

The heavy citrus crop in 1947 is reflected in the statistics of shipments appearing in the trade section and in the reports on the individual islands. Shipping was made available during the year to handle practically all the fruit offering for export.

No bananas were exported during the year, but three banana nurseries were established in order to maintain a source of supply of shoots should the industry revive.

There was a much smaller total shipment of tomatoes than in the previous year, which was a record year for tomato exports.

The cultivation and export of arrowroot, mainly from Aitutaki, was well maintained. A shipment of 808 cases of pineapples was made from Mangaia. Extensive plantings of pineapples have been made in that island, and an increase in the crop is expected next year. Steps were taken to obtain a supply of shoots from Fiji for distribution in other islands.

In Rarotonga there was increased activity in the latter part of the year in the planting of native food crops due to lack of shipping in the last quarter leading the people to rely more on their own foods. In the outer islands, native food plantings were generally speaking adequate, and in some islands abundant crops were reported.

There is no organized breeding of live-stock, a few cows, goats, and horses sufficient only for the needs of the inhabitants being found in the Group. Meat is imported from New Zealand in frozen form. So far as forestry is concerned there are few marketable types of trees, but arrangements are being made for tree-planting to a certain extent to prevent soil erosion.

#### 24. COMMUNICATIONS AND SHIPPING

The Cook Islands have a radio station at Rarotonga and eleven substations at outer islands. There is a regular air service through Rarotonga and Aitutaki to Samoa, Fiji, and New Zealand. There is also a regular shipping service with New Zealand and occasional calls by trans-Pacific vessels. Post and telegraph services are available in all the islands, and there is a telephone service in Rarotonga. Avarua, Rarotonga, is the main port, the roadstead there providing a reasonably safe anchorage in most weather for vessels of any size. Only small vessels are able to negotiate passages through the reefs of most of the other islands.

The N.Z.G.M.V. "Maui Pomare" was specially built for trade with the islands and continues to provide the mainstay of the transport connection with New Zealand.

Except for the normal period of annual overhaul at the commencement of 1948, this vessel maintained its regular service to the Cook Islands, and although a larger and faster vessel is necessary if the Group is to be fully developed, the "Maui Pomare" has proved invaluable in the absence of any other suitable ship. The 1947 citrus crop was a heavy one, and to assist in uplifting the cargoes of oranges and tomatoes offering, calls by other vessels were also arranged. In this manner there were loaded nearly 2,000 tons of export cargoes which it was beyond the capacity of the "Maui Pomare" to uplift.

A fortnightly air service between New Zealand and Rarotonga was maintained throughout the year. In November, 1947, the National Airways Corporation of New Zealand assumed control of the service, which had previously been operated by the Air Department. The air service has become increasingly popular, and during the early part of 1948 when, through lack of shipping, imported supplies in Aitutaki were practically exhausted very considerable use was made of it to ferry essential goods to that island. Although the fortunate lack of any untoward incident and the regularity of arrivals and departures have caused the efficiency of the service to be taken for granted, consideration of the length of the route flown entirely over open sea will give some appreciation of the organization and technical skill behind the service.