

MAHIA

This scheme, due mainly to its situation on the isthmus and the sunny side of the Mahia Peninsula, is endowed with a mild climate, ample rainfall, and fertile soil. Although butterfat-production dropped slightly from the total of previous years, the effect of the drought was not nearly so severe as on other schemes and dairying could be carried on for the full season. It has been possible to provide nearly every dairying unit with a lucerne stand, and these, with the natural flush growth of grass, enabled ample supplies of hay to be baled.

MATAKAOA STATION

This area of 2,400 acres is situated at the northern end of Hicks Bay and extends along the seashore for several miles. It has made good progress despite war shortages, and returns allow a substantial dividend to be paid from the profits.

MOHAKA-KAHUNGUNU

Last summer drought conditions were soon apparent in the light soil of these schemes. Little hay could be saved as the growth was completely arrested, and unless mowing was done early what little feed there remained had to be grazed to keep the herds going. Extensive sowings of turnips, oats, and barley were made to provide late winter and spring feed. Perhaps the benefits of a similar annual programme will become apparent to the units and the year's sowings repeated. In 1943 two stations were created from a number of units with a view to improving the pasture and capital assets. In one case, owing mainly to management, the trial was unsuccessful, and the area is being divided between the second station and a former unit holding. Several of the original blocks should, with suitable pasture management, become available next year for settlement by ex-servicemen.

In seven cases in this district the occupiers have failed to progress, and it has become evident that while they retain tenure no improvements can be anticipated. These cases will be referred to the Native Land Court for a recommendation and the owners given an opportunity to give their opinions at the hearing of the application.

NGAMAHANGA STATION

The main item of interest on Ngamahanga Station during the year was a soil survey undertaken by an officer of the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research. His findings disclosed that there is a large tract of nearly 2,000 acres through the centre of the station where the soil is of such a nature that it is extremely doubtful if it should be used for grazing. Accordingly, it has been decided to shut off this tract from the remainder of the station and use it only for run purposes, although some of it, where the fire hazards do not appear dangerous, might serve for small plantations. Experiments in dressing with phosphatic papa were carried out.

POROPORO-TUPAROA

The Poroporo scheme produced the only Ahuwhenua Trophy entry for the district, but it was most unfortunate that this splendid farm was rendered barren at the time of judging by prevailing climatic conditions. The judge stated that nowhere in his travels throughout the Island had he witnessed such severe effects of the drought.

Uruahi Station continues to pay well and the owners receive liberal dividends from the farm profits. With the leasing of an inactive unit section adjoining, a site for a much-needed wool-shed is made available, and the erection of this will be budgeted for with funds from the credits the Department is now holding. During the year a dip and yards were installed.