

BANANA INDUSTRY.

Limitation of Area Favoured.

MURWILLUMBAH, Friday.—The inquiry into the fruit industry which was adjourned in Sydney last week was resumed here to-day by the Commissioner, Mr. J. E. McCulloch. S.M. Evidence was given by three witnesses concerning the banana industry and each favoured the limitation of areas, if such could be accomplished constitutionally and equitably.

Limitation was suggested as a means of protection against over-production, which it was feared would follow increased plantings in New South Wales and Queensland, bringing about conditions similar to those in 1934, when extremely low prices were received for bananas.

Alick Buckley, secretary of the Banana Growers' Federation Co-operative Society and the Banana Growers' Federation of New South Wales, said it had been recognised that the ripening of bananas on the various markets was in great need of improvement. The co-operative society was so much alive to the importance of the matter that it had agreed to finance the Banana Marketing Board to the extent of £6,000 for the construction of properly-equipped ripening rooms in Sydney.

Mr. Buckley added that he had been advised by telephone to-day that the rooms were practically ready for use and a trial run of the plant was being conducted to-day. The capacity would be 3,300 cases a week, with provision for extension to double this.

Julian Orlov, banana grower, in evidence said that 7½ per cent. commission plus 1/ per case ripening fee charged by Sydney agents was exorbitant. Referring to the operations of the New South Wales Marketing Act, he claimed that a clause similar to the one in the Act operating in Queensland where the opinion of growers was obtained before any major alteration of policy was adopted, should be included in the provisions of the New South Wales Act.

The inquiry will be continued in Mullumbimby on Monday.