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A STUDY OF FACTORS
HINDERING INCREASED
PRODUCTION ON THE
RANGITAIKI PLAINS AND
IN GALATEA

by

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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Summary

This chapter gives a brief outline of the purpose of this study of the Rangitaiki Plains and Galatea. The population of farms from which the survey sample was taken is defined, and a thesis guide is given.

1.2 The Purpose of the Survey

Prior to this survey some farmers on the Rangitaiki Plains and in Galatea were making large increases in butterfat production by following a pattern of higher stocking rates, and increased rates of application of fertilizer, together with the required complementary inputs. It was noticed, however, by the district extension officers, and officials of the Rangitaiki Plains Dairy Company that many other farmers were remaining static in production.

This study consisted of a survey of 37 dairy farms selected from this district, and was aimed to firstly evaluate, both physically and financially, development projects on progressive farms, and secondly to investigate the factors which were hindering other farmers from increasing production, and to find ways of overcoming these problems.^{1/}

1. The objectives of the survey are fully outlined in Section 4.2.

1.3 The Population Studied

This study was restricted to suppliers to the Rangitaiki Plains Dairy Company which is the only dairy factory operating in the Rangitaiki Plains district. Included in this district is the Whakatane river valley and Galatea. The total area is approximately 85,000 acres of intensive dairying land.

This survey was commenced in November 1965, and hence selection of the survey farms was made from the 646 suppliers in the 1964/65 season. ^{2/}

1.4 Thesis Guide

This section outlines the contents of the remaining chapters in the thesis.

Chapter 2 gives an outline of the farming environment and services on the Rangitaiki Plains and Galatea. A review of the literature on farm surveys and their uses is given in Chapter 3. Chapter 4 discusses in detail the objectives of this survey, the selection of the survey farms, and the survey method.

Chapter 5 discusses farming on the survey farms and outlines the major types of farming encountered in this survey. In Chapter 6 various aspects of evaluating the profitability of farm development are discussed and 5 case farm studies are given to show the profitability of development on the survey farms.

2. The method of selection of farms is discussed fully in Section 4.3.

The survey results are reported in Chapters 7 and 8. This includes discussion on family situations and attitudes related to development, the local extension officers views of needed husbandry changes for increased production, and the factors which the author considers are actually hindering increased production on the survey farms. Chapter 9 gives the authors recommendations for overcoming the factors which he considers the survey has demonstrated to be hindering increased butterfat production, and Chapter 10 gives a summary and conclusion to the thesis.