

Progress of Development.

The areas of blocks comprised in titles favourably recommended by the field officers, on which Cabinet approved estimates of expenditure to the 31st March, 1931, were as follows :—

Name of Scheme.	Number of Units.	Area owned or occupied.	Area in Pasture.	Dairy Cows.
		Acres.	Acres.	
Maugonui	79	6,625	2,325	251
Hokianga	58	4,431	2,262	248
Bay of Islands	61	7,245	2,375	280
Kaipara	14	1,049	485	24
	212	19,350	7,447	803

Some of the units recommended and approved did not receive assistance in the financial year for which the estimates were framed. The area owned or occupied was the total area comprised in the titles, but included lands not considered developable. The area estimated to be in pasture when the provisions of the development legislation were applied comprised much of poor quality, or which had reverted partially to fern and scrub. The stock figures for Kaipara were incomplete. Yearlings and calves were not included in the stock tally.

The area in pasture of sorts was closely estimated by the field officers in view of the demand by units for dairy stock. The approved estimates provided for the purchase of 1,215 dairy cows and heifers, thus increasing the number to be milked in that season to two thousand. The Maoris assisted were required to repair existing fences or to complete ring fences and subdivisions; also to recondition as much as possible of pasture land and to prepare new ground for pasturing in the autumn. The estimated costs of stock and material were on the delivered basis, which in the case of cows and heifers on the drop were on the high side in the spring of 1930. The cattle purchases were, however, completed to delivery at an average of two guineas below the estimate; 1,358 were purchased and delivered at an actual cost of £11,590, as against an estimated cost for 1,217 (including two bulls) of £13,540.

The fact that the development funds assumed no responsibility for labour costs left the extent of clearing and cultivation or the general work of preparing for pasture to the initiative of the settlers. Individuals who had been passed over in the 1930 recommendations strove hard to qualify for admission in the 1931-32 Budget. Their efforts combined with those of the units approved in 1930, were reflected in the grass-seed requirements for sowing in the autumn of 1931.

The position at the end of the financial year 1930-31 was as follows, the estimated and actual expenditure being given :—

Expenditure (Estimated and Actual) to 31st March, 1931.

Particulars.	Estimated.		Actual.	
	Quantity.	Value.	Quantity.	Value.
		£		£
Purchase of stock	1,217	13,540	1,358	11,590
Grass-seed	147½ acres	330	2,102 acres	2,222
Fencing material—				
Wire	1,186 cwt.	1,200	1,176 cwt.	1,268
Posts .. .. .	..		1,025	
Strainers .. .. .	..		36	
Fertilizers	122 tons	720	120 tons	591
Dairy utensils—				
Separators	104	1,795	104	1,706
Cans	168		196	
Sundries—				
Implements .. .. .	..	..	..	65
Liabilities .. .. .	..	..	11 accounts	300
Freights .. .. .	..	..	..	133
Miscellaneous .. .. .	..	705	..	9
		18,290		17,884
Less sales .. .. .	..	..	..	240
				17,644
Add interest .. .. .	..	..	..	420
Total .. .. .	..	18,290	..	18,064

Of the total shown as actual expenditure, £1,580 was not paid until after the end of the financial year.

The Year 1931-32.

It was anticipated that in the second year the provision to be made would greatly exceed that of the first year. The Farm Supervisors assisted by the Consolidation Officers were continuously at work from January until the end of March, 1931, taking applications for assistance, analysing and reporting on the same. The number of applications was very heavy and kept mounting up. The