

BRANCHES

AUCKLAND

Auckland continued particularly busy patting and tinning *butter* for the United States Pacific Forces until October; thereafter returned to city supply only. However, the wartime zoning arrangement has reduced the Branch's proportion from 45 per cent. of pat sales in Auckland to 37 per cent. Seaweed collected for manufacturing *agar agar* amounted to 111 tons (1943, 24 tons; 1944, 79 tons; 1945, 105 tons). The *dry butterfat* plant recovered some £500 of butter from parchments and salvaged odd lines of pastry butter. *Egg* distribution was supervised—138,000 dozen in this season's peak week, as against a peak of 121,000 dozen in 1944. 124,000 dozen eggs were chilled (50,000 dozen increase). The *honey* blending and packing plant processed less honey than previously, owing to a poor season and the expiry of the wartime regulations, which had required a proportion of the New Zealand crop to be packed there in order to maintain a priorities pool. The lemon-curing plants and the Pukekohe Vegetable Processing Plant are also managed from this Branch. The *storage floor*, strengthened by an auxiliary at Federal Street, prepared vegetables and apples for export to the Pacific Forces, handling in all 16,000 crates of cabbages, 62,000 of carrots, and 124,000 of cauliflower. To the end of November, 1945, the Branch had exported over 14,000,000 lb. of vegetables.

CHRISTCHURCH

This Branch's main military activities were the management of the Riccarton *dehydration* factory (including the continuous supply of vegetables to it) and the supplying of the Army and Air Force in Canterbury with fresh *vegetables* (250,000 lb.). Surpluses from dehydration contracts were sent to poorly-supplied North Island districts, and all North Island vegetables that shipping shortage permitted were distributed through South Island towns when the close of the war left large quantities to be used by civilians. *Onions, potatoes, and manures* were stored. All *egg* pools in the South Island were audited and their accounting systems standardized. 1,751 crates were chilled, as against 733 crates in 1944-45. With only three express ferries running weekly through the winter it was often difficult to keep Wellington supplied with eggs. Little *honey* was received for shipment to the Auckland plant, manufacturers and country districts drawing the bulk of supplies from the beekeepers direct.

HASTINGS

Hastings, in the course of the year, changed its main activity from packing fresh *vegetables* for the Pacific, and later for southern centres (5,800 tons from 2,759 contracted areas) to assembling, cool-storing, and distributing *apples and pears* (767,534 cases, compared with 1944's record of 1,021,520 cases). The Branch stored large quantities of various *produce* while awaiting shipment to the Pacific area. It received only 228 cases of *lemons*, as against 306 last year; but supervised the distribution of 531,237 dozen *eggs* through the Hastings floor, as against 432,829 dozen last year. *Dehydration* in J. Wattie Canneries, Ltd., was under its direction.

NELSON

Nelson Branch directed the Division's apple dehydration plant at Motueka, but otherwise was concerned mainly with transferring to other districts, under difficulties in obtaining shipping, the year's *apple and pear* production of 844,000 cases.

DUNEDIN

Dunedin Branch, hampered by inadequate premises, handled increased quantities of apples and pears, supervised increased distributions of eggs, and operated a quota system for distributing imported fruits.