

“In spite of the difficulty of obtaining complete root kills of the ragwort, the use of sodium chlorate is undoubtedly enabling many farmers to replace almost pure stands of ragwort by productive pasture swards. Often large numbers of small ragwort-plants come up from live roots. In sheep pastures these remain small and harmless. Dairy-farmers have, by treatment of regrowth, changed badly infested areas into comparatively ragwort-free pastures. On the other hand, much of what has been attributed to re-seeding is undoubtedly the result of incomplete root kills.”

SAMPLES RECEIVED FOR ANALYSIS DURING THE YEAR.

<i>Wellington Laboratory—</i>				Dips .. .. .	19
Field crops .. .. .	13	Limestones .. .. .	293	Soils .. .. .	300
Animal organs for trace elements .. .. .	103	Thyroids .. .. .	3	Miscellaneous .. .. .	60
Pig-carcass specimens .. .. .	11				— 2,233
Butters .. .. .	32	<i>Ruakura Laboratory—</i>			
Pastures for trace elements .. .. .	255	Soil samples for chlorate deter-			
Pastures for Fields Division .. .. .	253	minations .. .. .	49	Soil samples for moisture deter-	
Sugar Beets .. .. .	392	minations .. .. .	47	Pasture samples for dry matter	
Fruit-tree leaves .. .. .	160	determinations .. .. .	20		116
Fertilizers .. .. .	32			Total .. .. .	2,349
Stock foods .. .. .	38				
Limonites .. .. .	30				
Toxicological specimens .. .. .	185				
Waters .. .. .	41				
Stock Remedies .. .. .	13				

NAURU AND OCEAN ISLANDS PHOSPHATE.

REPORT OF A. F. ELLIS, C.M.G., NEW ZEALAND COMMISSIONER, BRITISH PHOSPHATE COMMISSION. DETAILS of operations at Nauru and Ocean Islands for the eighteenth year under Government ownership are supplied herewith. The year terminated on 30th June last, and the shipments as compared with the two previous years are as follows :—

	1935-36. Tons.	1936-37. Tons.	1937-38. Tons.
Nauru .. .. .	506,600	577,600	836,250
Ocean Island .. .. .	319,779	429,000	329,850
Total .. .. .	826,379	1,006,600	1,166,100

It will be noted that the two previous years' figures which established records considerably above any former years have again been exceeded, the total of 1,166,100 tons being up by 159,500 tons. A still further increase is aimed at for the present year, as the demand for phosphatic fertilizers in New Zealand and Australia continues to expand rapidly. This is instanced by the following figures giving the distribution of shipments for the three years :—

	1935-36. Tons.	1936-37. Tons.	1937-38. Tons.
United Kingdom .. .. .	6,000	17,225	15,650
Australia .. .. .	561,200	683,475	771,150
New Zealand .. .. .	192,879	243,400	290,300
Other countries .. .. .	66,300	62,500	89,000
	826,379	1,006,600	1,166,100

The proportion of output which came to New Zealand was 24·9 per cent., as compared with 23·34 per cent. for 1935-36 and 24·18 per cent. for 1936-37.

Importations to New Zealand compared with the two previous years are : 1935-36, 199,237 tons ; 1936-37, 246,778 tons ; 1937-38, 293,830 tons.

During the year under review very favourable weather conditions have again been experienced ; the health of the Island staffs and labourers has been good, and there have been few labour troubles.

The mining and artificial drying-plant and the shipping arrangements at both Islands have given excellent service under heavy pressure. In view of the expanding demand it has been decided to materially increase the plant facilities during the next few years.

The Commission's m.v. "Triaster" and s.s. "Triona" continue to make fast trips between Australia and New Zealand and the Islands, the former having now delivered a total of thirty-seven cargoes and the latter seventy-one in the two countries, besides doing any necessary mooring and labour recruiting work at the Islands.

The new m.v. "Trienza," owned by the Commission, with a phosphate-carrying capacity of 9,300 tons, entered the trade early in April, and making fast trips has already delivered three cargoes in Australia. Her next trip will be to Auckland in July. A fourth vessel, the "Triadic," a sister ship of "Trienza," is due at the Islands early in July on her maiden voyage.

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