

## HOP INDUSTRY

Over a period of many years the hop-growing industry, which is located in the Nelson Province, has changed very little. The area under hop-production in 1945 was 621 acres. Unfortunately, the poor growing season has resulted in a low yield, the estimated production being 1,750 bales, compared with 3,203 bales for the 1945 season.

## BEEKEEPING

Commercial beekeeping in New Zealand made excellent progress until war conditions created difficulties in transport and a general shortage of labour and essential apiary equipment. To meet this situation many beekeepers were compelled to reduce the number of hives kept. On the other hand, there has been a sharp increase in the number of domestic beekeepers who have established a few hives in an endeavour to offset the shortage of sugar-supplies and to provide sufficient honey for their own table use.

There are at present 6,507 beekeepers in New Zealand, who own 9,445 apiaries containing 129,576 colonies, the distribution in the various apiary districts throughout the Dominion being as follows :—

Apiary Inspection District.				Number of Beekeepers.	Number of Apiaries.	Number of Colonies.
Auckland	..	..	..	1,462	1,598	16,020
Hamilton	..	..	..	848	1,456	32,865
Hastings	..	..	..	859	1,245	13,331
Palmerston North	..	..	..	1,258	1,909	21,394
Nelson	..	..	..	447	547	6,379
Christchurch	..	..	..	729	1,362	20,714
Dunedin	..	..	..	904	1,328	18,873
Dominion totals .. ..				6,507	9,445	129,576

*Climatic Conditions and Production.*—Climatic conditions throughout New Zealand varied to a considerable degree during the 1945-46 honey season, which was three to four weeks later than usual in most districts. Conditions generally improved from December onward in both North and South Islands, with the exception of Hawke's Bay, Wairarapa, North Canterbury, and parts of Southland, where honey-production was down from half a normal crop to a complete crop failure in some localities. In the remaining districts average to excellent crops of good-quality honey were secured.

The estimated normal production of honey harvested in New Zealand at present (based on the number of hives registered at June, 1945) from commercial and domestic apiaries is 3,259 tons, while production from all sources for the year ended 31st March, 1946, was estimated to be not less than 3,116 tons of honey and 89,925 lb. of commercial beeswax.

*Marketing.*—During the war beekeepers were required (under the Honey Emergency Regulations) to supply a certain percentage of their crops each year to a central depot, essentially for the supply of wartime priorities. The regulations have now been revoked.

All sales of honey made in New Zealand by beekeepers outside of the central organization, which is again operating on a voluntary basis, are of a private nature. This year no difficulty is experienced in disposing of all surplus honey at the ceiling prices allowed under existing Price Orders.

*Instruction.*—There has been an increasing demand for information and advice on all phases of apiculture. These requests have been met by correspondence and visits to the apiarists, also by lectures and demonstrations at organized meetings of beekeepers, as well as by publication of special articles in the *Journal of Agriculture*.

With a view to improving beekeeping standards in New Zealand, two illustrated bulletins were issued dealing with "Bee Diseases" and "The Establishment of a Domestic Apiary." A third bulletin, "Practical Beekeeping in New Zealand," has also been prepared and is now being printed.