

Federation of Young Farmers' Clubs

Seventh Annual Report of N.Z. Federation Of Young Farmers' Clubs

Seventh annual report of the N.Z. Federation of Young Farmers' Clubs (Inc.), presented at the annual general meeting at Hamilton on July 30, 1941, by the Dominion President, Pilot Officer E. W. Barnett.

I HAVE much pleasure in presenting to you the seventh annual report of the N.Z. Federation of Young Farmers' Clubs at the end of a year which has been a most momentous one in the history of our Empire, and indeed in the history of the world. During this period we have seen many changes and have had to readjust many of our ideas, while the necessity for hard work and sacrifice has become more than ever apparent.

With the further depletion of the ranks of the farm labourers, and also the farmers, due to the increasing numbers being drawn into the Armed Forces, the burden of primary production has fallen more heavily upon those who are still on the land, with the result that working hours are, of necessity, longer, and pleasures and recreation have had to be curtailed. In such manner, however, will the war be won—by the realisation that hard work and sacrifice are needed just as much on the "home front" as in the front lines—and so long as each and every one of us continues to adopt this attitude, then we will be going far towards "doing our bit."

Difficult Year

So far as the Y.F.C. organisation generally is concerned, the past year has been one of increasing handicaps and difficulties. These have, however, been faced in the proper spirit, and despite the general depletion of club membership through service overseas and attendance at Territorial camps, the greater number of clubs have still been able to carry on. Probably the severest handicap with which the clubs have had to contend has been the

shortage of petrol, which has reacted particularly to the detriment of clubs with a more or less scattered membership. The restrictions have further made it difficult to arrange transport for outside lecturers, and made it harder to secure good attendances at both club and district field days, etc.

Surprisingly few clubs have actually been disbanded, but a number have found it necessary, because of low membership and the difficulty of holding meetings, to go into recess for the period of the war. While some of these clubs may be difficult to revive, the majority have every prospect of being resuscitated after the war. The fact that six new clubs were formed during a very difficult year indicates that the value of the movement is undoubtedly recognised. One factor that has been definitely associated with the carrying on of the organisation generally is the "drive" for younger members that has been made in almost every district, and which has, in most cases, met with success.

Club Membership

At the end of the Federation's last financial year (May, 1940) there were 203 clubs in existence throughout the Dominion, with a total membership of over 6000, the average club membership being about 30. To-day, there are 140 clubs still actively functioning, with a total membership of a little over 3500—an average of 25 members per club. Six new clubs were formed during the year, and fifteen completely disbanded, while 54 clubs have gone into recess for the period of the war. Actually, therefore, there are still 194 clubs on the books of the Federation, although for the time being, at any rate, only 140 of these are really active.

The following table sets out the position of the clubs in the four council areas:—

Council.	Clubs in 1939/40.	Disbanded during year.	New clubs formed.	In recess for war period.	Clubs actively functioning to date.	Membership of active clubs
Otago-Southland	35	1	2	8	28	518
Canterbury	38	5	—	6	27	753
Wellington	77	3	—	21	53	1,390
Auckland	53	6	4	19	32	865
Totals	203	15	6	54	140	3,526

Activities Curtailed

Major activities have of necessity, been considerably curtailed during the year, and there has been no attempt to undertake anything such as stock judging or debating on a national scale, building, ensilage-making, root crop and other competitions, and interest has been maintained in this direction. Because of the difficulties connected with the transport of outside lecturers, many clubs have been thrown more and more upon their own resources. Perhaps, in some ways, this has been all to the good, as far too many meetings have been conducted in the past as a series of lectures; members tended to become mere audiences, thus losing sight of one of the most important features of club work—the encouragement of the members themselves, and the development of their own powers



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