

yield per acre was above average. We should therefore be again independent of auxiliary importations of this important product. Official statistics regarding other arable crops for the past season are not available at date of writing.

The leading feature of rural New Zealand to-day is perhaps its grass-land farming, for which nature has peculiarly fitted the country. Increasing attention is being given to this great phase of agriculture as regards both pasture constituents and pasture management, together with promotion of fertility by means of manurial top-dressing. The agrostologist, the live-stock agriculturist, the chemist, and the field experimentalist all have their share in the work of improvement along these lines. Problems are being better apprehended, and valuable light thrown on various points of difficulty. In regard to artificial fertilizers, New Zealand is fortunate in having an assured and ample supply of all-important phosphates, through our share in the Nauru and Ocean Island deposits.

The fruitgrowing industry, after a somewhat prolonged period of depression, now appears to be really on its feet and steadily gaining in strength and resources. The apple-export trade for the current year has so far been attended with success, and indications are that the average returns will prove to be the highest yet attained by our shippers. Local trade in the main fruits has also shown improvement, and better results are being obtained in the cool storing of keeping varieties for the late demand. State assistance rendered at various points has proved of great benefit to the industry generally. Viticulture, and various lesser lines of horticultural production, are quietly prospering.

The poultry industry continues to hold its own, notwithstanding admitted difficulties caused chiefly by the comparatively high prices of the standard feeding-stuffs. The egg-export trade to the British market, established in the preceding season, was successfully followed up in the year under review with increased shipments, payable prices being secured for all consignments of standard-weight goods. There seems to be considerable room for greater adaptation and elasticity in the feeding of poultry, so as to secure less dependence on wheat and its by-products. Experiments carried out by the Department some time ago, and duly recorded, indicated the possibilities in this direction. The claims of the poultry industry for sympathetic State co-operation, as a very considerable source of food-supply and income, are duly recognized. The Poultry Act, introduced and passed during last year's session of Parliament, should prove of distinct benefit to the industry.

The hemp (phormium-fibre) industry has experienced quite a good year. The overseas markets for this product remained at a remunerative level during the period under review, and production showed a substantial increase. It is a pity, however, from all points of view, that more of the mills are not turning out a higher average quality of fibre. Bearing on this matter, there appears to be a decided lack of organized training in the more skilled positions of milling, and an undue persistence of the casual element in connection with the industry generally. In venturing this observation the efficient operation of the industry in many directions is not lost sight of.

By the passing of the Fruit Control and the Honey-export Control Acts, the year has seen an extension of the policy of control as applied to the Dominion's overseas trade. The first-named measure also embodied local control, but only the export section was adopted at the poll of producers. Export Control Boards under both Acts were duly elected. The Dairy-produce Export Control Board, constituted in 1923, has now, after due consideration, formulated its policy, and may be trusted to use its best efforts for the welfare of the industry. The Board has already done good service in connection with marine insurance on dairy-produce, and in other respects. The Meat-producers' Board has continued to do excellent work for our frozen-meat trade, both in New Zealand and in London. A measure of co-operation between the Board and the newly constituted Food Council in England appears likely to be brought about in the near future.

With a view to formulating definite measures for the advancement of agricultural education in the Dominion, the Board of Agriculture was requested during the year to undertake an inquiry into the several phases of this question. The Board—to which was attached a representative each of the Departments of Agri-