

needs of pig-farmers, but in the latter end of the season no further supplies were available. This was due to the very severe drought in Australia, the 1944-45 barley harvest there being sufficient for their own requirements. The Division is therefore unable to secure any further supplies at present, and must depend upon our internal cereal production for stock-feeding purposes during 1945.

### MAIZE

The crop harvested in 1944 proved to be one of the smallest maize crops for many years, yielding a total of about 40,000 sacks only, whereas under normal conditions the Dominion consumes some 120,000 sacks. Indeed, with present shortages of other stock-foods, this figure would be greatly exceeded if the maize was available. In order that this small crop should be equitably distributed to all classes of consumers, a Maize Marketing Committee was set up to operate under regulations giving it authority to control the sale and distribution of the whole of the maize available. This Committee consists of two representatives of growers, two merchants (from growing areas and distributing centres), a Poultry Board delegate, a manufacturer, a Department of Agriculture officer, and the Director of Internal Marketing as Chairman.

At its first meeting, at Gisborne in September, 1944, it made preliminary allocations of the estimated crop, and at a later meeting in February it was found possible to make further small allocations, the total quantity dealt with by the Committee being 38,155 sacks.

Although the Committee was faced with a difficult task in endeavouring to make the small crop available meet the demand for four or five times the quantity, it appears to be generally considered that the work of the Committee has been satisfactory and that the object for which it was set up has been achieved with the minimum amount of friction. For the 1944-45 season the maize crop carried a Government subsidy to growers of 1s. per bushel. For the coming season the subsidy has been increased to 1s. 6d. per bushel, and an increased area will probably be obtained.

### HOPS

Unfavourable weather conditions during the two months prior to harvesting in 1944 caused a big reduction in yield. The crop amounted to only 2,359 bales, one of the smallest for many years. As a result not only was there no surplus available for export, but insufficient to meet New Zealand brewers' requirements. Rationing of available supplies was therefore undertaken by the Committee, brewers receiving about seven-tenths of their requirements, which have shown a very substantial increase during recent years. For the 1945 season much better growing conditions have prevailed and it is estimated that there will be sufficient for the New Zealand brewers, but none for export. The Committee is now conducting an intensive canvas of all growers in an endeavour to get a substantially increased acreage grown, there being excellent export prospects for a number of years ahead. The present acreage is 621, and it is desired to increase this by at least 200 acres.

### RASPBERRIES

As a result of a slightly better season and a small increase in acreage, the crop harvested this season amounted to 190 tons, an increase of 44 tons on the poor yield of the previous year. With a good season the present acreage should be capable of producing 250 tons, but even this quantity falls far short of manufacturers' requirements, and efforts are being made by the Committee to obtain increased plantings to assist in meeting the demand. Difficulty is still being experienced by growers in obtaining the necessary seasonal labour for picking.

### FERTILIZERS

Importation and distribution of sulphate of ammonia, nitrate of ammonia, muriate of potash, and sulphate of potash has continued to be the responsibility of the Division.