

REPORT ON FISHERIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH, 1947

Attention is drawn to the fact that all fisheries statistical data in this report is for the calendar year ended 31st December, 1946.

The estimated total quantity and value of the principal classes of fishery products marketed in the year 1946 are as follows:—

	Quantity.	Value. £
Wet fish	380,321 cwt.	660,096
Whitebait	6,578 cwt.	73,674
Oysters—		
Dredged	89,356 sacks	67,017
Rock	5,103 sacks	8,933
Mussels	10,568 sacks	3,687
Crayfish	16,766 cwt.	30,801
Toheroa (canned products)	69,043 lb.	4,567
Whale-oil	700 tons	21,000
Total values		<u>£869,775</u>

The detailed landings are summarized in Tables I to IX (pp. 36 to 46).

The total landings of wet fish show an increase of 48,548 cwt. over the previous year's total of 331,773 cwt., while the total value has increased by £101,692. The quantity of oysters dredged from Foveaux Strait has increased by 13,318 sacks, and a decrease of 373 sacks is shown for rock oysters. The crayfish total is up by 842 cwt., but the mussel figures show a decline of 2,588 sacks.

In the most important group, the "wet fish"—*i.e.*, all the ordinary fishes caught by all methods of sea fishing—the annual totals for successive years are as follows:—

Year.	Total Quantity. Cwt.	Total Value. £
1934-35	331,415	294,267
1935-36	363,448	313,106
1936-37	363,128	360,406
1937-38	355,687	413,516
1938-39	356,114	424,643
1939-40	339,231	416,480
1940-41	328,594	440,308
1941-42	326,863	458,393
1942-43	311,971	442,976
1943-44	294,445	489,268
1944	308,237	522,954
1945	331,773	558,404
1946	380,321	660,096

The total weight of wet fish, 380,321 cwt., is the highest for many years—this result is even better than I predicted in last year's report. The good result is attributable to divers causes: (1) the return of several large catching units after war service; (2) the re-engining and replacement of many vessels after the war; (3) exceptionally fine weather on many of the fishing-grounds during the period of seasonal congregation of some of the more important types of fish.

FISHING-VESSELS AND PERSONNEL

The number of licensed fishing-vessels operating in 1946 was 797, an increase of 76 over last year—some of these are first-class modern units and have done much to boost the total production figure. Of the more important units, steam-trawlers increased by 1; motor-trawlers increased by 14; Danish-seine boats decreased by 2, which became motor-trawlers; vessels engaged in both trawling and line fishing increased by 8. A total of 1,550 men were engaged in fishing, either whole time or part time, during the year. The full details of these changes are shown in Table I.