

During the past year many vigneronns have been seeking advice from the Viticulturist on means of improving the quality of wine being manufactured as well as the use of more efficient methods. In March, 1949, 120 vigneronns attended a field-day at the Horticultural Station at Te Kauwhata. The Viticulturist demonstrated cultural practices in the vineyard, such as trellising, pruning, spraying, application of manures, and cultivation with machines. In the wine cellar the vigneronns were shown the technique of wine-manufacture as well as up-to-date equipment. It is proposed to make this field-day at Te Kauwhata an annual fixture.

Numerous wine and cider samples are submitted to the Viticulturist by wine-manufacturers for microscopical examination and report.

TABLE GRAPES

There has been little extension in glasshouse vineries over recent years, mainly because of the high cost of building. About 312 tons of grapes were produced in 1948.

It is estimated that 120 tons of outdoor grapes, mainly Albany Surprise, were marketed for dessert purposes.

NURSERIES

The owners of nurseries who are raising for sale ornamental shrubs, rose-trees, forest trees, fruit trees and plants, and tomato-plants are required to have their nurseries registered before being permitted to sell plants. During 1948-49, 881 nurseries were registered, including 321 tomato nurseries, compared with 810 in the previous season.

COOL STORAGE OF FRUIT

In 1948, 1,027,478 bushel cases of fruit were shipped overseas, made up of 1,005,960 cases of apples and 21,518 cases of pears. This was the first major consignment to the United Kingdom since the beginning of the Second World War.

The overseas shipping companies have brought into commission a number of new ships which have up-to-date equipment for keeping apples and pears in good condition for the United Kingdom market.

Export fruit must be treated with care and not be subjected to transit delays or high temperatures between orchard and shipment.

The 1948 export season was a difficult one, but all fruit was despatched without any serious mishap.

New cool stores with a 500-bushel to 1,000-bushel capacity were built by eight fruit-growers during the year. These stores are a distinct advance and enable growers to cool store fruit immediately it is picked and despatch to market in good condition.

In 1948, 71 fruit cool stores were operating in the Dominion, with a total capacity of 1,232,835 bushel cases. Included in this total are 42 cool stores on orchards—18 in the North Island and 24 in the South Island. On 30th June, 1948, the quantity of fruit held in cool store and stored on orchards was:—

				Cool Storage.	Ordinary Storage.	Total.
				Bushel Cases.	Bushel Cases.	Bushel Cases.
Apples	..	..	..	787,668	60,520	848,188
Pears	..	..	..	104,702	620	105,322
Total	..	..	..	892,370	61,140	953,510