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THE INFLUENCE OF WEATHER ON DAIRY PRODUCTION

(An Analysis of the Relationship Between Meteorological Variations and Fluctuations in Dairy Production in the Manawatu 1939 - 1970)

A Thesis Presented in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in Geography at Massey University

by

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1972

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PREFACE

In recognition of New Zealand's pastoral potential Sears (1961:65) wrote:

> "New Zealand has a tremendous climatic advantage for grassland agriculture, ...
>
> "This is very simply because of New Zealand's great climatic advantage for cheap high-productivity pastures, ...
>
> "New Zealand's continued, but not extreme, soil moisture, moderate temperatures, and adequate sunlight are all of great value to high-production pasture growth. ... The New Zealand climate is also very suitable for the continued outdoor husbandry of European breeds of sheep and cattle."

It would seem, however, that too few studies have been made of the relationship between climatic situations and primary production in New Zealand.

One might offer, in justification of an inquiry into the relationship between climate and dairy production, the importance of dairying to the New Zealand economy. The initial impetus to investigate this relationship was motivated by the author's interest in the farming scene and an appreciation of the importance of climate and weather in agricultural practices.

This thesis is essentially an exercise in applied climatology and makes no claim to be anything more. The study is aimed primarily at investigating the impact of measured physical parameters on an agricultural activity. It is hoped that some of the results might be valuable, even if only to stimulate further research into a situation which has been rather too blithely accepted.

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