

SEED CERTIFICATION.

Seed certification activities have proceeded along smooth and steady lines in the year under review. The kinds of seed coming under the certification scheme continue to increase, and for 1935-36 certification was undertaken with respect to potatoes, wheat, white clover, perennial rye-grass, brown top, cocksfoot, Montgomery red clover, Italian rye-grass, *Phalaris tuberosa*, turnips, swedes, and rape.

The value of certified seeds is widely recognized throughout the Dominion, but it yet remains for overseas seed-markets to be thoroughly explored. The one exception is in the case of Australia, where New Zealand certified seeds are receiving considerable publicity.

A comprehensive report prepared by the Certification Officer at headquarters relative to the operations of the seed certification scheme is attached.

PEDIGREE GRASS AND CLOVER SEEDS.

With a view to further improving the pastures of the Dominion the Division early in 1935-36 had harvested some Government pedigree grass and clover seeds. Such seed, which will be produced during each succeeding year, has been grown on contract from seed especially raised at the Plant Research Station at Palmerston North. The production of such seed is considered to mark a further advance in the already high standard of the Dominion's certified seed. Pedigree stock seed is intended for sowing-down areas to be devoted to the production of certified pedigree seed. No difficulty whatever was experienced in the disposal at remunerative prices of the 800 bushels of Government pedigree stock perennial ryegrass seed and several hundred pounds of pedigree white clover seed.

FARM-MANAGEMENT SURVEY.

During the year a start was made with a farm-management survey of Hawke's Bay. Such survey is being undertaken in conjunction with the soil survey of Hawke's Bay at present being carried out by officers of the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research. The work is as yet in its initial stages, but nevertheless progress has been made sufficient to indicate the possibility of obtaining much knowledge of direct value in respect to the absorption of labour and the utilization of land in Hawke's Bay. The farming and mercantile communities of that province are distinctly interested in the work in which they are helping usefully in directions in which their co-operation is desired.

IRRIGATION IN CANTERBURY.

The Government is further developing irrigation farming in Canterbury, and in connection with such development it has been found desirable to institute an advisory service with the object of rendering assistance to farmers by placing at their disposal the full-time services of a special officer whose duty it will be to consult with irrigators in the application of water to their crops. It is fully realized that knowledge of the most satisfactory methods of irrigating different types and grades of country and the water requirements of the various crops is necessary if irrigation farming is to be an economic proposition. It is for the purpose of ensuring that sound advice in this direction will be forthcoming that this special service has been instituted. With the development of irrigation in Canterbury it is anticipated that the demands upon this service will increase, and provision will be necessary to reinforce the irrigation advisory service in the not distant future. This matter will be presented for consideration at the appropriate time.

PASTURE SURVEY.

Towards the end of 1935 the Division put in hand the making of a detailed pasture survey of the North Island. It is intended that such survey will demark the principal grassland types at present prevailing in all North Island districts, and should prove of considerable value in determining the potentialities of different soil types on completion of the soil surveys, which are also being conducted by Government officers.

FARMERS' FIELD COMPETITIONS.

These competitions, the value of which it is difficult to overestimate from the point of view of agricultural instruction, have been continued in various parts of the Dominion on much the same lines as in past years. The Division's assistance, however, has been mainly along the lines of judging the competitions. It is unquestionable that the competitions provide a ready means whereby both local farmers and the departmental officer for the district gain first-hand information and much valuable field experience.

YOUNG FARMERS' CLUBS.

The Young Farmers' Club movement started by the Fields Division in the Otago District in 1932 has greatly extended during the year, and at the present time there are thirty clubs in the North Island and fifty-six in the South Island, with a total membership of approximately two thousand young farmers. Clubs are self-supporting, having for members youths between the ages of sixteen and twenty-five. Regular monthly meetings are held by the club members, who discuss agricultural problems, while at the same time regular lectures are arranged for by departmental officers and others. Field days are held at convenient Government institutions or on some high-class farm in the district. There is no question that this club movement has a great future ahead of it if properly developed. It is the intention of the Department to recommend the appointment of a full-time officer as general secretary to the movement and, in addition, to use field officers of the Fields Division as local organizers and secretaries, and with this arrangement in force there is no doubt the movement will thrive, and thrive rapidly.