

Estate, and twenty-one dairy-farms on the Ngakuru Block, to enable selectors to commence operations during the forthcoming season, but the uncertain outlook in respect to the dairy industry has precluded attainment of this project. In the meantime, share milkers will be established on the available dairying land on the Galatea Estate, and the pasture on the Ngakuru Block, additional to that comprising the twelve share-milking farms and the Demonstration Farm, will be grazed by the Department.

The satisfactory prices ruling during the year for stock and wool have enabled the Board to realize profits in respect to farming operations undertaken on all the blocks where sheep comprise the major portion of stock carried, after allowing for interest on the purchase price of the land and the cost of developmental work.

New loans to Crown tenants under the provisions of the Act have been granted in fifty cases, but additional loans for improvements and for live-stock and chattels have been approved also. A total of 455 tenants have now been assisted, loans approved totalling £188,008.

Pursuant to section 10 of the Land Laws Amendment Act, 1929, the following summary of operations up to 31st March, 1934, is recorded :—

(a) *The several Areas of Unoccupied Crown Lands in respect of which Development Works have been undertaken during the Year.*

*Auckland Land District :—*

Ngakuru Block of 14,755 acres of light pumice land, fifteen miles from Rotorua : This block, of which 4,325 acres are being developed, will provide about fifty dairy-farms. Twelve share milkers are established and a demonstration farm is operated by the Department. Total butterfat production on the share-milking farms for the year was 171,650 lb., or 107 lb. per acre of grass, and, on the demonstration farm, 16,545 lb., or 186 lb. per acre of grass. The number of cows on the share-milking farms was 850, and, on the demonstration farm, sixty. The Department has run dry stock on the remainder of the grassed area pending offering the sections for selection. The Agriculture Department has supervised the developmental and farming work on this block.

Onepu Block, of 2,536 acres pumice land, near Te Teko, Bay of Plenty : This block will provide twenty-seven farms, including twelve farms under the Small Farms Scheme. The development of this block has been outstandingly successful. The land, exclusive of buildings, was taken up at an average value of £8 13s. 3d. per acre, which was sufficient to cover costs of development.

Galatea Estate, of 22,326 acres, near Murupara : This is a purchased estate being developed with a view to ultimate settlement for dairying. Twenty sections were prepared for selection this year, but, in view of the present low prices and the uncertain prospects of the dairy industry, the offering was withheld. Ten share milkers are being placed on the sections for the forthcoming season. A demonstration farm was established during the past year, to illustrate the possibilities of the land.

The remainder of the block has been farmed by the Department. The stock comprises 9,935 sheep, 2,856 lambs, and 2,181 cattle. On the year's operations a net profit of £4,421 was obtained after charging interest on expenditure and on purchase price.

At 31st March, 4,738 acres had been laid down in grass and 75 miles 24 chains of fencing had been erected. Eleven farm cottages were erected during the course of the year, and a water-supply scheme installed to serve 6,000 acres of the estate.

Whangamarino Block, of 842 acres, near Mercer : This block has been handed over to the Small Farms Board, which is arranging for its settlement. Development work has been completed. The cost per acre of clearing, cultivation, grassing, fencing, and water-supply for 795 acres of grass was £10 19s. 6d. Nine settlers will be established.

Pongakawa Block, of 930 acres, flax-swamp land in Bay of Plenty : This block will provide for ten dairy-farms and eight "run-off" sections. During the year 4 miles 68 chains of new drains were constructed and 2 miles 5 chains of existing drains deepened ; 122 acres were cleared of scrub.

*Hawke's Bay Land District—*

Kakariki Estate, a purchased estate of 17,688 acres at Kotemaori : This block is intended to provide ten holdings for sheep-farming ; 3,159 acres of new grass have been laid down, and approximately 3,300 acres are in course of preparation for sowing. The Department has farmed the estate during the year. Stock carried comprised 11,410 sheep and lambs, 596 cattle. A net profit was made on the year's operations of £1,388 after charging interest on expenditure and on purchase price.

*Taranaki Land District—*

Tapuwae Estate, of 3,350 acres, a purchased estate in the King-country : This block is estimated to provide approximately eleven mixed farms ; 2,260 acres are being developed, and 2,054 acres have been laid in grass at a cost of £5 10s. per acre. The estate is being farmed by the Department in the meantime. Stock carried comprises 3,800 sheep and 850 cattle. On the year's operations a profit of £105 was made after charging interest on expenditure and on purchase price.