

REPORT ON FISHERIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH, 1950

Attention is drawn to the fact that all fisheries statistical data in this report is for the calendar year ended 31st December, 1949.

The estimated total quantity and value of the principal classes of fishery products marketed in the year 1949 are as follows :—

	Quantity.	Value. £
Wet fish	449,903 cwt.	864,332
Whitebait	7,899 cwt.	204,269
Oysters—		
Dredged	97,336 sacks	81,519
Rock	5,076 sacks	8,744
Mussels	14,845 sacks	4,912
Crayfish	36,771 cwt.	99,034
Whale oil	973 tons	36,000
Fish livers	783,307 lb.	31,006
Total values		<u>£1,329,816</u>

The detailed landings are summarized in Tables I to VI (pp. 45 to 58).

The total landings of wet fish show an increase of 3,638 cwt. over the previous year's total of 446,265 cwt., while the total value has increased by £25,998. The quantity of oysters dredged from Foveaux Strait has increased by 2,892 sacks, and the rock oysters have decreased by 617 sacks. The crayfish total is up by 9,541 cwt., and the quantity of mussels is up by 431 sacks.

In the most important group, the "wet fish"—i.e., all the ordinary fishes caught by all methods of sea fishing—the annual totals for successive years are as follows :—

Total Quantity. cwt.	Total Value. £	Total Quantity. cwt.	Total Value. £
1934-35 .. 331,415	294,267	1942-43 .. 311,971	442,976
1935-36 .. 363,448	313,106	1943-44 .. 294,445	489,268
1936-37 .. 363,128	360,406	1944 .. 308,237	522,954
1937-38 .. 355,687	413,516	1945 .. 331,773	558,404
1938-39 .. 356,114	424,643	1946 .. 380,321	660,096
1939-40 .. 339,231	416,480	1947 .. 438,300	802,496
1940-41 .. 328,594	440,308	1948 .. 446,265	838,334
1941-42 .. 326,863	458,393	1949 .. 449,903	864,332

The total weight of wet fish landed 449,903 cwt., although the highest recorded total represents only the small increase of 3,638 cwt. This increase is slightly less than half the increase shown last year. Compared with the great increases in the years immediately following the war, the figures for the last two years show that an increased level of production has been reached as a result of the greatly increased fishing potential to which reference was made in last year's annual report. In the course of the next year or two the effect of this increased fishing potential on the stocks of fish should become apparent.

Reference to the figures above setting out the quantity and value of wet fish landed since 1935 show that the value has risen more steeply than has the quantity. In spite of this, however, a number of the medium and larger units are finding the cost of maintaining this increased fishing potential out of proportion with the increased return to-day. Unfortunately, adequate figures are not available for publication to present the picture showing the cost of the production over these years.