

As these figures include honey from two seasons, the following is a brief summary from each season—

1st April, 1944, to the 30th November, 1944 (balance of 1943-44 season)—						Tons.	Cases.
Bulk honey	..	..	..	..	..	503½	9,495
Packed honey	..	..	..	..	..	83	..
From 1st December, 1944, to 31st March, 1945 (portion of the present season)—							
Bulk honey	..	..	..	..	..	199½	3,786½
Packed honey	..	..	..	..	..	8	..

The average grade for the season as at 31st March, 1945, is 91.99. This, compared with the previous season of 93.41, shows a considerable decrease. This can be accounted for by climatic conditions and by the fact that all honey received was produced late in January and early in February when clover had practically died out and buttercup and bush were the main source of supply.

The Division appreciates the action of the Honey Control Board, the National Beekeepers' Association, and the great majority of apiarists generally in maintaining the "pool," despite the attraction of temporary higher prices outside it. It has enabled essential calls to be met, a roughly proportionate distribution throughout the Dominion and throughout the year to be maintained, and the plant which the Division operates on the industry's behalf to be continued for the normal days ahead when its stabilizing function will again be needed.

POTATOES

A fairly substantial increase in the area planted in potatoes was reached for the 1944 harvest, the total acreage of 27,178 acres being an increase of 3,318 acres on the previous year. Unfortunately, crop conditions were not entirely favourable and the average yield of table potatoes per acre showed a slight decrease, the total yield of all potatoes, including seed, being 161,512 tons. This quantity was, however, sufficient to provide for all civilian requirements and a surplus of approximately 30,000 tons which were supplied to Allied Forces in the Pacific and for military needs within New Zealand.

The contract system under which merchants contracted with farmers on behalf of the Internal Marketing Division for their main-crop potatoes was continued during the year under review, with fixed prices month by month for all contract-grown potatoes.

For the 1945 potato harvest a further considerable increase in area, estimated to reach 28,000 acres, has been achieved, but conditions in the early part of the year have not been satisfactory and the yield and surplus available are not likely to reach those of the 1944 crop.

ONIONS

Of the 1944 harvest from an area of 1,023 acres the estimated yield was 8,466 tons and the condition of the onions was, on the whole, good. As in the case of potatoes, these onions were almost all grown under contracts made by merchants on behalf of the Division. The surplus available for military requirements after providing for all civilian needs amounted to 1,850 tons, which were packed and shipped for use by the Forces in the Pacific. For the year 1945 a greatly increased area has been grown, approximately 1,850 acres, and it is expected that the surplus for export will be much larger than heretofore.

BARLEY

Importations from Australia during the year were a total of 150,000 sacks of feed barley and 45,000 sacks of barley-meal. All of this was sold at stabilized prices and was of great assistance to both pig and poultry farmers in maintaining and increasing their production. These importations were sufficient to meet the winter and spring