “units” established.

Generally speaking, the main objective has been the establishment of the Maori unit as a dairy-farmer on a small area. Evidence is not wanting that, given adequate facilities for scientific cow-shed management, the Maori farmer does not suffer by comparison with his pakeha neighbours as a supplier of good-quality butterfat. The spread of ragwort into the King-country makes necessary the introduction of sheep, and the conducting of mixed farming. It is realized that this type of farming entails special attention to the selection of the individual to be assisted, and demands increased supervision and advice from the field personnel.