

The outlook during the spring was not too bright for those farmers intending to undertake agricultural work. They were unable to get on the land owing to the continuous rains, consequently few crops were sown before the month of October. Most of the cereal crops were drilled at this period. Conditions favourable to the growth of these crops followed immediately, with the result that yields were quite equal to, if not higher than, the average of past seasons. Of all wheats cultivated, the variety Bobs suits this locality better than any other. Among oats Green's Ruakura still holds favour, and an excellent crop has again this year been harvested.

Maize for green feed followed red clover, and a very fine crop resulted. Soft turnips following red clover gave excellent returns, and no difficulty was experienced in keeping this area free from weeds. Mangolds have yielded heavily, and a good crop of swedes has been grown. As in former years, rape was grown for ewes and lambs. Pumpkins for pig-feeding proved highly successful, and over 70 tons were fed to pigs during the autumn.

Demonstrations in the breaking-in of swamp lands with Western Wolths rye-grass are being continued on a larger scale, and about 25 tons of good white-clover hay saved from the last-reclaimed lands will be available for future development-work.

The growing and harvesting of farm seeds received further attention during the year. A fair quantity of red clover, *Lotus major*, cocksfoot, and mangold seed was saved. Mangold-seed will no doubt be difficult to secure next season. Over 2 cwt. has been gathered.

Five years have now elapsed since the commencement of the experiment to determine the influence of artificial manures on the feeding-value of permanent pasture. All details in connection with this experiment were carefully recorded, and the results published from time to time should be of special interest in the Waikato, where top-dressing for maintaining and improving pastures is a problem of great importance.

Live-stock.—Dairy Cattle: The dairy section of the farm has undoubtedly made more progress than any other during the year. The building-up of an improved herd was essential in order that the stock at this station should compare favourably with private herds. Purchases during the year include seventeen pedigree milking Shorthorn cows descended from the old stock originally imported from England by the New Zealand Government. Reference may also be made to the sale of over forty bulls from this station during the last twelve months. The distribution of this stock amongst farmers should prove of great value to the dairying industry. The very great increase in the number of dairy stock now bred and reared at Ruakura is an item which cannot pass unnoticed. To breed is better than to buy, and at the present time it is a correct policy. Apart from a national standpoint, such a course is essential if advancement is to be made in the direction of improving our herds. The addition of over fifty heifer calves this season is a matter worthy of mention, for stock of this quality cannot be bought.

This is the first year that certificates of merit have been awarded for cows at this station completing semi-official records. Seven certificates were gained, two by Jerseys and five by Shorthorns.

Pigs: The herd of pedigree Berkshire pigs is one of the principal adjuncts to the dairy section. While increasing the herd special attention has been given to selection. The young sows kept for stud are splendid types of the breed. When exhibited at the various agricultural and pastoral shows throughout this district the pigs from this station met with much success, and scored every champion ticket in the Berkshire classes.

Sheep: The flocks have again given good returns, and the number of sheep carried increased. Prices obtained for all fat sheep are in advance of those of last year. All fat lambs were cleared early, and realized £1 5s. each net. Owing to the fluctuating and uncertain market for fat lambs the Southdown breed has gone out of favour, and the demand for Southdown rams fell to a low level. As soon as conditions alter, the breed will no doubt come back to the position it held before the war.

Improvements.—Certain small improvements in the way of buildings have been effected during the past year. The building of new poultry-houses as recommended facilitated work in the poultry section. Lack of piggery accommodation is the great difficulty, and without this the handling of the swine herd is no easy problem. More conveniences are urgently required, and new pens, sties, and buildings, even though small, should be erected without delay. Representations for sheep-yards, dip, and shearing-shed have been repeatedly made. The inconvenience of handling sheep without proper yards, and also of shearing under present temporary conditions, is sufficient to warrant some improvement in this direction.

Horticulture, Poultry, and Apiary Sections.—These have been carried on as usual on very up-to-date lines, and have attracted great interest from visitors throughout the year. Detailed reports of operations in progress are available for the information of the public.

Moumahaki Experimental Farm.

From the viewpoint of the agriculturist and pastoralist weather conditions were most favourable. A beautiful autumn was followed by an open winter, and although at times somewhat cold and stormy weather was experienced, generally speaking conditions were seasonable. In the early spring the weather was not so favourable for crops, gales and dry winds being prevalent, thus militating against the growth of the young shoots. There was, however, an abundance of grass, which was ideal for cattle, but somewhat too rank for sheep, considerable losses resulting. Early summer weather was peculiar, but later on conditions improved and harvesting was carried on under splendid conditions.

Live-stock.—With the exception of a rough period during the lambing season, which caused considerable mortality amongst ewes and lambs, live-stock has done well. Cattle fattened readily and realized satisfactory prices. Young Shorthorn stock is progressing, and, given fair treatment