

Growers of grapes under glass have experienced a good season. A fair number of new glasshouses have been erected, and in a few instances houses previously used for tomato-growing have been converted for the purpose of grape-culture.

Diseases and pests of glasshouse grapes have been kept reasonably well under control. Mealy bug is, however, proving somewhat difficult to deal with in houses where it has become established.

CIDERMaking.

There has been an increasing demand for advice and information on cidermaking from persons desirous of producing this beverage on a commercial scale.

The output of cider for the season is estimated at some 60,000 gallons.

THE KAUWHATA HORTICULTURAL STATION (LOWER WAIKATO).

Weather conditions were generally favourable to the carrying-out of farming operations, and a good growth of feed contributed to the fattening-off of stock carried on the Station for grazing purposes.

Sales of live-stock, wool, skins, &c., amounted to £594 10s.

In the early spring there was every indication that the grape crop grown for winemaking purposes would be above the average. Cold winds and showery weather experienced in October, however, resulted in a bad setting and a light crop. The weather was also conducive to the spread of fungous diseases, rendering control difficult. Considerable damage was caused to the crop by the bird nuisance, which appears to be growing worse each year, notwithstanding every effort taken to keep it in check.

It is estimated the wine-production for the year will be approximately 13,000 gallons, which is considerably less than that of the previous year, when some 19,000 gallons were produced.

An area of approximately 4 acres was prepared and planted in vines of the Direct Producer variety.

There is an increasing demand for the wines produced at the Station, the quantity sold during the year being some 14,155 gallons, which realized £10,330, and representing an increase of approximately 1,650 gallons on the previous year's figures.

Considerable interest has been manifested in the vinegrowing operations, and numerous orders received for rooted vines and vine cuttings.

The financial position of the Station is satisfactory, receipts exceeding the general working-expenses by some £2,900.

TOBACCO-CULTURE.

Increased attention has been given to tobacco-growing on commercial lines for the 1939-40 season. It is estimated the total area planted was some 2,586 acres, practically the whole of this being in the Nelson Province. This shows an increase of 456 acres as compared with the previous year's figures.

Favourable weather conditions have resulted in a heavier crop and better-quality leaf than that secured last year. No leaf was exported overseas during the 1939 season, all the leaf now produced being readily absorbed by the manufacturing companies operating in the Dominion.

HOP-CULTURE.

The season has not been particularly favourable for hopgrowing. The hops are light, but a much better crop than that of last season. It is expected that the yield will reach 3,000 bales this year.

The quantities and values of hops exported from the Dominion during the last five years ended 31st March are as follows:—

						Cwt.	Value. £
1936	..	..	..	..	..	3,436	22,684
1937	..	..	..	..	..	4,258	28,495
1938	..	..	..	..	..	1,856	12,385
1939	..	..	..	..	..	2,814	17,042
1940	..	..	..	..	..	1,337	7,627

ROYAL NEW ZEALAND INSTITUTE OF HORTICULTURE.

The Royal New Zealand Institute of Horticulture continues to carry out a considerable amount of valuable work in the interests of horticulture and fruit-culture generally. Matters connected with nomenclature, improvement of economic plants by selection and hybridization, recording new varieties of plants produced in New Zealand, and the training of young men and women in all branches of horticulture are some of the main features of the work of the Institute.

Under the New Zealand Institute of Horticulture Act passed in 1927 the Institute has full legal authority to grant diplomas in horticulture to those qualified and passing examinations during the course of a special training.

This very important phase of the work is being taken advantage of, and quite a number of persons have already gained the diploma in question.

The annual examinations of the Institute were held in November, and a total of thirty-eight candidates sat for the Junior, Intermediate, and Diploma examination, a good percentage being successful in passing.