

slight seed towards the latter part of the season. Wanganui wools, on the whole, have been poorly grown, the colour has been poor, and the general character of the clip has been uninteresting. Growers here could profit by better classing and preparation.

Season.		Number of Bales sold.	Net Weight.	Gross Value.	Average per Bale.	Average per Pound.
			Lb.	£	£ s. d.	d.
1942-43	950,607	327,321,380	19,916,828	20 19 0	14.60
1943-44	930,694	316,152,540	19,424,253	20 17 5	14.74
1944-45	1,038,019	357,606,520	22,013,258	21 4 1	14.77
1945-46	1,022,124	349,365,289	21,552,153	21 1 9	14.80

RABBIT NUISANCE

In spite of labour shortages, the position of the rabbit pest in districts under Rabbit Board control can be regarded as generally satisfactory, in many cases the pest being reduced to a minimum. In Hawke's Bay, however, where a number of "killer" Boards have been recently constituted, a considerable increase in the rabbit pest is recorded and is causing some concern. The rapid and substantial increase in the pest is attributed to particularly favourable breeding seasons, due to dry conditions over the past two years, combined with an acute labour problem. In areas outside of Board Control an increase has been observed. It is obvious that an extension of an active Rabbit Board policy is the solution to the rabbit problem.

Further Boards were constituted during the year under review, while one small Board ceased operating, the administration of this area being assumed by the Hon. Minister. A total of 106 Boards have now been constituted. Subsidies paid to Boards on rates collected amounted to £68,079.

The continued high prices ruling for skins and carcasses have materially assisted in the keeping-down of the pest, but this cannot be regarded as a suitable form of long-term rabbit-destruction policy, the position being entirely governed by the financial aspect.

The payment of a subsidy on milky does and smalls by the Rabbit-skins Levy Committee, which is domiciled in Dunedin, has encouraged effective destruction work during the spring and summer, when, in the ordinary course of events, comparatively little rabbiting is undertaken in areas outside of Board control.

Strychnine is now in full supply, but traps are difficult to obtain. At the Department's Poison-mixing Depot at Frankton Junction considerable trouble has been experienced in manufacturing phosphorized pollard on account of the coarse nature of pollard available. Every effort is being made to surmount this manufacturing problem.

NOXIOUS WEEDS

Little progress has been made in coping with the noxious-weeds problem, particularly on second- and third-class lands, and efforts of land-occupiers appear to be confined to keeping the better-class land free from encroachment by weeds. The availability of labour for noxious-weeds work is still a problem in most districts, and this aspect definitely retards progress. Ample supplies of weedicides are now available. Due to favourable germination conditions during the past two years, variegated thistle is assuming alarming proportions in the Hawke's Bay district.

Local authorities continue to do good work, particularly with ragwort, and the Department has continued to render financial assistance. A further two counties have taken over the administration of the Act, making a total of thirty-four counties accepting responsibility.

Weeds on unoccupied Crown and Native lands have been given attention.

The special Noxious Weeds Committee set up by the Hon. Minister has submitted its report, which is being considered by interested parties.