

There are two units on part of the area, but the greater portion of the land is worked as a mixed farm and at present is stocked with dry sheep and cattle for the better handling of the property and building-up of the pastures.

Efforts were made during the year to consolidate the area already developed (2,000 acres) by subdivisional fencing, stumping, ploughing, and top-dressing, and the following works were completed: Stumping manuka, 100 acres; clearing and grubbing gorse, 62 acres; ploughing and grassing, 60 acres; sown in turnips, 65 acres; new fences (subdivisional), 50 chains; and repairing old fences, 60 chains.

At the 31st March, 1935, the scheme was carrying 597 run cattle, 25 dairy cattle, and 2,203 dry sheep.

Sales for the year were as follows: 225 run steers, 13 run heifers, 27 rams, 489 wethers, 1,421 ewes, and 49 bales wool.

These figures do not include units' returns.

The area is at present fully stocked, and, in fact, slightly overstocked with cattle for winter-carrying capacity.

The turnip crop did not reach expectations owing to the exceptionally dry summer.

The land is badly infested with ragwort, gorse, and blackberry and requires constant movement of stock to check second growth. A thousand acres of pasture have shown a definite improvement with top-dressing, and ragwort was kept under control by grazing with sheep.

The prospects for the coming season are promising, and a larger wool clip is expected, with increased sales of fat sheep.

Mahoenui should eventually be suitable for subdivision, and the present policy is to build up the pastures so that control of weeds may be maintained by Native units under ordinary grazing conditions.

The scheme maintains two units with eight dependants, three workmen with fourteen dependants, and assistance from unemployment funds gave employment to an additional fifteen men supporting twenty-three dependants. The principal unit is Rongo Kingi Wetere, who owns considerable other lands in the district and who is milking a large herd. There is a valuable asset in this community in the hereditary leadership of the Wetere family, and it is expected that their influence will become more pronounced as time goes on and will prove beneficial to all concerned in the Mahoenui scheme.

WAIMIHA.

Situated about two miles from the railway-station midway between Te Kuiti and Taumarunui and comprising an area of 7,829 acres, of which approximately 2,000 acres are developed, Waimiha may be classed as the major development scheme in the Maniapoto District. The scheme gives employment to two defined units, six milking units, and about twenty-eight other workers, whose total dependants number ninety-three persons, a community of Natives, principally members of the Te Ihingarangi *hapu* of Maniapoto and a few representatives of neighbouring *hapus*. Although there were two or three defections among the occupiers some time ago there has been in the comparatively short period since the inception of the scheme a remarkable improvement in the health and general condition of these people, and this is being reflected in their willingness and capacity to cope with the farming operations on the various sections occupied by them.

During the year 1934-35 the principal work carried out on the scheme comprised the consolidation of the position of the land already under development (2,000 acres) by top-dressing, stocking, and fencing. No building programme was undertaken to actually settle units on sections, and no additional area was brought in, but progress was made as follows: 85 acres sown down in grass, 25 acres reconditioned by harrowing in of seed, 45 acres cropped with swedes, 45 acres cleared of scrub, 450 acres cut for hay and ensilage, 420 chains wire sheep-proof fencing; 10,000 matai posts erected and 50,000 battens were split; and 75 chains of drains excavated.

Throughout the season milking was carried on, the production from 197 cows being 33,616 lb. of butterfat, valued at £1,292 and averaging 171 lb. per cow, an increase of 4,000 lb. in weight and £302 in value over the previous year. Other returns included sales of 120 steers (£870) and 837 wethers (£918). The hay crop produced 13,776 bales, which were stacked for winter requirements.

The scheme is at present stocked to carrying-capacity with 202 dairy cows, 13 bulls, 46 heifers and calves, 65 steers, 1,511 breeding-ewes, 230 wethers, and 45 rams. No wool was sold, as the sheep were purchased after December, 1934.

The pastures as a whole show an improvement on last year. The grass-content has considerably increased, and the red clover has to a large extent gone out. This is reflected in the general improvement of the carrying-capacity and the condition of the stock. Some of the pastures have been attacked by grass grub, but concentration of stock on the areas affected and heavy rolling has kept this pest down. Top-dressing with potash is an experiment which has proved successful, and this is borne out by the extra growth and apparent greater palatability of the pastures. On some of the sections half the area was top-dressed with superphosphate and half with potash, and the stock showed a decided preference for the potash-treated portions.

Waimiha is not badly affected with noxious weeds. On the grazing areas ragwort is well controlled with sheep, and in the hay paddocks any odd plants were hand-pulled before cutting commenced. The same treatment was applied to gullies and other waste parts. There are a few patches of blackberry, which have been cut and kept under control. Rabbits have been kept under by periodic poisoning with phosphorized pollard.

Housing conditions of the milking units and stockmen are good, and generally are sufficient for the requirements of the people. Temporary employees are accommodated in wooden huts in preference to tents. The health of the community during the year has been excellent, and no deaths or outbreaks of infectious diseases have occurred.