

From the foregoing it may be deduced that the Department's activity must be based increasingly on instruction instead of on regulation, or, in effect, essential regulation must represent the result of instruction. Hence, the departmental officers must function more and more as instructors rather than as inspectors.

It is realized that an important function of the Department is to keep the farming community fully and promptly acquainted not only with the final results of investigational work, but also with its progress and its trends that may have a bearing on farm practice and planning.

The prior incidental reference to the quality of our produce calls for further mention. In general, New Zealand farming has to face steadily increasing competition from other agricultural countries upon our export markets. One of the most effective means of meeting this competition is improvement not only in the quality of our export products, but in the quality of all those other farm-products upon which the quality of our export products at times depends. There is scope also for improvement in the handling of our products.

An important phase of the agricultural position may be summed up thus: while the efficiency of our farming already is gratifyingly high, there remains scope for substantial progressive improvement, and the task of fostering that improvement in the most economical manner is looked upon as the basic task of the Department of Agriculture.

Two features of the year are worthy of special mention:—

(1) There was a substantial increase, of 38,309 tons, in the deliveries of fertilizers by rail. In the light of departmental investigations and experience relative to the use of fertilizers, this trend augurs well for future farm production.

(2) There was a substantial increase in the killings of pigs for export. At the close of the production year ending September the increase in comparison with the previous year promises to approximate 120,000 carcasses. Further profitable expansion of pig-production is clearly in sight, and the Department is planning to foster such profitable expansion to the fullest possible extent.

I have, &c.,

W. LEE MARTIN,

His Excellency the Governor-General.

Minister of Agriculture.

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