

RADIO RESEARCH COMMITTEE

The Committee has continued its work of promoting and co-ordinating radio research activities in New Zealand. Within the Department these are undertaken by the Dominion Physical Laboratory (see p. 30).

Seagrove Radio Research Station.—An applicant from the United Kingdom has been appointed to the post of senior physicist and a formal agreement for the operation of the station has been signed by Auckland University College and the Department. Establishment is now complete and the station has been taken over by the college. Details of the programme of investigations will not be decided until the arrival of the senior physicist.

Meteor Research.—A grant has been made to Canterbury University College to enable Dr. C. Ellyett to undertake investigations by radar methods of meteor showers, velocities, turbulence, and correlation with sporadic E. Equipment for the purpose is now being assembled.

Auroral Photography.—Carter Observatory is commencing a programme of auroral photography financed by grant. Staff has been secured and good progress made in sorting existing records prior to revision and in establishing the camera base-line in Southland.

TOBACCO RESEARCH

Station Director: Mr. R. THOMSON

The weather during the past season was abnormal. The winter rainfall was only moderate, and this was followed by a very dry spring. November was characterized by frequent showers, and this facilitated planting of tobacco and to some extent offset the preceding dry conditions. The latter part of December was wet with occasional low temperatures. Warm dry weather was then experienced for the remainder of the season, night temperatures dropping sharply in March. A severe frost on 13th March killed tobacco in some parts of the district, but the crop at the Station escaped damage.

In the 1948–49 season the tobacco crop on the Station was damaged by hail and on this account the crop was a light one, being only 983 lb. per acre. No data are yet available for the past season, but the crop appears to be average.

RESEARCH PROGRAMME

As in previous years, research work on tobacco was carried out jointly by the staffs of the Tobacco Research Station, the Cawthron Institute, and the Dominion Laboratory.

Work at the Institute included investigations into the nature, dissemination, and control of various diseases, together with disease surveys; studies of the intake of plant nutrients and their effect on the composition of the leaf; chemical analysis of the leaf from the fertilizer plots and from curing experiments; survey of tobacco soils; and investigations into specific soil problems.

Work at the Research Station covered all phases of the crop in the field, starting with seedling-bed methods and treatments, and following through various aspects of fertilizer application, cultural methods, variety trials and seed-production work, plant-breeding, and control of diseases in the field.