

STATISTICS OF TOBACCO-GROWING

The following table provides comparative figures for the past six seasons : —

Season.					Number of Growers.	Acreage licensed.	Production.
							lb.
1938-39	..	..	..	..	342	2,225	1,423,610
1939-40	..	..	..	..	339	2,570	2,217,040
1940-41	..	..	..	..	381	2,963	3,143,355
1941-42	..	..	..	..	381	3,063	2,721,539
1942-43	..	..	..	..	360	2,960	3,185,183
1943-44	..	..	..	..	414	3,106	3,083,094

WHEAT, FLOUR, AND BREAD INDUSTRIES

The Wheat and Flour Controller's report covers the year ended 31st January, 1945, and is as under :—

“ The turnover in wheat and flour approached closely to the record set last year.

“ The turnover by weight is given as follows :—

*“ Wheat (including Australian)						Bushels.
						9,617,128
					Tons.	Tons.
“ White flour					157,780	
“ Wholemeal					11,223	
“ Biscuit meal					6,450	
						175,453
“ Bran						11,698
“ Pollard						30,564
“ Australian stock meal						13,504
“ Stock meal gristed locally						5,437

* This does not include the New Zealand wheat sold as fowl wheat or which goes into consumption on farms where it is produced. This figure covers only the quantity bought and sold by the Wheat Committee. The Committee handled only 5,807,123 bushels of New Zealand wheat, whereas the total production was 7,208,485 bushels.

“ The cash turnover was :—

					£
“ Wheat Section					3,210,552
“ Flour Section					2,986,085
					£6,196,637

“ The loss through bad debts, £17 3s. 2d., was exceedingly low.

“ Administration costs show an increase of £417, but are actually lower than last year, because last year had the benefit of a bad-debt recovery of £477 from a previous year.

“ The Flour Section administration costs, which cover all the charges arising from collecting orders from bakers, grocers, cake kitchens, poultry-farmers, and others, ordering out from mills, invoicing, collecting accounts, paying proceeds to mills, *del credere* risk, &c., amounted to 1.129 per cent., a small increase upon 1.077 per cent., which was the percentage of cost the previous year. Millers pay the Wheat Committee 1½ per cent. commission for this work, so that the net result is a profit, despite the fact that the Wheat Committee pays 2 per cent. to merchant agents in certain districts to handle their flour sales there. Were it not for this payment to merchant agents in Wellington and certain other areas, or, in other words, if the Wheat Committee had its own office in these as in other centres, the cost of administration would be greatly reduced.

“ The percentage of operating costs over all wheat and flour, including the payment of 1½d. per bushel to brokers on all New Zealand wheat handled and the above 2 per cent. to certain merchants handling flour, is only 1.06 per cent. of the turnover, and this must be considered most satisfactory.

“ The trade in flour represented 123.46 per cent. of the basic allocation made to mills when the scheme was inaugurated in 1936. This is 4.95 per cent. less than the 128.41 per cent. of allocation sold in the previous year.

“ The quality of the flour was excellent and very few complaints were received. Most of these arose because of damage in transit or in store after leaving the mill.

“ The quantity of Australian wheat imported was 3,810,535 bushels (102,068 tons). This exceeded last year's quantity by 44,030 tons. In October, 1944, Australia experienced severe drought conditions, with the result that the Australian Government was unable to make available to us further supplies of either wheat or stock-meal. As a consequence, towards the end of 1944 we were forced to seek supplies of wheat elsewhere, and although a favourable allocation was agreed to by Canada, it was not possible to arrange for immediate supplies of Canadian wheat because of the extremely acute shipping position.

“ Every endeavour is being made to encourage the growing of as large a wheat acreage as possible within New Zealand during the 1945-46 season in order to ease the strain on shipping resources and to make available further supplies to the nations devastated by war.

“ The needs both of the milling industry and of the poultry industry have had to be met throughout the year, and because of supply and shipping difficulties referred to above and the lowered local yield, together with intensified demands for poultry feed, very considerable difficulty has been experienced in adequately filling all requirements.