

Fruit, especially apples and pears, is one of those commodities which has a high packing and transportation cost in relation to the actual cost of the article itself. It will be seen from the above figures that packing-costs almost equal the cost of the fruit, but, in addition to this, the bulkiness of the article and the high transport, storage, and handling charges add appreciably to the cost before reaching the market. Transport and storage costs amounted to 1s. 8d. per case. The complete costs incurred by the Division covered all assembly, distribution, repacking, accountancy, and administration, and amounted to 3½d. per case. Costs associated with selling through brokers approximated 10d. per case.

The overall returns from the local market showed a loss of 2s. 0-1d. per case, but the substantial profits from export consignments was sufficient to cover all local costs and losses and provide a net profit of £2,370.

DISTRICT PRODUCTION, SEASON 1940.

District.	Apples.				Pears.		
	XE.	F.	C.	Total.	F.	C.	Total.
	Bushels.	Bushels.	Bushels.	Bushels.	Bushels.	Bushels.	Bushels.
Auckland	111,452	103,400	63,760	278,612	13,465	7,933	21,398
Poverty Bay	8,376	7,276	3,803	19,455	514	49	563
Hawke's Bay	437,875	170,503	93,542	701,920	52,398	16,823	69,221
Wairarapa	18,633	8,833	3,768	31,234	714	218	932
Blenheim	45,827	21,894	4,214	71,935	1,107	341	1,448
Nelson	76,171	91,641	43,921	211,733	8,510	3,638	12,148
Mapua	157,523	166,141	96,640	420,304	8,055	4,435	12,490
Motueka	137,945	103,714	50,244	291,903	13,126	6,405	19,531
Christchurch	72,224	19,961	10,486	102,671	7,856	3,376	11,232
Timaru	3,276	2,605	1,158	7,039	655	504	1,159
Otago	64,122	32,401	19,070	115,593	13,354	4,143	17,497
Totals	1,138,424	728,369	390,606	2,252,399	119,754	47,865	167,619

SUMMARY OF FRUIT EXPORTED.

	Bushels.
To United Kingdom	564,334
To Canada	18,552
To Singapore	2,278
To Java	2,340
	587,504

PURCHASING SECTION.

The purchase of foodstuffs required for Government Departments has been carried on during the year ended 31st March, 1941, with a view to the strictest economy, also the conservation of overseas funds, both sterling and dollar.

The great expansion of the training schemes of the armed Services which has taken place during the year has resulted in an ever-increasing demand for foodstuffs being made upon sources which were already experiencing difficulty in meeting trade demands. Merchants and other suppliers have, however, met this demand to the best of their ability, with the result that trainees have continued to enjoy the variation in the daily menu which modern dietary demands.

As it was obvious that the drawing from local stocks of large quantities of certain kinds of foodstuffs would result in the supplies available for civil use being severely curtailed, arrangements were made to indent direct the undermentioned commodities in order to relieve the position: Rice, sago, tapioca, dates, dried peaches, dried apricots, dried pears, dried nectarines, dried prunes, sultanas, butter-beans, dried raisins, currants, canned pineapple, sardines (for Navy Department), and haricot beans.

Some 300,000 lb. of tea has been imported from Ceylon during the same period.

The Internal Marketing Division has, when required, co-operated in the handling and distribution of these bulk supplies, providing a convenient and effective service.

A high standard of quality has been maintained during the past year in respect of items regularly supplied under contract—viz., meat, milk, and bread; also hams and bacon. Frequent inspections by the Inspectors of the Departments of Health and Agriculture ensured that only foodstuffs which fully complied with contractual requirements were supplied. Even so, it has been found necessary to cancel several contracts and to take disciplinary measures of a less severe nature in respect of others.

The use of locally-produced goods in preference to imported is constantly encouraged. For instance, locally-canned fish is now in general use in Government institutions, and packers are experiencing difficulty in meeting the heavy demand which has developed.