

1935.
NEW ZEALAND.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE.

ANNUAL REPORT FOR 1934-35.

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.

Wellington, 28th August, 1935.

SIR,—

I have the honour to forward herewith, for your Excellency's information, the report of the Department of Agriculture for the financial year ended 31st March, 1935.

The report provides a summary of the principal farming developments of the year and of the comprehensive and numerous activities of the Department in the work of fostering the growth and maintenance of rural industries in the manner most compatible with the national well-being. It shows that the work of the Department has followed generally the lines that have been adopted in recent years, and that it has been associated with considerable advances in our agriculture in point of both quantity and quality of produce. Apart from the regulatory services, fresh ground has been broken in investigations relative to animal and plant husbandry, and by close interlocking of this work with the advisory work of the Department satisfactory progress has been made in the translation of our knowledge, new and otherwise, into practice.

In rural industries, despite a prolonged adverse summer period in many districts, the volume of production has been well maintained at a point that indicates increased production capacity under normal seasonal conditions, which reflects most commendable efficiency of our farmers when facing relatively difficult and sometimes even depressing conditions. Indeed a close knowledge of the developments in our farming during the past five years or so suggests that the achievements in farming have reached a plane which farmers themselves a few years ago would have said could not be attained.

During the year the upward trend in the number of sheep, including an increase in the number of breeding-ewes, has been maintained, while at the same time the number of lambs slaughtered for export has increased. A relatively small increase in the number of dairy cows in the Dominion has been linked with a fairly substantial decline in the amount of butterfat produced—this as a direct result of the unfavourable summer in the main dairying districts. The decrease in the production of butterfat resulted in a decrease of £1,413,014 in the value of butter and cheese exported.

A marked feature of the year was the decline in the value of wool exported—in the year ended 30th June, 1935, 582,763 bales, valued at £6,327,793, were exported, whereas in the corresponding previous year 822,396 bales, valued at £13,287,458, were exported. However, the stocks of wool in the Dominion at the 30th June, 1935, were greater than at the corresponding date in recent previous years.