

The Division has gone to considerable research to see that these eggs, which are intended to supplement fresh egg-supplies in autumn and winter, will be in the best possible condition and acceptable by the public with equal satisfaction to fresh eggs. It proposes during the coming flush season to chill even greater quantities, hoping that eventually by this method a steadier and more continuous supply of eggs will be available all the year round. Unfortunately, however, the cool store facilities are available mainly in the non-production areas, entailing transport of eggs prior to chilling, which is not the most satisfactory method.

POOLS

All distributors operating in the seventeen marketing areas continue to pool the proceeds of the sale of eggs at prices fixed by current Price Orders and to pay out to the producers at the prices fixed by the Division. Surpluses in each individual pool are transferred to a National Egg Pool Account, from which funds are made available to the poultry industry for approved purposes. All egg-pool operations are subject to Government audit, thus ensuring that the supplier to any particular pool receives the price relevant to the ruling wholesale price—and also, indirectly, the benefit of any surplus created in the pool accounts.

POST-WAR MARKETING COMMITTEE

The New Zealand Poultry Board's annual conference of registered poultrykeepers held at Palmerston North during February ratified their previous request that the Minister of Marketing set up a post-war marketing committee to advise upon peacetime marketing plans and operations. This committee has now almost completed its report, and will present it to the Minister in due course.

PRODUCE SECTION

POTATOES

The contract system of last year, under which merchants contracted with farmers on behalf of the Internal Marketing Division, was continued in order to ensure that as far as possible ample supplies were available for both civilian and military requirements, and, in all, 29,974 acres were planted, an increase of 2,596 acres on 1944. However, storms and heavy rainfall during February and March of 1945 waterlogged much of the potato-growing land, and further frequent rains prevented its recovery. Some hundreds of acres became a total loss in North and South Canterbury, and, with blight following, the yield was very greatly reduced. The full extent of this became apparent only in May, when main-crop digging revealed that there would not be enough for military and civilian needs. A substantial quantity from the North Island main crop had already been supplied to the Allied Forces, and, in expectation of sufficient for all needs being available, some further commitments had already been made to the Forces and had to be honoured. Total quantity of potatoes supplied to United States Joint Purchasing Board was 11,000 tons.

As digging proceeded during May, June, and July it finally became apparent that there would not be sufficient main-crop potatoes to meet civilian requirements until the new crop was due to be marketed in quantities during November and December. Tentative discussions with Australia had already taken place, and towards the end of July the Director of the Division left for Australia to arrange for supplies and their shipment. It was hoped to land the first potatoes in August. But although actual supplies were secured from the Australian Government (through the Commonwealth Potato Marketing Board), all Allied shipping was preparing for the onslaught on Japan. Accordingly no shipping space could be booked from Tasmania until towards the end of August, and then only after representations on the highest plane to the Canadian Government. Two very large shipments were arranged (7,000 tons to Auckland, 3,000