

PART IV.—NATIVE TRUST ACTIVITIES.

The farming operations of the Native Trustee are classified as follows :—

- (1) On Native lands vested under section 25 of the Native Trustee Act, 1930, and occupied for the purpose of carrying on any agricultural or pastoral business for the benefit of the owners.
- (2) On farm properties which have been acquired under mortgage, or in respect of which the Native Trustee is mortgagee in possession.
- (3) On Native estates in respect of which the Native Trustee has been appointed administrator or trustee.

Pursuant to the Board of Native Affairs Act, 1934–35, the Board exercises a general control over the financial operations of the Native Trustee, including the investment on mortgage or otherwise of moneys available in the Trustee’s Account and over the expenditure on all farming activities undertaken or approved by the Trustee either before or after the passing of this Act. By virtue of section 7 of that Act, the farming operations are reviewed annually by the Board of Native Affairs, when budgets are considered and expenditure proposals are approved.

Consequent upon the extension, as from 1st June, 1938, of the decentralization policy of the Native Department, with which the Native Trust Office has been amalgamated since 1934, the following shows the various stations grouped under the district offices, which now exercise the administration, supervision, and detailed management of the properties :—

Stations.							Controlling Office.
Aohanga	} Head Office.
Motuweka	..	..	..	..	..	..
Tiratu	..	..	..	..	..	..
Hakurenga	..	..	..	..	..	..
Hereheretau	} Gisborne.
Hikuwai	..	..	..	..	..	..
Hoia	..	..	..	..	..	..
Tawhiti	..	..	..	..	..	..
Tawanui	Auckland.

The following statistical information is supplied in respect of farms and stations under administration and which are vested in the Native Trustee :—

Number of properties	..	..	..	..	..	..	9
Area (acres)	..	..	..	..	..	..	41,685
Number of sheep	..	..	..	..	..	..	55,964
Number of cattle	..	..	..	..	..	..	6,069
Wool-clip, 1938–39 (bales)	..	..	..	..	..	..	1,310
Average price per bale	..	..	..	..	..	..	£14 6s. 7d.
Average price per pound	..	..	..	..	..	..	9·4d.

The majority of the Native Trust Office investments is in mortgage securities over Native lands. The policy of the Department is to assist Maori farmers on their own properties by providing the necessary finance and supervision in developing and working their holdings, with the object of making each individual a self-supporting member of the producing community. Such advances are subject to the approval of the Board of Native Affairs and are limited to three-fifths of the capital value of the security offered. At the 31st March, 1939, there were 411 loan accounts covering investments totalling £421,811.

Particulars of each station farmed under authorities Nos. (1) and (2) aforementioned are appended hereunder, but separate details concerning trusts and pooling schemes are omitted, for the reason that private estates are involved.

Aohanga Station.

This station is situated on the East Coast, in the Akitio County, and comprises three blocks of land—namely, Mataikona Nos. 1, 2, and 3, containing in all 17,723 acres. Of this area, 907 acres are reserved for occupation by the beneficial owners, leaving 16,816 acres to be farmed as a sheep and cattle run by the Native Trustee.

Despite the deteriorated condition of the improvements on this property and the reversion to scrub and second growth at the commencement of occupancy, the policy of rehabilitation adopted over a period of nine years has greatly increased the stock-carrying capacity, and the station may well be said to have attained a high degree of efficiency. During the past season one line of wethers disposed of numbered 5,060, while 700 store bullocks were also sold.