

The quantities in the principal classes of exports for the last six years have been as follows :—

—	1931-32.	1932-33.	1933-34.	1934-35.	1935-36.	1936-37.
	Cwt.	Cwt.	Cwt.	Cwt.	Cwt.	Cwt.
Frozen fish .. ..	14,098	19,854	34,738	46,714	54,267	50,727
Fish smoked, dried, pickled, or salted	638	521	1,243	1,968	2,519	3,724
Fish potted or preserved in tins—	lb.	lb.	lb.	lb.	lb.	lb.
Oysters .. ..	69,479	51,620	128,028	95,270	172,855	331,747
Other kinds .. ..	112,186	103,186	384,282	184,148	174,438	160,994

Blue-cod exports show a decline of 24·4 per cent. in quantity and 18·5 per cent. in value ; flounder have decreased by 37·3 per cent. in quantity and 11·4 per cent. in value ; the exports of snapper, however, show an increase of 34·5 per cent. in quantity and 84·5 per cent. in value, the disparity between the increments of quantity and value in this case being largely due to the above-mentioned trade in filleted fish.

Of canned fishery products the considerable increase in oysters shown last year is well maintained, the total being almost double in quantity and more than double in value in comparison with last year's figures. Toheroa and whitebait exports have also increased, but canned crayfish shows a substantial decline.

#### ROCK OYSTERS.

As in 1935, the direction of the oyster-picking operations for the 1936 season was attended by difficulties arising from the great preponderance of young oysters on the beds, which were not sufficiently grown to be removed and which were liable to damage by the removal of those that were marketable. This condition was most marked in the Bay of Islands. Picking began on the 4th June, and the last shipment for the season arrived at the Auckland Depot on the 21st August. Weather conditions were generally much more favourable than during the previous winter, and the work of collection and transport from the beds was conducted with efficiency, for which credit is due to the Senior Inspector of Fisheries, in general charge, and to the local Inspectors, overseers, and pickers in the different areas of supply.

The numbers of sacks marketed from each area was as follows : Bay of Islands, 1,197 ; Kaipara, 350 ; Hauraki Gulf, 1,583 (Takatu - Gull Point, 138 ; Kawau, 120 ; Rakino, 89 ; Rangitoto, 368 ; Motutapu, 122 ; Waiheke, 353 ; Ponui, 365 ; the Noisies, 7 ; Crusoe's Island, 21) ; Coromandel, 403 ; Great Barrier Island, 500 : total, 4,033 sacks (of 3 bushels each). The gross proceeds from sales amounted to £4,965.

Since 1922 the beds in Whangarei Harbour have been picked for two seasons and then left for one, and 1936 was a year when no oysters were obtained from here. The beds in this harbour were reported to be in a disappointing condition. It is to be expected that this condition will prevail until whole-time surveillance is provided, with the continuous attention to both cultivation and protection that can only be forthcoming by the appointment of an Inspector competent to attend to these matters. Whangarei Harbour is one of the most promising areas within reasonable access to markets where there is scope for increasing rock-oyster production.

#### OYSTER-CULTIVATION.

The usual operations have been conducted in connection with the destruction of pests and the cleaning of the beds, most attention to constructive work on a major scale having been given to the Kaipara Harbour, where there is most scope for it and the best prospects of profitable results. The details of the work done during the year are shown in the following statement :—

##### *Work done, Area, and Cost :—*

- I. Bay of Islands : 559,200 borers and 1,690 pupus destroyed ; 12,995 square yards of rock cleared of weed, and 17 square yards of new rock-face exposed by blasting ; 29 square yards of drift bed formed. Cost, £100.
- III. Kaipara : 23,250 square yards of clean stone laid down and 1,815 square yards of stone turned. Cost, £499 10s.
- IV. Takatu to Gull Point : 206,800 borers and 285 pupus destroyed ; 110 square yards of rock cleared of dead shell. Cost, £2 8s.
- V. South Shore, Tamaki Strait : 157,200 borers and 93 pupus destroyed ; 360 square yards of rock cleared of dead shell. Cost, £5 12s.
- VI. Coromandel : 337,557 borers destroyed ; 1,500 square yards of rock cleared of weed ; 190 pumice-concrete posts, with transplanted young oysters, erected. Cost, £25.
- VII. Kawau : 87,400 borers and 71 pupus destroyed ; 300 pumice-concrete posts erected and 10 re-erected. Cost, £48 17s. 9d.
- X. Motutapu : 164,000 borers and 95 pupus destroyed. Cost, £4.
- XII. Motuihi : 234,000 borers destroyed. Cost, £4 16s.
- XIII. Waiheke : 880,200 borers and 1,133 pupus destroyed ; 2,654 square yards of rock cleared of weed and 2,373 square yards of dead shell. Cost, £36 16s.