

Joint Purchasing Board during the early months of 1945 arrangements were made in North Canterbury and the Manawatu to lift very substantial quantities (approximately 2,000 tons) which growers had contracted to deliver during April and May and to store them pending the United States Joint Purchasing Board's later requirements. This relieved the growers of the surplus which they were unable to store for later marketing.

The total quantity supplied for military purposes was 3,500 tons. Growers themselves carried over sufficient supplies to meet civilian requirements throughout the year, their price being progressively increased month by month to meet storage costs and losses through deterioration. Ample supplies were thus available until the new crop began to come on the market in January.

Unfortunately, the advice that further onions would not be required for the Pacific was received too late to enable us to limit the planting for 1946. Accordingly, 1,350 acres were planted—enough to yield three to four thousand tons above normal civilian consumption. Small quantities were exported during the early months of 1946 to the Far East and to Canada, and further shipments could have been made had shipping space been available.

Opportunities for further shipments seem unlikely. However, efforts, which have met with fair success, are now being made to increase the consumption of onions in New Zealand so that any surplus which may still exist above normal consumption may be utilized and wastage avoided.

BARLEY

Drought in Australia made it impossible to import whole barley or barley-meal during 1945-46. Since large quantities are customarily obtained, this shortage proved serious for both pig and poultry farmers, who thus had to depend entirely upon our local production and upon alternative and less satisfactory feed. Local feed-barley production however, is always small, since it comprises only that part of the year's crop which does not come up to brewers' standards. Last year's crop was poor and, in the acute shortage of malting barley, brewers took almost everything that was available. It seems improbable that New Zealand will be able to import any feed barley from Australia for the next eighteen months owing to supplies being diverted to Europe.

MAIZE

Suitable weather and the increased government subsidy (1s. per bushel) led to the crop which was harvested in 1945 being larger both in yield and in area than that of 1944, and the Maize Marketing Committee was able substantially to increase its allocations to all distributors, although the amount available was still only enough to meet half the demand. There was, however, general agreement that the Committee's work had resulted in a fair distribution to all interests, special preference being given to poultry-farmers. The quantity harvested and allocated for the year ending 30th June, 1945, was 38,155 sacks, and for that ending 30th June, 1946, will, on present indications, be approximately 60,000 sacks.

For 1945-46 the subsidy was increased to 1s. 6d. per bushel, and an increased acreage obtained. However, owing to drought in the main growing areas, the total yield is unlikely to exceed that of 1945.

HOPS

A considerably better yield of hops in 1945 (3,000 bales weighing 862,417 lb.) came on to a market that was very bare owing to the extremely low yield of the previous year having sufficed only for New Zealand brewers, leaving nothing for export. The Committee has continued its efforts to get an increased area planted in hops, but, owing mainly to labour difficulties and high cost of installing new hop gardens, has gained only moderate success (68 acres increase). With the 621 acres previously planted this area