

When plant is available rapid progress will be possible, and good pasture-establishment is anticipated. It is anticipated that it will, if desired, be possible to extend development into adjoining areas of Crown land aggregating approximately 5,000 acres.

*Whirinaki Block (1,200 Acres).*

(Control : Land-development Superintendent, Auckland.)

The Small Farms Board approved of the development of this area in 1938 subject to satisfactory arrangements being finalized for access roading. A commencement was made on this roading by the Public Works Department at the end of the year, and sufficient roading has now been completed to enable development to proceed.

*Murupara Block.*

(Control : Land-development Superintendent, Auckland.)

One section of lighter land was withheld from settlement on this block, and during the year this land was top-dressed and grazed with stock. It was intended to commence dairying in the coming year, but following the exceptionally dry summer experienced it was decided to make the area available to the small-farm settlers for grazing through the winter. Fifty-six tons of hay saved was also disposed of to these settlers.

It is anticipated that a settler will be established at the commencement of the 1940-41 season.

*Pouarua Block (10,476 Acres).*

(Control : Land-development Superintendent, Auckland.)

This is an area on the Hauraki Plains comprised mainly of deep peat lands on which drainage and roading had been commenced prior to its being taken over by the Small Farms Board in 1937. Some 1,100 acres of this block is sufficiently consolidated to carry stock.

Draining and consolidation with stock will be gradually extended over the whole of the area, using the consolidated land as a base.

An average of eighty men has been employed throughout the year on drain-construction work, ballasting peat roads, and in cleaning, burning, and sowing grass. Fencing and the provision of water were undertaken in order to permit stocking of the pastures.

As indicated in the original report, development is necessarily slow, as extensive drainage and consolidation must precede grassing. Satisfactory progress has been made during the year, and this indicates that if the programme is persisted in the whole area can be successfully handled over a period of years and eventually converted from waste peat swamp to good dairying-land. (See also reference in Hauraki Plains swamp-drainage report, Waitakaruru-Torehape district.)

Work completed to date includes the erection of 528 chains of fencing, 5,734 chains drains constructed, 4,610 chains drains cleaned, 53,800 cubic yards roads ballasted, 1,280 acres cleared and burned, and 780 acres grassed.

*Kerepehi Extension (1,100 Acres).*

(Control : Land-development Superintendent, Auckland.)

This block is portion of the Hauraki Plains adjacent to the Pouarua Block. A considerable amount of drainage-improvement had been effected and a pumping plant installed for this and adjoining lands prior to the purchase by the Small Farms Board. The land is partly consolidated by drainage, and final consolidation and grassing will be fairly rapid when an efficient system of drainage has been provided.

Draining, clearing, and grassing have been proceeded with throughout the year. A water-supply was installed, and fencing and stocking of the pastures proceeded with.

It is anticipated that it will be possible to report a decided improvement after a period of heavy stocking with dry stock, and the eventual establishment of good dairying-pasture is assured.

Eight men are employed.

*Hoe-o-Tainui Block (1,472 Acres).*

(Control : Land-development Superintendent, Auckland.)

This block is situated on the Morrinsville-Ohinemuri Road and work was commenced in 1935. The land comprises easy hill country with some peat swamp of varying depths. The original intention was to develop some 700 acres of easily worked land, but as this was brought in activities were extended over a larger area, and to date some 800 acres of hill land have been grassed and 200 acres of swamp land improved and sown mainly in temporary pasture.

A satisfactory water-supply has been installed, and during last season seven sections were dairied on, and it is anticipated that during the coming season the remaining five sections will be fully equipped for dairying.

Some work will still remain to be done on the peat swamp before final grassing, as a certain amount of consolidation is necessary before this can be accomplished.

A considerable amount of fencing and draining was carried out. Further areas were cleared and sown to crops and grass. The pastures were top-dressed, and hay saved on the dairy-farms.

Arrangements were made for a grant for the formation and metalling of an access road, and this work will be completed in the coming year.

Good returns have been recorded from the dairy-farms despite the dry season.