

A few complaints are still being received from woollen-mills and buyers about harmful non-scouring branding-fluids. There are three likely sources of these—namely, old stock-pile wools, old stocks of non-approved branding-materials still in the hands of farmers, and home-made non-scourable branding preparations made up by farmers themselves or approved substances which have been spoilt by the addition of such ingredients as linseed-oil, spirits of turpentine, &c. The first two sources of trouble will automatically right themselves with the passage of time, but the other will be a continuing problem. It appears that, in spite of the publicity given the matter, there are still many who are unaware that it is against the law to use anything other than approved wool-marking preparations. All Inspectors of Stock are now fully aware of this, and their aid has been enlisted in an educational campaign to farmers.

*The Wool-clip.*—The clip for 1948-49 has been for the most part better grown than last year because of the mild climatic conditions over most of the country.

Prices for wool have again been good, with an increasing demand from Canada, India, Russia, Germany, and Japan creating good competition along with better-known clients from England, France, and the United States of America.

Late shearing has been responsible for the number of acquired faults such as seed, burr, and water stain which have shown in later offerings, but growers have not taken as much trouble to skirt or class their clips as in previous years, no doubt because of lack of trained personnel to do the job.

It is very noticeable that when wool which was reasonably well skirted and classed was offered there was very animated competition for it.

North Island : The Auckland clip opened up very well for the first sale. The wool was light in condition and for the most part well grown. There was not much seed or discoloration present, except in the skirtings. The wool from then on, however, acquired faults, the main ones being seed and discoloration, and it was apparent that growers were not taking as much care in the preparation of the clip as previously.

Napier : The first sale at Napier was a two-day one and a very large amount of wool was offered. The "trade" was most enthusiastic about the wool, remarking that it was the best offering for many years. The clip was well grown, light in condition, and of a good colour. Burr was the only fault in some fleece lines and skirtings. At later sales the wool, though still well grown, was dusty and heavier in condition and the seed and burr, which is a curse in Hawkes Bay and Poverty Bay, was very noticeable and depreciated values to some extent.

Wanganui : Wool from the Wanganui district has never had the colour or condition of clips from other districts because there are such a wide diversity of farms and farming methods and such extreme variations in soil types, pastures, and climatic conditions. However, the amount of good wool is improving each year, though many farmers still practice the out-of-date "all in" method when selling their wool.

The wool opened up in fair condition and colour, though most lines were touched with seed and the wool was not well got up for market. The oddments showed seed and water stain from some of the wetter districts.

Wellington : The wool opened up for the first sale at the beginning of December, 1948, in very good condition and colour and with very little vegetable fault. Woolly hoggets were sound in stable and the lambs' wool was attractive but rather short. Except for some inferior clips from the Nelson district, later sales have maintained this record, and growers in the Wellington district have had an excellent year for wool-prices. The oddments were quite good and showed very little seed.