

BRANCHES

AUCKLAND

Apples and Pears.—In view of the smaller crop, the receipts of apples and pears for the Auckland district were less than for the previous year, a total of 214,116 cases being received as against 292,099 cases. The number of cases of apples distributed and sold in this district was 352,000 whilst for pears the total was 94,000.

Agar Agar Seaweed.—Receipts of this seaweed again showed a decline, only 48 tons being received as against 60 tons for the previous year. For the coming year, a freight pool is being established in order that all producers, irrespective of locality, will be put on almost the same financial basis. It is hoped that this step, together with visits to the collecting areas, will increase the quantity of agar next year.

Butter.—The Branch continued to carry out *patting, tinning, and butterfat-drying* on behalf of the Dairy Products Marketing Commission.

The following table shows the quantity of butter processed during the year for local markets and export :—

Butter patting	2,965,189 lb. in 1 lb. and $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. pats.
Tinned butter	{ 1,436,420 lb. in 1 lb. tins.
Butterfat-drying	{ 375,125 lb. in 5 lb. tins.
			676,165 lb.

Eggs.—The receipts for the year showed an increase of 3.29 per cent. 3,095,847 dozen being received as against 2,997,122 dozen for the previous year. Deliveries continued on a zoned area basis through six distributors.

Only 12,930 dozen eggs were *chilled* during the flush of the season whilst egg pulp manufactured locally was 507,600 lb.

Honey.—This Branch is responsible for the running of the honey-blending plant and 370 tons were received during the period. Further details appear elsewhere in this report.

Imported Fruits. The supervision of allocations of these fruits for the Auckland district was again under the control of this Branch.

Lemons.—The Auckland packing-plant, which together with the Kerikeri and Tauranga plants, is controlled by Auckland was overhauled during the year. A total of 268 tons of lemon-peel and 20,288 gallons of lemon-juice was manufactured during the year.

Storage.—In addition to the utilization of the storage space at Auckland for assembling apples and pears, the storage floor was used for storing other products during the off season on behalf of private firms. Products handled on behalf of the Sundry Products Section of the Department included dessicated coconut, canned fruit, and tin.

Milk.—The checking of subsidy claims and vendors' records for Auckland district was again carried out.

Pukekohe Processing Factory

Casein.—Mention was made in the last report that Pukekohe would continue casein drying only until such time as the casein-factories installed their own drying facilities. On the 17th December, 1948, therefore, Pukekohe ceased drying casein, and the amount of rennet casein dried up till that date was 3,654 sacks.

Canning.—The factory processed 461,000 16 oz. cans of peas, 330,000 30 oz. cans of peas, 71,565 16 oz. cans of half carrots and half peas, and 959 30 oz. cans of half carrots and half peas. In addition, 74,000 lb. of peas were quick frozen.

Tomatoes.—Tomatoes were again processed under contract, a total of 666,717 lb. being processed into 12,471 40 lb. cans.

Storage.—56,668 cases of apples and 4,000 cases of pears were cool-stored during the year whilst, on behalf of private firms, a total of 600,000 lb. of onions were dry stored.