

The year's activities were of a routine nature, but some additional stumping and clearing and a little cultivation were carried out by the settlers. Several new manure-sheds were erected.

Although the land is generally hilly and the pastures comparatively new, the returns to date have been satisfactory. It was anticipated that the production this year would be in the vicinity of 50,000 lb. butterfat, but it now transpires that the extraordinarily dry season will prevent this figure being reached. Although fairly well watered, the block suffered seriously during the autumn, and there was a consequent heavy drop in production. However, the settlers are of a steady type, and should soon recover their position.

*Onekura Farm Settlement (1,032 Acres).*

(Control : Commissioner of Crown Lands, North Auckland.)

This block was acquired for development in 1933, when it was nothing more than a rough grazing-run. To-day it is supporting twelve families and carrying a total of 321 cows, plus dry stock. Seven hundred acres are in clean to fairly clean top-dressed pastures.

Although the returns so far have been low, an improvement is becoming evident following regular top-dressing and careful culling. Most of the herds are under test this year, and from now on it should be possible to maintain and increase the herds without purchasing further stock.

The gravitation water-supply has proved most beneficial, and this year, owing to the ample water and the fact that the main pasture is *paspalum*, the settlement will not show the effects of the dry autumn to the same extent as other blocks relying on finer grasses.

Action is being taken to have the settlement valued, with a view to fixing the settlers' final mortgage liabilities.

*Tutamoe Farm Settlement (974 Acres).*

(Control : Commissioner of Crown Lands, North Auckland.)

The 974 acres comprising this settlement was acquired by the Board under the provisions of section 16 of the Small Farms (Relief of Unemployment) Act, 1932-33, owners in the district surrendering portions of their holdings for small-farm settlement as consideration for the money expended by the Crown on stumping and clearing the areas retained.

Tutamoe is in the deteriorated-land area, where the average yearly rainfall is 109 in., and, although the soil is of fair quality, wineberry and water fern make very rapid growth.

The six settlers are still working on wages—clearing, stumping, and logging their holdings.

The benefit of regular top-dressings is now becoming evident, and the estimated total returns this year from the 116 cows will exceed £1,000. The dairy season here is much later than any other district.

*Otaneroa Farm Settlement (803 Acres).*

(Control : Commissioner of Crown Lands, North Auckland.)

Crown land formerly held under lease by N. L. Gurr subject to a mortgage to the State Advances Superintendent, from whom the Small Farms Board acquired the leasehold interest in September, 1933. A camp was established under the supervision of the Public Works Department to hasten development.

At the date of acquisition, 500 acres were in bush and 300 acres in fair pastures.

Four settlers are now in possession, milking herds of about thirty cows each. As a result of the additional clearing, logging, and fencing carried out by the settlers during the year the carrying-capacity of all sections next season should be in excess of thirty-five cows. Butterfat sales for the current year will approximate 21,500 lb.

As soon as the topographical survey has been completed, arrangements will be made to assess the settlers' final mortgage charges, which will be based on valuation.

*Mata North Farm Settlement (1,523 Acres).*

(Control : Commissioner of Crown Lands, North Auckland.)

Camp labour was also employed on this block, which was purchased from private vendors in 1933. The situation is eight miles from Kohukohu, in the Hokianga County. The first six settlers were given possession in July, 1934, and the other four at later dates. Butterfat-production was low at the commencement, but the figures have gradually improved, and had the present season been normal would have exceeded 43,000 lb. for the year. As it is, the figure will be in the vicinity of 35,000 lb.

Although the land is not ideal for dairying, a reasonable living should eventually be possible from each holding. A programme of regrassing will be carried out as revenue permits, as it is desired to keep the capital expenditure at a minimum.

The block is carrying 281 dairy cows and 202 head of dry stock.

*Oriwau Farm Settlement (Dr. Smith's Block), (1,089 Acres).*

(Control : Commissioner of Crown Lands, North Auckland.)

A lease of this property was acquired in 1932, and eighteen settlers were established without any preliminary development or reconditioning work being undertaken. Experience proved that the holdings were too small, and opportunity has been taken to amend the subdivisional scheme whenever a settler has vacated. The number of holdings is now fifteen, and the remaining occupiers are rapidly improving their position.