

Linen Flax Is A Payable Crop In Marlborough

LINEN flax is a new crop to many farmers, and as such it gives rise to two questions—"Is my land suitable?" and, having sown the crop, "What return can I expect to get?" These two questions have not, in the past, been easily answered, because until a year or so ago the determination of suitable land was in its experimental stages only, and therefore we had of necessity to rely on overseas figures for probable yields of straw and seed.

However, the position is now vastly different. This season's experience, has, in the main, borne out experimental evidence as to the suitability of selected land, and the final results of the 1939-40 series of crops, which are now available, give a fairly accu-

rate idea of what returns the crop will yield under Marlborough conditions.

Suitability Of Land

The land suitability question has been well answered by the experi-



By
D. R. WILKIE,
Instructor in Agriculture,
Blenheim.

ences in the season just passed, when, in spite of some failures and near failures, it can be asserted that the bulk of the land sown in linen flax returned very successful crops—particularly in Marlborough. Crops of sufficient length, with few weeds, little or no disease, and excellent seed prospects are now in stack or in the process of being harvested. There seems little wrong with the suitability of the selected areas.

Those who had direct contact with farmers in linen flax growing will readily agree that the spirit in which this task was undertaken was truly admirable. In fact, with some farmers the question of returns did not appear to enter into the matter, and here the answering of the second question presented no difficulty. The grower understood that an essential war effort was being made, and was willing to do all that he could to help it. While local organisers are very grateful that such a spirit exists, it is realised that the question of returns is of vital importance, and every effort has been made to ensure that linen flax is a worth-while crop from a financial aspect.

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