

detail in connection with the existing working-conditions at each place, with the result that a line of policy for the conduct of the farms has been arrived at in conjunction with Dr. Reakes.

Te Kauwhata and Tauranga Horticultural Stations.

We also visited Te Kauwhata and Tauranga Horticultural Stations with Dr. Reakes, and went over the whole of the grounds included in both. After we had discussed the matter subsequent to our inspection we were agreed that Tauranga Station should be continued for a further period of five years before coming to a conclusion as to disposing of it.

The following resolution was passed and forwarded to you:—

“That there is an idea amongst the fruitgrowing settlers at Te Kauwhata that the policy of the Government was to sell the whole property in small fruit-farms, and that thus the whole farm would be a fruit settlement. The report the Board had from a fruit expert was that there was no move in the district to develop the fruitgrowing industry, and on the inspection of the station made by members of the Board they can endorse this. The Department has demonstrated that the land is suitable for general farming, and it is understood that the neighbouring farms are paying under general-farming methods. The vineyard at the station has proved successful and profitable. Considering the demand for land in the district, the Board is of opinion that as the station has served its purpose of demonstrating the capacity of this and similar land, the farm should be disposed of. The receipts from such disposal could be much more profitably employed in connection with fruit demonstration or other farms elsewhere, and should be reserved for this purpose.”

Report on Moumahaki Experimental Farm.

Most of the members have also visited Moumahaki Farm. At our last meeting we had before us some valuable suggestions about this farm, furnished by one of our members who had recently visited the property. As a result of the information supplied a discussion ensued as to the growing of swedes and of rape in the Taranaki District. It was stated that rape grows well but does not seem to ripen, and it does not fatten stock as in other districts. We requested Dr. Reakes to inquire whether anything had been done by his Department in the way of an analysis of swedes and turnips grown in the Taranaki District to ascertain whether the percentage of water in these crops is higher in the North Island than in the South.

The question of lucerne-growing was also fully discussed. The opinion was expressed that as lucerne would prove to be one of the most payable food crops available for stock, further experiments should be carried out at Moumahaki Farm, and it was suggested that these should be in the direction of testing the grazing-qualities of lucerne as compared with ordinary grass pasture, as well as its feeding-value for cattle; also its suitability for pig-feeding either for grazing or ground into meal, and for lamb-feeding chaffed, and in the form of lucerne hay.

TURNIP, SWEDE, AND RAPE SEED SUPPLIES.

At our May, 1918, meeting the Board went very exhaustively into the question of the supply of turnip and swede seeds, as inquiries from merchants had shown that the stocks were seriously below the probable requirements for the coming season. The following cables to and from the High Commissioner in London in connection with this matter were referred to us for consideration:—

(1.) From Prime Minister to High Commissioner, dated 23rd February, 1918:—

“Government without definite information that British shipping permits will be granted for supplies of turnip and rape seeds for 1919 season. Matter extremely important, and unless New Zealand Government assured no difficulty obtaining these seeds from overseas sufficient turnip and rape will have to be sown in New Zealand to supply whole our requirements for 1919 season. Ascertain position from Shipping Controller and reply by telegram as soon as possible.”

(2.) From High Commissioner to Prime Minister, dated 27th February, 1918:—

“With reference to your telegram 23rd February, seeds, have continuously pressed for release of full quantities ordered, and have obtained export license in all cases for upwards of 50 per cent. Attitude authorities is that there is shortage in supply of seeds of food plants, and the necessity for reserving sufficient to meet Home requirements compels restriction of export even to British possessions, but they assure me New Zealand's application will receive most sympathetic consideration. Mustard, clover, cauliflower, brussels sprouts, leek, parsnip, onion entirely refused. Some further applications now under consideration, and some others have yet to be submitted. Will telegraph result when decisions in all cases have been given. Meanwhile impossible to obtain assurance that all orders will be released in full. Shipping Controller is not affected: seeds are controlled by Food-production Department.”

Mr. Pope, Secretary of Agriculture, informed us that on the suggestion of Mr. Cockayne, Biologist of the Department, a census of the Brassica seed held by merchants in the Dominion as at April, 1918, had been taken, and the following information had been obtained:—

	Amount held in Store in New Zealand.	Amount ordered direct from United Kingdom for 1918 Requirements.	Usual Annual Requirements.
	Cwt.	Cwt.	Cwt.
Turnip	2,647	4,133	6,671
Swede	1,273	2,224	3,202
Rape	9,564	3,104	12,170