

The price to the grower is fixed by the local Administration on the basis of export realization, less a reasonable profit and handling margin for the traders. Exports are inspected and check-weighed with the firms by the Administration.

Bananas are purchased by the Marketing Department of New Zealand at a fixed price per case for each year. The fruit is all Native grown and is purchased and exported by the local Administration on behalf of the New Zealand Marketing Department. All shipments of bananas are inspected before export by locally trained Niueans.

Small quantities of kumaras are being grown, and it is hoped to have sufficient later in the year to make a trial shipment to New Zealand. Exports in the past have not been large, but have provided an additional source of income for the growers.

The experimental plot of citrus trees imported from Rarotonga and cultivated by the Administration is showing good results and the trees should be in production next year.

A census of agriculture as part of the organization of the Food and Agriculture World Census of Agriculture is to be carried out in Niue during the coming year. It is anticipated that this census will provide additional information on the agricultural potential of the island.

Land Tenure

By the Cook Islands Act, 1915, land is vested in the Crown, subject to Native rights gained and held under ancient custom and usage. Land acquired by the Administration for public purposes represents a negligible part of the whole, and areas in each village used for Church purposes are held on lease to revert to the Native title-holder when no longer employed for those purposes. The ownership and the boundaries of the first type of land, the so-called Native "customary" land, are now generally disputed, and the Native Land Court possesses exclusive jurisdiction to investigate the title to customary land and to determine the relative interests of the owners.

As the Niuean depends for his livelihood upon his family lands, alienation is prohibited, so that there are no land-owners apart from the Administration and the island people. No lease of Native land is for a period exceeding sixty years. The passing of land by will is prohibited. On the death of either parent of a family, the land passes to the children; if there are no children, the land reverts to the family, and is thus passed from generation to generation by blood descent.

This policy of land tenure ensures the Niuean sufficient food and shelter, and money with which to purchase clothing and other necessities. There are differences in the wealth of the families, but under the influence of communal ownership, intermarriage, and the customary adoption of children, these differences lose any significance. Niue offers little encouragement to Europeans to settle.

C. INDUSTRY

The only industries on Niue are those based on Native manual skills, of which mat and hat weaving are examples. Competition from foreign sources of supply has had the effect of diminishing the quantity and value of the exports during the year, and efforts are being made to extend the market for this produce, which is essential to the economy of the island.

D. STANDARD OF LIVING

As recorded last year, there are no details available to measure the national income. The list in Appendix II sets out the current retail prices of the principal items of consumption and may be used for a comparison of costs of living. Although the Niuean population lives largely off the land, the recent tendency, caused by the high prices received for copra, has been for the people to make greater purchases of foodstuffs from the stores. Bread, for instance, is sold in every village of the island, and imported soap and kerosene are now everyday necessities.