

Zealand Fruitgrowers' Federation (Limited), to be expended on proper lines in the furtherance of the interests of the fruitgrowers of New Zealand.

REGISTRATION OF NURSERIES.

During the year under review 414 nurseries were registered, representing £418 in fees. This is the third year that the nursery regulations have been in force, and considerable good has resulted in controlling the spread of diseases.

HORTICULTURAL STATIONS.

Te Kawwhata.

The season on the whole has been a very successful one considering the very wet winter and early spring. The fruit crops were good, both apples and pears bearing heavily. The grape crop was lighter than usual owing to the wet weather experienced when the vines were in bloom. The trees on the four fruit-farms have made good growth and look very promising. The lucerne plots have done remarkably well. The autumn-sown plot still stands out superior in every respect. In addition to the continuation of spraying experiments some useful manurial experiments were conducted. The demand for the wine manufactured at this station still keeps up, as is evidenced by the fact that it was found necessary some months ago to discontinue the bulk sales.

Arataki.

A portion of an adjoining commercial orchard, as well as the whole of the orchard at the station, was utilized for spraying experiments. A block of seven varieties of peaches was planted last winter for an experimental pruning-area. The grass-garden is now established and creating a great deal of interest. The vegetable trials have been continued, and some useful results have been published. The control of brown-rot after the fruit is picked and packed will form a feature of the experiments during the coming season.

Tauranga.

An area of about 7 acres has been set aside for citrus trees. As the district is well suited to citrus-culture, it is proposed to make this work a strong feature of the station's activities. The block was partially planted last spring, and will be completed this season. Pruning, stock-testing, as well as testing varieties, form part of the scheme. An experimental apple and pear area of about 4 acres was planted last winter for variety, pruning, spraying, and manurial tests. A system of continuous green-manuring is now adopted at this station to conserve moisture in place of deep summer cultivation. Good results are already apparent.

EXPERIMENTAL ORCHARD, CANTERBURY.

The Department has leased a property of 8 acres in Harewood Road, Papanui, Christchurch, for experimental purposes. It comprises 4 acres of established apples and pears from twelve to twenty years old. It is proposed to work this as far as possible on commercial lines. The control of black-spot and red mite will form a feature of the experiments. Manurial and spraying tests on tomatoes and potatoes will also be conducted. This orchard should prove of great value to the fruitgrowers of Canterbury.

INVESTIGATION OF FRUIT INDUSTRY IN AMERICA.

Mr. J. A. Campbell, Assistant Director of this Division, left the Dominion in March to investigate the fruit industry in Canada and the United States. He will be in America during the whole of the growing and harvesting season, and will make full investigation and inquiries in connection with cool storage, marketing—particularly the co-operative systems—and the working of the compulsory grading regulations, pruning, control of insect pests and diseases, and all other matters relative to the industry. The information acquired will be published, and should be of very great value to the industry.

SCHOOL OF HORTICULTURE.

This is a matter which has demanded attention for some considerable time. Further representations have been received from fruitgrowers' associations and others again urging the establishment of a properly equipped school of horticulture. Owing to the lack of housing-accommodation at the horticultural stations there are no means at present of imparting knowledge in the various branches of horticulture to even a few cadets. It is hoped something will be done in connection with this important matter at an early date, as at present there is an entire lack of facilities in this Dominion for the study of horticulture, and this lack is retarding various branches of the industry.

HOPS.

According to figures supplied by the Customs Department, 2,294 cwt. of hops, valued at £12,830, were exported during the year. This shows an increase in value of £3,289 as compared with the previous year. The following figures show the quantity and value of hops exported from the Dominion during the last six years ending 31st March: 1914, 5,152 cwt., value £26,430; 1915, 3,216 cwt., value £20,786; 1916, 4,425 cwt., value £17,742; 1917, 4,449 cwt., value £17,708; 1918, 2,134 cwt., value £9,541; 1919, 2,294 cwt., value £12,830.