

(iii) TOP-DRESSING

The carrying-capacity of the land has been increased markedly by the greater use of fertilizer. The outstanding feature is the dominating importance of phosphatic fertilizers:—

(Thousands of tons)

Season.	Super-phosphate (Straight).	Other Phosphates.	Blood and Bone, Blood, Bone, &c.	Potash, Sulphate of Ammonia, Nitrate of Soda.	Total.
1928-29	275	151	25	14	465
1932-33	307	59	26	11	403
1937-38	447	121	22	21	611
1942-43	295	27	35	5	362
1945-46	445	27	24	11	507

Normally, New Zealand supplies of rock phosphate for superphosphate-manufacture come from Nauru and Ocean Islands, and production and distribution to fertilizer-works were administered by the British Phosphate Commissioners, an organization set up following World War I to distribute the phosphates from these mandated islands. Provision was made for Great Britain and Australia each to obtain 42 per cent. and New Zealand 16 per cent. of the total output. Great Britain, however, obtained her supplies from other sources, and Australia and New Zealand have shared the output from Nauru and Ocean Islands.

After the phosphate rock reaches New Zealand it goes to the fertilizer-works; eight works manufacture superphosphate and one manufactures a heat-treated phosphate. The potential output of all works combined is in the vicinity of 700,000 tons annually.

Blood and bone and blood and bone-dust are by-products of the Dominion's meat industry, and they are used largely for market gardening and in mixtures for annual crops. Potassic and nitrogenous fertilizers are used to a limited extent only; potassic fertilizers are used for top-dressing pastures in certain areas when the soil is deficient in potash and for special mixtures for annual crops. Nitrogenous fertilizers are used mainly by market-gardeners and orchardists.

The areas top-dressed were as follows:—

(Thousands of acres)

Year Ended 31st January,	Artificial Fertilizer Only.	Lime Only.	Fertilizer and Lime.	Total Area Top-dressed.
1927	1,410	107	4	1,521
1932	2,068	387	*	2,454
1937	2,122	177	1,027	3,326
1942	2,324	380	1,508	4,212
1948	2,654	548	1,481	4,684

* Not quoted for this year.