

FARMERS' TRIALS.

During the last four years roots of kikuyu have been sent out to farmers who applied for them, and over ninety lots of cuttings have been distributed in this manner. Each season reports have been sent in by most of these men, and since the climate over the area from Kaitaia to Taumarunui varies a good deal, so the successes and failures with the grass have alternated. As would only be expected with a grass introduced from a tropical country, kikuyu did best under the warm conditions of North Auckland. In most places in South Auckland where it was tried, although producing feed by the middle of the first summer, it never recovered from the frosts. The majority of farmers in the northern districts who have tried kikuyu are very pleased with it, and they report that stock does well on the grass. In its second and third season many farmers had secured enough cuttings from their original supply to plant out a large area, and even now requests are received from farmers who wish to put down areas of from 5 to 10 acres.

Where it was tried in cultivated ground, however, the kikuyu soon became quite a menace to the other plants in the vicinity, and it was very difficult to eradicate. In two seasons a few roots, planted at a distance of 3 ft. apart, had covered an area 15 ft. long by 6 ft. wide. From its habit of growth one would expect to find this result, so that kikuyu should never be planted on such ground, but should be used on the poorer classes of soil where other grasses will not hold. On poor clay hills, where farmers report that it can be established, kikuyu should do well and throw a quantity of good feed, since the surface-sowing of Lotus major and white clover is an easy matter. Already on this class of country two species of Lotus occur naturally, and, as is shown at Puwera, the association of these with kikuyu gives a good sward.

EXPERIENCE IN OTHER COUNTRIES.

In the *Agricultural Gazette of New South Wales* for May, 1921, Whittet gives a good account of the trials with kikuyu in New South Wales, and also describes feeding-experiments which were carried out at Hawkesbury Agricultural College. In these latter trials kikuyu was found to be next to Hungarian brome in palatability, but was ahead of both timothy and cocksfoot. In this determination the grasses were cut and fed green to dairy cows for a certain period. Trials generally in New South Wales and Western Australia show that kikuyu does well in a variety of soils and climatic conditions, and produces most of its feed in the summer months. In the winter it lies dormant, but has proved to be a good drought-resister in summer. Roots were sent to Fiji from the Albany Experimental Area; reports show that the kikuyu is doing well on dairy farms, and it is expected that if the present successful sward can be maintained kikuyu will become one of the most important grasses there. Cuttings of roots were also forwarded to the Experiment Station at Honolulu, and the first report stated that the grass had become well established there.

CONCLUSIONS.

Kikuyu does well under the soil and climatic conditions of a great part of the Auckland Province, and is particularly suited to the Northern