

Ashburton.—As in the past seasons a great deal of the work at Ashburton has been in connection with the improvement of the potato crop. During the 1930-31 season, however, the work on this farm was conducted under most trying weather conditions. In connection with certification, 334 lines of potatoes were tried out in the certification trials and 232 lines in the qualifying trials. This is the largest number so far entered in any one year. About 16 acres were under various varieties, and selections of potatoes and seed from these will be available for sale to farmers for sowing in the 1931-32 season.

Gore.—This farm has again during the season been devoted to experimental work, and a wide range of investigations has been dealt with. Of particular importance has been the experimental work in connection with club-root, and the results being obtained are very encouraging.

Galloway.—This area continues to serve, as was originally intended, as a demonstration of the adaptability of irrigated country to dairy-farming. Continued interest is shown by local settlers in the activities of this farm.

Waimaunga.—Dairying has been continued on this farm during the year.

Subsidized Farms.—The subsidized farms at Stratford, Manaia, Dargaville, and Winton have continued to do much useful demonstration work during the season.

WINTER LECTURES.

The holding of winter lectures as in past years was not so prominent a feature during the 1930 winter. The decrease in the number of lectures given was to some extent due to officers not having sufficient time available to organize and conduct these lectures.

RUAKURA FARM TRAINING COLLEGE.

The Training College established at Ruakura in 1923 continues to meet the popular demand, and for the first term of 1931 all accommodation at the school was occupied. No great difficulty is experienced in securing an adequate number of students to enter Ruakura each term.

BOYS' AND GIRLS' AGRICULTURAL CLUBS.

These clubs are still conducted in various parts of the Dominion, especially in Taranaki, Wellington - West Coast, and the Wairarapa districts, while a considerable extension has taken place in Canterbury and Otago-Southland. As hitherto, the movement embraces the growing of crops, particularly roots, and the rearing of calves. Owing to reduction in available funds it will be necessary to revise the basis on which these clubs are at present conducted.

LAND-DEVELOPMENT SCHEMES.

The land-settlement policy of the Government has created a considerable amount of extra work for several of the field staff, and particularly for the Fields Superintendent for the Auckland District. Development work on a block called Ngakuru No. 1, a few miles distant from Rotorua, was continued, and the authorized programme of development was completed by the end of March, 1931. One thousand two hundred and thirteen acres were cleared, and 1,160 acres were cultivated and sown in grass and plantations, and much subdivisional fencing carried out. During the year (in November, 1930) work was commenced on a block adjoining and called Ngakuru No. 2. On this block to the end of March, 1931, 1,975 acres were cleared and 400 acres cultivated. Only a comparatively small area was sown in grass in the autumn of 1931, and the remainder of the block, of approximately 3,000 acres, will be sown in grass during the coming spring.

In addition to this development work on the pumice-land near Rotorua, some work has been done on about 50 acres of pakihi soils near Westport.

DETERIORATED LANDS.

The work carried out under this heading for the Lands Department ceased during the year, and is now carried on by officers of the Lands Department.

FARMERS' FIELD COMPETITIONS.

Farmers' field competitions were carried on in various parts of the Dominion, but mainly in Taranaki and Wellington - West Coast districts, on much the same lines as in past years.

CHEMICAL CONTROL OF NOXIOUS WEEDS.

Quite an appreciable step forward in the control of noxious weeds by chemical means was made during 1930-31 season. On the recommendation of the Department large quantities of sodium chlorate were used to control noxious weeds, particularly ragwort, and the improvement obtained in those districts formerly badly infested with ragwort is most noticeable. A considerable amount of experimental work on other weeds with sodium chlorate, calcium chlorate, Atlacide, Occysol, and other materials, has been conducted during the season, and it is hoped to publish the results secured, with recommendations, in a bulletin so soon as the current season's work has been finalized.