

## BRANCH REPORTS

## AUCKLAND

The Auckland Branch has handled from the growers for the 1944 season 232,000 cases of apples and pears (the largest quantity for several years) and distributed 800,000 cases—to public, 272,000; to United States Joint Purchasing Board, 466,000; and to New Zealand Services, 62,000. The *butter* plant, working two shifts for part of the year and turning out as high as 210 tons per week, has patted 78,000 boxes for the public and 209,000 boxes for the United States Joint Purchasing Board. Total butter sales reached £1,250,000. The butter-tinning plant, commencing in February, canned 1,892 tons. *Eggs* have reached Auckland in greater quantities, the peak week totalling 121,000 dozen, against 85,000 dozen for the best week of the previous year. A total of 21,700 40 lb. tins of pulp were manufactured, against approximately 5,000. To be marketed during April and May, 75,000 dozen were chilled. New emergency floors were begun in Tauranga and Hamilton.

The Auckland Branch has managed the entire *lemon-curing* operation, marketed lemons in its own area and worked under Head Office in receiving and distributing *imported fruit*.

Management of the *Pukekohe* factory and of *vegetable* supply to the United States Joint Purchasing Board has also largely devolved on the Auckland staff. By the Branch's fleet of eleven *lorries*, vegetables and other transport costs have been turned into a credit of approximately £20,000. The *storage floor* has been running to capacity over the year. At the end of the 1944 fruit season the assembly floor handled 133,000 crates of cabbage and 31,000 crates of carrots. The Branch has also stored penicillin for the Health Department.

## CHRISTCHURCH

Through the assembly store now being situated at Mandeville Road, Riccarton, and the Division having its own private siding, the receiving and distribution of apples have been greatly facilitated and more economically handled. Local orchards have lost much fruit in storms, and that remaining is seriously marked, though without essential damage.

The *dehydration* factory on this site began operations on 21st June, six months after the building was begun. In addition to contracts with growers for *vegetables* for dehydrating, parsnips and cabbages were contracted for and distributed throughout the South Island when and where needed or shipped to meet deficiencies in the North Island. *Eggs* reached the Central Egg Floor, Ltd., in greater quantities, and, over and above local needs, were sent on to Wellington. Pulp to supply the winter months was made in the flush. A depot was established at Ashburton and has supplied the West Coast. A Timaru floor has also been established, the surpluses from which, after local retailers have been supplied, have been pulped or directed to areas of need. The usual services in *butter*-distribution, *honey* receipt and distribution, *stock-feed* distribution (Australian barley) and the allocation of *lemons* and *imported fruit* has taken place. Quotas of lemons, oranges, and bananas to shops and districts have been adjusted during the year after conferences with retailers.

## DUNEDIN

The marketing of *apples and pears*, the Division's biggest task in the Dunedin district, was rendered difficult at times by the nature of the Branch's premises. As military camps closed down, the Division undertook to dispose of locally the *vegetables* grown for their needs by Services' vegetable-production farms at Outram and Totara.

With *imported fruit* the rationing-out system (to brokers and to shops) has been continuously amended and now works almost automatically. The *Egg* Marketing