

farmers who produce quality straw and deliver it to the factory in good condition. To the careful grower, this year's contract offers greater inducement for the establishment of larger areas than was the case last year, and it is fully expected that, quite apart from any patriotic motives, farmers will readily respond to the request that more flax should be grown.

The old boggy that flax is an exhausting crop in the soil is, I hope, now dead and buried. Apart from being an excellent preparatory crop for wheat, it is no more exhausting in the soil than any of our cereal crops. The experience of last year clearly shows that where flax is grown in reasonably good soil, particularly in land broken out of grass, good crops result provided climatic conditions are right.

I am satisfied that it is definitely to the farmer's advantage to grow flax as one of his crops in the rotation, and I consider that New Zealand is fortunate in having over a wide area those conditions which are very suitable for flax growing. I am further optimistic enough to believe that this is no mere wartime industry. Provided we give care to the selection of areas suitable for flax growing, and provided further, that every attention is given to produc-

ing quality fibre, we should in the post-war period be able to obtain a market for our fibre.

Mechanisation of our methods of harvesting and processing of the crop will result in the reduction of costs of production, and the fact that the factories built by the Government are designed on the most efficient lines should materially assist in ensuring a market for our fibre, which is proving to be of excellent quality.

Besides directly helping the Empire to win this war by supplying Britain with an essential war commodity, farmers should regard the linen crop as a valuable cash asset, and there should be no difficulty in reaching the 25,000 acres aimed at in this year's production programme.

Noxious Weed Control

THE supply of sufficient quantities of sodium chlorate and/or Atlacide for use on ragwort and other noxious weeds has been giving some concern, as indications have pointed to the possibility of supplies from overseas being obtainable in limited quantities only, as Continental sources of supply are no longer available, and the production in Empire countries is not sufficient to meet the demand after safeguarding their own requirements.

Under normal conditions, and assisted by the Government scheme in operation through County Councils, approximately 1000 tons of chlorate weedicides are imported for use each year, but although prospects for even limited quantities are at present more promising than they were a month ago, it is evident that the quantity offering will not be sufficient for normal use, and in addition the overseas price now being quoted is such that importers are naturally reluctant to place orders, as users would hesitate to buy at the price being quoted.

The question of supplies being made available for New Zealand was taken up by the Government some time ago, and as a result some is being released, but this quantity is relatively small, and supplementary supplies from other sources are also likely to be small both because of a shortage and because of the price.

To ensure the utmost good from the supplies that may become available for this work it will be necessary to concentrate on maintaining the position on areas already dealt with rather than to attempt to extend operations, and

this procedure is recommended to County Councils and others who may be affected.

The question of the use of other weedicides is not being overlooked.

Emergency Cool Storage

DURING the last six months considerable extensions have been made to cool storage available for meat at various strategic centres. In the aggregate the Government has arranged for approximately two and a half million cubic feet of emergency cool storage to be built, and this is either completed or well under way. The finance involved in this emergency cool storage has been advanced to companies by the Government under terms which represent no hardship to the individual companies who have co-operated in the provision of cool storage. The total sum involved is in the vicinity of £330,000. The completion of this programme will ensure that the meat killed for 1941-42 can be accommodated, provided killings are normal and reasonable shipments are obtained.

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