

XII. METEOROLOGICAL

—	1942.	1943.	1944.	1945.	1946.
Total rainfall (inches) ..	76·99	79·59	64·76	90·02	84·2
Number of rainy days ..	131	112	116	233	207
Highest for any day (inches) ..	3·79	4·76	2·85	4·63	3·6
Date	5 Oct.	14 Oct.	22 Feb.	11 Aug.	10 Mar.
Highest temperature (F.) ..	89·5	88	87	88·5	90·2
Date	31 Mar.	27 Feb.	9 Mar.	15 Mar.	19 Jan.
Lowest temperature (F.) ..	61	56	57	58·5	58·0
Date	9 Sept.	1 Sept.	12 Aug.	8 June	10 July.
Mean of maximum thermometer (F.)	81·3	81·4	80	80·9	81
Mean of minimum thermometer (F.)	71·2	70·4	69	70·3	69·3

This year the Group escaped serious storms, and the weather during the "hurricane season" was unusually calm. Two warnings of storms which might possibly visit the Cook Islands were received, but the storms, fortunately, took a different course.

XIII. AGRICULTURE

Progress towards the re-establishment of the citrus industry continues to be maintained. Eighty-four plots have been established under the orange replanting scheme; the majority of these plots are of ninety trees planted in one and a half acres of land, a few are smaller owing to the smaller area available. One plot is ready for planting, and applications for twenty-nine other plots have been finalized. On the whole, the plots are doing exceptionally well and the young trees are well advanced for the length of time they have been planted.

During the year 8,700 budded orange-trees were distributed; in addition, there are 730 young budded trees now ready for distribution, and a further 1,500 plants are ready for budding now and will be available for distribution in November, 1947. There are also 20,000 seedlings which have been recently transplanted, and 40,000 seedlings yet to be transplanted.

The citrus-replanting scheme has been extended to Aitutaki, and some 2,100 budded orange-trees have been planted out in plots. The citrus nursery at Aitutaki has been restocked with seedlings sent from Rarotonga, and a further distribution of budded orange-trees will be made during 1947. The establishment of the full number of one hundred plots will be completed as soon as the young trees are available.

It is hoped that it will be possible to establish citrus seedling nurseries in Atiu and Mauke during 1947.

Citrus shipments from the whole Group have been small during 1946 owing to the damage sustained during the severe storm experienced in January. Prospects for 1947 after a calm "hurricane season" are however, much better.

Tomatoes were extensively planted to make up for the loss of the citrus crop, and a record total of 78,761 boxes was shipped.

The few remaining banana plantations were partially wiped out by the storm in January, 1946, and until shipping prospects improve there is little hope of interesting growers in re-establishing this industry. The Administration has established nurseries for the propagation of banana-shoots so that when it is possible to revive the industry shoots will be available for the replanting scheme.

In Aitutaki, arrowroot has been extensively cultivated, and 81 tons have been processed and exported. Mangaia shipped 708 cases of pineapples to New Zealand. The extension of these industries may well assist in providing cargo during the lean period between orange seasons.

Copra-production has increased, and Penrhyn and Aitutaki have recommenced the export of this commodity.

The outer islands rely to a much greater extent on native food crops than Rarotonga does, but greater interest has been evinced in these crops during the year in Rarotonga, with the result that there has been no shortage of native vegetable foods.