

VITICULTURE AND WINEMAKING.

Humid weather experienced in the Northern grape-growing districts was against the development of wine grapes, and as a result the crop was below the average. In the Hawke's Bay District, however, excellent conditions prevailed, and a heavy crop of well-ripened grapes was gathered. With the coming into bearing of newly-planted areas it is estimated the season's output of wine will be in the vicinity of 104,550 gallons—a slight increase on last year's figures, and representing a wholesale value of £36,592. An increase is noticeable in the area planted in table grapes, the crop of which was above the average, especially in the case of the Albany Surprise variety. Good crops were secured by growers of grapes under glass, and a number of new vineries were erected during the year.

CIDER-MAKING.

The quantity of cider manufactured from the 1932 apple crop is estimated at 40,000 gallons, valued for commercial purposes at £10,000.

TE KAUWHATA HORTICULTURAL STATION (LOWER WAIKATO).

Climatic conditions were favourable to farming operations and growth generally throughout the year. Abundant feed was available for grazing purposes, a quantity being turned into hay for future requirements. Six acres of cleared wattle land was laid down in grass for pasturing. The returns from the sale of live-stock, wool, and skins amounted to £228.

Good weather was experienced during the growth and development of the grape crop, from which 8,200 gallons of wine was made. Sales of wine amounted to 8,543 gallons, which realized £4,119, a considerable increase on the previous year's figures. This was no doubt in a large measure due to the wine being now made available for sale from depots established in the main centres of the Dominion.

TOBACCO-CULTURE.

Considerable expansion has taken place in the growing of tobacco, the total area under this crop in the Dominion having now reached 3,154 acres. The main progress has taken place in the Motueka district, Nelson, which has proved eminently adapted for the production of tobacco. In this locality some seven hundred growers were engaged in tobacco-growing on a commercial scale during the past season, the area cultivated being approximately 2,500 acres, which produced an estimated yield of 2,000,000 lb. of leaf, of an approximate value of £170,000. About 150 kilns are operating in the Motueka district for the flue-drying of the leaf. The industry is also making good progress in the Auckland District, where some 590 acres are under cultivation, and to a lesser extent in Marlborough, the area in this district being 63 acres. Satisfactory progress is being made in the culture of tobacco at the Pongakawa Settlement in the Bay of Plenty District, where twenty families have been settled under the Small Farm Plan.

The bulk of the leaf at present grown in the Dominion is raised under contract to the local manufacturing companies at satisfactory prices to the grower. A commencement has not yet been made in the export of tobacco leaf, this phase of the industry being entirely dependent on a satisfactory overseas market being found for any surplus not needed for New Zealand requirements. Any person intending to take up tobacco-growing commercially is therefore strongly advised not to commence operations before making satisfactory arrangements for the ultimate disposal of his crop.

A further quantity of tobacco-seed was produced during the past season on the plot established in the Auckland District, the operations being carried out under the supervision of the Department's Instructor in Tobacco Culture.

HOP-CULTURE.

The season's production of hops was quite up to the average and the quality good, very little disease being apparent. Owing to the unstable market, there has been a considerable falling off in the area grown under hops during recent years. A more hopeful outlook is, however, now being manifested, and there are indications of the acreage being increased in the near future. The quantity of hops exported from the Dominion during the year ended 31st March was 3,192 cwt., valued at £13,793.

TUNG OIL.

Considerable advancement has been made during the year in the planting-out of tung-oil plants in the North Auckland district, where a number of companies are operating, the area already planted comprising several thousand acres. While some of the plantations appear to be progressing satisfactorily, it is not possible to give an expression of opinion as to the future prospects until such time as the trees reach a bearing stage and nuts are available for analysis, testing, and sale.

NEW ZEALAND INSTITUTE OF HORTICULTURE.

Good progress continues to be made by the New Zealand Institute of Horticulture, and many matters of considerable importance connected with horticulture generally received attention during the year. The educational scheme inaugurated by the Institute has been further extended to include