

continued increasing demand for high-class pasture seed indicates that farmers generally are supporting a policy of pasture replacement with high-producing, long-lived strains of grasses and clovers. As a result of the lack of fertilizers and the deterioration of certain pastures it is anticipated that the next few years will see an extensive programme of pasture renewal. Except in the Auckland Provincial District, hay and silage crops were fairly good. This was fortunate, as it enabled good stocks of hay to be made available to the drought-affected area.

### CROPS

The wet autumn and spring conditions in most districts were not conducive to extensive cropping. The result was that the area in autumn-sown crops, particularly wheat, was reduced, while the area in spring-sown crops increased. Details of estimated crop acreages and the comparative figures for 1944-45 are as follows:—

	1944-45.	1945-46 (Estimated)
	Acres.	Acres.
Wheat .. .. .	188,771	165,000
Oats (all purposes) .. .. .	228,470	206,000
Barley (all purposes) .. .. .	43,200	61,000
Potatoes .. .. .	29,774	23,800
Onions .. .. .	1,915	1,250
Peas .. .. .	43,970	40,000
Maize (for grain) .. .. .	8,473	6,300

*Wheat.*—As previously mentioned, the adverse weather conditions reduced the total acreage, although the area spring-sown, particularly in the North Island, showed an increase. Actually, the weather suited the filling-out of spring-sown crops and excellent grain was harvested in good condition.

*Oats.*—The area in oats was down on that of the previous year, while present indications are that the yield will also be down. In Southland much lodging occurred, but despite this good-quality grain is being harvested.

*Barley.*—An increased area was sown to barley throughout the North Island and Canterbury, but in Marlborough and Southland the area appears to be down. The quality of the grain already harvested is excellent and the yields good.

*Potatoes.*—Arrangements were made early in the season to have an increased area planted in potatoes to meet the demands of the United States Joint Purchasing Board. Owing to changed conditions following VJ Day, the programme had to be curtailed, although some planting had then been done. In Hawke's Bay the dry weather retarded growth, but in the Manawatu and Rangitikei good crops resulted. In Canterbury dry conditions in January and February checked growth and caused some early ripening, but in South Canterbury yields should be good.

*Onions.*—The area in this crop in the Manawatu continues to increase and the Opiki district bids to become one of the main onion-growing districts. Pukekohe crops were good and were harvested in fair condition. In Canterbury there are prospects of a good harvest with promising yields. Control of weeds by spraying was practised in the Manawatu with good results.

*Peas.*—There was an increase in area in peas in Marlborough and Canterbury, but a decrease in South Canterbury. Yields in this last-named district are good, but in most other districts the yield will be down a little. Gales did much damage to some crops just prior to harvesting. Grain quality should be good as compared with last year.

*Maize.*—The 1944-45 crop yielded exceptionally well with good-quality grain. The area for this season's crop showed an increase and despite the dry conditions promises to produce a fair crop under the very adverse circumstances. A large area of the crop intended for grain was, however, utilized as green feed.