

The prices realized on the British markets for apples were, generally speaking, fairly satisfactory, and were in advance of those realized on the 1938 shipments.

The market for pears was, however, disappointing, considering the excellent condition of most of the lines. The position was prejudiced by heavy arrivals from the Argentine and the extension of the South African season well into the Australian and New Zealand season.

The quantities of fruit (apples and pears) exported from the Dominion during the last five years are as follows: 1935, 1,065,420 cases; 1936, 1,228,286 cases; 1937, 944,753 cases; 1938, 1,562,720 cases; 1939, 1,051,261 cases.

In view of the unsettled conditions caused by the war and the probability of it not being possible to obtain freight for the 1940 season export, the marketing of the fruit crop (apples and pears) was taken over by the Government at certain fixed prices to the grower according to grade.

It was eventually found possible to obtain space for the first shipment of 17,731 cases on the "Port Gisborne," which sailed for London on the 15th March.

It is hoped that further space will become available on other overseas vessels from time to time before the season closes.

#### LOCAL MARKETS FOR FRUIT AND VEGETABLES.

Owing to the lighter production of apples and pears for the 1939 season, prices realized for fruit on the local markets were well above the previous season's figures and were on the whole satisfactory to growers, especially in regard to cool-stored fruit, which sold exceptionally well. The instructional work carried out by the field officers attached to the Division is reflected in the continued improvement noticeable in the manner in which the New-Zealand-grown Fruit Regulations 1938 are being complied with, the grading, packing, &c., being very favourably commented upon.

At the same time, the careless grower has still to be contended with, and non-compliance with the regulations necessitated the issuing of a considerable number of warning notices by the Fruit Inspectors.

The outbreak of war in Europe, and the probability of shipping space not being available for the export of fruit overseas, gave considerable concern to representatives of the fruit industry as to the marketing of the 1940 season's crop.

As the result of representations made to the Government, a scheme was devised whereby the Government took over the marketing of the fruit (apples and pears) through the Internal Marketing Department at certain fixed prices according to grade. The scheme came into operation on the 5th February.

Under the scheme arrangements were completed whereby the fruit from each district was required to be submitted for inspection at assembly points conveniently situated and, where possible, adjacent to the orchard areas.

Assembly-point inspection, which necessitated the appointment of additional Inspectors to cope with the work, has proceeded very satisfactorily, and a close co-operation has been established between the officers of the Division and the Internal Marketing Department, which is tending towards more orderly and successful marketing.

#### ORGANIZATION OF MARKET-GARDENERS.

The eleventh Annual Conference of the Dominion Council of Commercial Gardeners, Ltd., took place in Wellington in July. Matters connected with the registration of market gardens, standardization of containers, grading and packing regulations, &c., were discussed.

Quarterly meetings were held during the year by the Advisory Committee, which was appointed by the Government for the purpose of co-operating with and assisting the Council in its deliberations. At these meetings representatives from the main producing centres are given the opportunity of reporting any matters of interest and discussing the more important problems that have arisen.

It is hoped that as a result of the work being carried out that the market-gardening industry will eventually be placed on a better footing in respect to the methods of production and marketing.

#### IMPORTED FRUIT, PLANTS, ETC.

Careful attention has been given to the inspection of fruits, plants, bulbs, &c., arriving at the ports of entry in the Dominion.

The total importations show a decrease for the year from all countries, with the exception of bananas from Tonga, which were in excess of the quantity imported last year, due to the recovery made by the plantations from storm damage.

Imports of all fruits from the Cook Islands were considerably lower, pineapples only showing an increase.

Most of the consignments of fruit arrived in satisfactory order both as to pack and condition, and were clean and free from disease, fumigation being only necessary in connection with a small line of pineapples for mealy-bug infection.

There was an increase in the quantity of grain and grass-seed requiring fumigation. The bulk of this was maize infected with weevil, which was dealt with on behalf of the Internal Marketing Department.