

prove of material aid towards the continued advancement and improvement of the industry. As regards dairying, the Department of Agriculture's laboratory at Wallaceville deals only with routine matters associated with the dairy work of the Department's officers, but in this work keeps in touch with the other establishments.

AGRICULTURAL INSTRUCTION.

The dominating feature of the progress of the Department during recent years has been its development along the lines of instructional and advisory services. In these the whole of the Divisions are equally concerned, and the demand on the part of farmers for the extension of all phases of instruction along lines of sound and economic management is gratifying, clearly indicating that these services are recognized as playing an important part in agricultural development generally. All instructional officers have had an extremely busy year.

BOYS' AND GIRLS' AGRICULTURAL CLUBS.

This movement is expanding rapidly, particularly in the South Island, where up to the present time staff limitations precluded sufficient attention being paid to it. Southland and Otago are now well organized, and a start is being made in Canterbury, where it is felt the movement will rapidly develop and prove especially popular. The value of these clubs in promoting agricultural keenness, not only among members but also among the farming community generally, is well illustrated in Taranaki and western Wellington, where clubs have now been established for some years. During the year under review there have been over four thousand competitors doing club work.

THE FRUIT INDUSTRY.

The fruit-export industry continues to make satisfactory progress. The export figures for the 1929 season, although somewhat lower than those of the previous season, were the second-highest on record, and the prices realized were quite satisfactory to the producer.

The 1930 apple crop has been the heaviest so far recorded, and the fruit generally is of excellent appearance and condition. This season's export will no doubt constitute a record. However, there is some little doubt as to the final market returns being altogether satisfactory to the grower, owing to the hold-over of a large quantity of last season's American fruit, plus heavy shipments from the Australian States flooding the English and Continental markets.

The need for economy in the cost of fruit-production and cheaper and better means of transportation has given rise to a movement towards the establishment of a Fruit Research Station, where practical and scientific research might be undertaken with a view to improving existing orchard practices, such as varieties, stocks, disease-control, cool storage, &c. In co-operation with the Research Department, together with promised assistance by the Empire Marketing Board and fruitgrowers' organizations, the question of establishing such a station is being actively gone into.

It is alleged by those in the trade that, despite the activities of departmental Inspectors and the prosecutions instituted by the Department on account of false packing, there is a growing tendency on the part of a certain section of producers to place both fruit and vegetables on the market packed in a manner calculated to deceive the buyer. In consequence of this both retailers' and producers' organizations have asked that the matter be fully inquired into, together with the whole question of the packing and marketing of fruit and vegetables throughout the Dominion. It will be of advantage if this can be done.

THE INSTITUTE OF HORTICULTURE.

The New Zealand Institute of Horticulture, which is a national organization receiving sympathetic and practical assistance from the Government and officers of the Horticulture Division, is continuing to make satisfactory progress. One of the principal aims of the Institute is in the direction of horticultural education. The Institute's scheme of education, designed to impart to the student theoretical and practical instruction in horticulture, is in active operation in the main centres, where a number of students are taking the course.