

This scheme is still in the developmental stage, and is maintaining thirty-one adults and forty-seven minors. During the past year two units have been milking and supplying the dairy factory, and the scheme has provided work for twenty-three Maoris.

Ragwort is the only noxious weed of any consequence, and this has been kept well in check by pulling and spraying with sodium chlorate. A few patches of gorse along the river bank will be grubbed during the coming year. The only water-supply is provided by creeks, drains, and the Rangitaiki River; every endeavour is made to arrange fencing in order that each paddock has its own supply of water.

The scheme is at present carrying 407 wethers, which will be sold as fats during the autumn, and 110 three-year in calf Jersey cross heifers have recently been purchased for milking during the following season. During the year 125 bullocks were purchased and sold, and 500 hoggets and 170 ewes were grazed from Ngatiawa scheme.

Now that the results of development are becoming apparent the Natives are taking more interest in the working of their scheme. Six units will be established with herds during the 1936-37 season, when the approximate number of cows to be milked will be 180.

Whakatohea (including Hinahinanui).

Members of the Whakatohea tribe are located on this scheme, which comprises a total area of 2,446 acres situated in the Opotiki district. Of this area it is proposed to develop about 2,000 acres, and at present 1,188 acres are in pasture, and 110 acres in rough feed. The number of units who are milkers and suppliers to the dairy factory is 33, and including dependants, the scheme maintains 83 adults and 138 minors.

At the end of the year under review, the stock returns were as follows: 48 bulls, 805 cows, 52 heifers, 100 heifer weaners (natural increase reared), and 53 working horses. Field reports indicate that the dairy stock wintered well considering the heavy frosts experienced on the table lands and the unfavourable weather which extended well into September. Since then good climatic conditions have prevailed, and the milk supplied has been satisfactory. All dairying-herds were inspected during the year, and all diseased unprofitable cows culled. With the exception of a few cases of mammitis, very little disease was noticed, and units have been given proper instruction in the treatment of affected stock. The grasslands have received careful attention during the year, and the quality and quantity of feed grown has been exceptionally good, due no doubt to the improved methods of grassing, manuring, and general pasture-management carried out by the units. As in the case of other schemes in the coastal district, settlers have experienced great difficulty in harvesting their hay crops owing to continual rains, but the majority of the units have been able to save one or more stacks of hay or ensilage, and others who have not made any provision for winter, have on hand maize stalks or areas in rough grass which can be used during the winter. The housing conditions of the settlers have been improved by the erection of sixteen cottages during the year, but there is still a number of cases where units are living in huts and dilapidated whares. Provision will be made in the estimates for the coming season for the erection of a further ten cottages.

Development operations undertaken during the year included 945 chains of new fencing, 316 chains of new draining, 105 acres bushfelling and scrubbing, 51 acres surface sowing in pasture, 133 acres ploughing and sowing down in pasture. For fencing, 2,340 posts and 10,600 battens were supplied and packed to the lines. Ragwort is still noticeable on the river-beds, but is kept under control by spraying with sodium chlorate.

The general standard and cleanliness of dairy-sheds and utensils is good, and the grading of cream supplied from the majority of the holdings has been satisfactory. The following butterfat table is supplied:—

	Season 1932-33.	Season 1933-34.	Season 1934-35.	Season 1935-36.
Recorded number of cows milked	330	419	341	487
Total butterfat supplied	61,869 lb.	77,717 lb.	61,060 lb.	80,079 lb.
Average yield per cow	181 lb.	185 lb.	176 lb.	165 lb.
Average value of butterfat per cow ..	£8 1s. 0d.	£6 17s. 9d.	£7 5s. 6d.	£6 8s. 6d.

NOTE.—The figures for 1935-36 are to the 31st March only. As the season does not end until the 31st May the average should be over 185.

Opape Base Farm.

This farm was established as a base for the breeding and supplying of dairy stock to the Native settlers in the Bay of Plenty district. The total area is 1,072 acres, of which approximately 800 acres are suitable for development. At the 31st March last 275 acres were in permanent pasture, 50 acres in rough feed, 5 acres in lucerne, 23 acres in turnips, 3 acres in maize, and 12 acres in millet. The land is a portion of the Opape Block, situated eight miles from Opotiki on the Coast road to Cape Runaway, and was under lease for a term of forty-two years from the 1st July, 1920. The lessee's interest was acquired by the Department in July, 1931.