



Types of Farming Practised in New Zealand

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THE number of holdings in New Zealand according to the type of farming practised in 1950 and according to farming regions and to land districts are given by the Census and Statistics Department in a supplement accompanying the May 1952 issue of the "Monthly Abstract of Statistics". A World Census of Agriculture was conducted in 1950, and in meeting the requirements of such a Census not only are extra items covered to those included in the annual collection, but additional tabulation and analysis work is done on the data. Further tables will therefore be published by the Census and Statistics Department as this work proceeds, and brief summaries of this special information with explanatory comment will be published in the "Journal" from time to time. This article deals with the types of farming practised in New Zealand and the numbers of farms classified in each group.

OFFICERS of the Department of Agriculture drew up a basis by which the types and combinations of types of farming enterprises could be established and recorded for each holding from the data collected. Where 75 or more per cent. of the total farming effort on a holding concerned any one type of farming the farm was classed according to that type. If the enterprise involved two types of farming in combination, one at not less than the 50 per cent. level and the other at not less than the 25 per cent. level, the type of farming was recorded according to the combination represented, with the major one mentioned first. The proportions of each type of farming within mixed farming enterprises were determined by using factors based mainly on the standard labour requirement of the respective types of farming.

Holdings where a particular type of farming was carried on to the extent

of 50 per cent. of the total or more (inclusive of those where the same main type of farming was carried on at the 75 per cent. level or more) have been combined into major groups according to the type of farming concerned. The numbers of holdings in these groups and other more miscellaneous groups in the North Island, South Island, and New Zealand as a whole are given in the table following. Data for the Chatham Islands have been included with the South Island, whereas the Census and Statistics Department have included these with the North Island. The numbers in the table represent all holdings of 1 acre or more (excluding those farmed by Maoris under the communal system) situated outside city and borough boundaries and in town districts comprising parts of counties within which they are situated.

NUMBERS OF HOLDINGS IN EACH FARMING GROUP

	North Island	South Island	New Zealand
Dairy group	33,262	6,505	39,767
Sheep group	12,092	11,172	23,264
Beef group	802	439	1,241
Poultry group	761	691	1,452
Horticulture group ..	2,422	2,193	4,615
Cropping group	293	2,495	2,788
Mixed farming group ..	427	1,307	1,734
Grazing group	2,240	1,754	3,994
Miscellaneous group ..	1,220	1,165	2,385
Unused and residential	4,764	4,286	9,050
Totals	58,283	32,007	90,290

The table above and those published by the Census and Statistics Department in the supplement to the May 1952 "Monthly Abstract of Statistics" give for the first time a really dependable and comprehensive indication of the relative popularity of various types of farming in New Zealand. Later as machine-analysed data are made available by the Census and Statistics Department concerning the main items covered in the collection a precise and valuable picture of the agriculture practised in New Zealand and of the locations and sizes of the farming patterns according to type will be gained. This information will facilitate the study of land-use problems, the collection of statistics by "master sample", farming surveys, and national and regional planning and development.

Heading photograph by V. C. Browne.