

**Climate**

Broadly, the climate of the coastal area of the Bay of Plenty may be described as sub-tropical. Annual rainfall varies between 50 and 60 in. and is usually fairly evenly distributed, but in some summers dry spells are not uncommon. There are not many severe frosts, but in some seasons they are of sufficient intensity to injure tender plants growing in low-lying or over-sheltered localities.

As a rule prevailing winds are seldom cold and only occasionally are there high winds. Average annual hours of sunshine are among the highest recorded in New Zealand and the coastal belt is almost entirely free from fogs.

Because of the long growing season and lack of intensity of winter frosts, some crops such as raspberries, currants, apricots, and cherries do not thrive as they do in the colder districts of New Zealand.

The climate favours rapid growth of plants and trees, but it is also equally favourable for weed growth and for the breeding of insect pests and diseases. Good cultural practices combined with adequate pest and disease control are therefore essential for the production of first-quality crops.

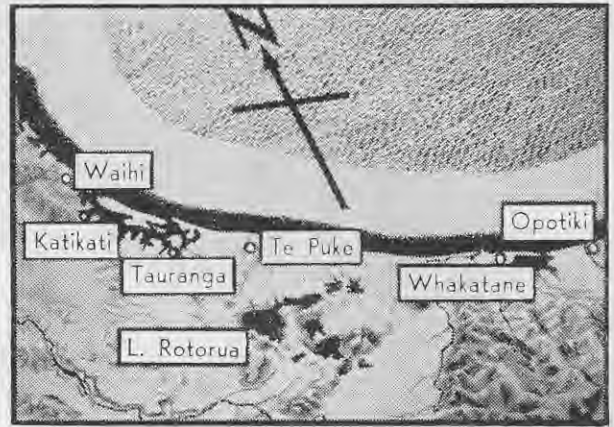
**Soils**

The soils producing the bulk of the horticultural crops are in general light pumice loams which tend to be slightly heavier round the coast. They are light and open in texture, naturally deficient in phosphate and organic matter, but very free working, and the

porous subsoil provides excellent drainage. Soils in areas suitable for horticultural cropping never pug and even after prolonged heavy rain it is only a short time before they can be worked with implements. They warm up quickly in spring, but because of their light, open texture, the heat is lost rapidly if changes of temperature occur within short intervals. For that reason they do not produce very early crops, except in isolated localities favourably situated. In spite of their light and open texture, the soils of the district appear to retain moisture reasonably well during dry periods at a depth effective for most horticultural crops.

**Citrus Fruits**

At the beginning of 1952 the area devoted to the production of citrus fruits in the Bay of Plenty was estimated to be about 540 acres. In Table 1, the present areas of the various kinds of citrus fruits are shown with the estimated production for 1951. Production varies from season to season, but that for 1951 was average and gives a fair indication of a normal year's yield.



[New Zealand Education Department map]

**TABLE 1—ESTIMATED PRODUCTION OF CITRUS FRUITS IN 1951**

Variety	Area (acres)	Production (packed bushels)
Standard lemons ..	260	62,100
Meyer lemons ..	30	3,150
New Zealand grapefruit ..	150	44,000
Wheeny grapefruit ..	45	550
Sweet oranges ..	40	2,600
Others ..	15	200
<b>Totals ..</b>	<b>540</b>	<b>112,600</b>

About half the area is planted in standard lemons. In the earlier years the industry was developed mainly round the standard lemon, and in plantings of commercial orchards the tendency has been to regard the



Tauranga, main centre of horticultural production and port of the Bay of Plenty.

[Rendell's]