

PUBLIC WORKS.

Owing to the financial position, no public works of any importance were undertaken during the year.

Government buildings and properties have been kept in a good state of repair.

Roads.—The road gang has been kept up to strength and fully employed in general maintenance and repairs to the main road round the island.

Bridges.—Plans and specifications were drawn for two new bridges to replace wooden structures. These await more financial times for completion.

Water-supply.—All supply systems of the various villages have been maintained in good order. There were no serious breaks during the year.

Reef Passages.—In the island of Mangaia further improvements have been made to the reef passages at Oneroa and Atuakoro. In Mauke the main passage at Taunganui has been widened and deepened, and the subsidiary passage at Angataura has been improved.

AGRICULTURAL DEPARTMENT.

RAROTONGA.

Planting Statistics.—Planting statistics for the year show noticeable increases in the planting of bananas, tomatoes, and citrus trees. All domestic crops—*e.g.*, yams, kumara, taro, &c.—have been heavily planted.

More use is being made of cover crops, and growers are also realizing the benefits to be gained from the crop rotation and the use of fertilizers.

Growers suffered heavy losses of tomatoes with overmature fruit owing to the cancellation of one trip of the cargo vessel, and its early withdrawal from the service.

Citrus.—It is satisfactory to note that a great deal of interest has been displayed on the part of growers in the establishment of new varieties. Improved varieties of trees have been introduced from California and New Zealand, besides a large number of propagated trees from the Experimental Nursery. A number of growers, with the assistance of the Department, have undertaken the propagation of their own trees. The Department offers every encouragement in this direction. Large numbers of Rough Lemon stock have been planted out in nursery rows, and the budding of same is already in progress. Grapefruit has also received considerable attention. During the season growers were able to dispose of large quantities of oranges to the Rarotonga Pure Food Products Co. for the purpose of making concentrated orange-juice for the New Zealand markets. This juice has been very favourably commented on in New Zealand, and is in good demand.

Monthly Notes.—The "Monthly Notes" have been regularly compiled and distributed to growers. The following subjects have been dealt with during the year: April: Citrus Outlook in the Cook Islands. May: Picking, curing, and packing Lemons. June: Bananas; Citrus Diseases; Tomatoes. July: Propagation of Citrus Trees; Tomatoes. August: Propagation of Citrus trees—*continued*. September: Tobacco Cultivation. October: Tobacco Cultivation—*continued*. November: Sweet Potato Storage Trials; Improper packing; Sorting of Tomatoes. December: Fruit Regulations. January: Copra. February: Banana-cultivation. March: Citrus culture; Budding Operation.

PACKING-SHEDS AND FRUIT-INSPECTION.

Work has been satisfactorily carried out in the district packing-sheds. The installation of the second set of grading machinery in the Arorangi district shed was of great assistance, as this shed handled half the total shipment of oranges for the season. The floors of all the district packing-sheds have been concreted and the roofs painted.

Regulations.—The amendments to the Fruit Regulations, prohibiting the export of oranges of $3\frac{1}{4}$ in., $3\frac{3}{8}$ in., and $3\frac{1}{2}$ in. in diameter, and tomatoes under 2 in. in diameter, gave satisfactory results.

Prosecutions.—Eighteen persons were prosecuted in the High Court for breaches of Fruit Regulations. Prosecutions in this respect are on the downward trend.

Parasites.—Reports from Aitutaki indicate that good results continue to be obtained from the use of citrus scale parasites (Chalcid flies).

Citrus Experiments.—A series of experiments in connection with the keeping-qualities of oranges were carried out during the season. Oranges were subjected to immersion in borax, bicarbonate of soda, formalin, salt water, and fresh water. The results were conclusively in favour of borax-treated fruit. Salt water proved to have disastrous effects. Further experiments, concentrating on the borax treatment, will be carried out during this coming season.

EXPERIMENTAL NURSERY.

All sections of the nursery are now planted with bananas.

The citrus trees are bearing good crops of fruit. A number have been attended to for various diseases. Several affected with Folio-cellosis (mottled leaf) have been trenched, heavily manured, and have responded well to the treatment. All trees have been pruned, and sprayed where necessary. Grapefruit and mandarins were forwarded to New Zealand during the season, and