

*Canned Meat.*

The clearance of frozen meat from the Dominion, to date, has been so satisfactory that the disposal of supplies in canned form has so far proved less urgent than had been apprehended.

Since the start of the war the New Zealand Government had been in continuous touch with the United Kingdom Government to ensure that the maximum of required canned-meat supplies, at appropriate prices, are drawn from New Zealand. All offers to purchase are submitted by the Ministry of Food to the New Zealand Government.

*Rabbit Meat.*

The United Kingdom Government's reply to the New Zealand Government's inquiry at the outbreak of war was that the Government did not propose to purchase this meat. Priority in shipping space was desired for meat and dairy-produce purchased by the United Kingdom Government. If, however, shipping space proved to be available, frozen rabbits could be shipped to the United Kingdom and marketed at controlled prices.

In recent months it has been found possible to ship small quantities of frozen rabbits.

*Other Meat By-products.*

The United Kingdom Government also confirmed that the purchase of bobby-calf skins was not contemplated, and that sausage casings, though required in the United Kingdom, would not be purchased by the Government, but would probably be controlled in the United Kingdom under a price order.

Calf-vells were not, till very recently, under consideration for purchase by the United Kingdom Government, but these are now the subject of discussion.

*Discussions with Meat Industry and Producers in New Zealand.*

Shortly after the outbreak of war (on the 8th September), the Acting Prime Minister and the Ministers of Marketing and Agriculture met the Chairman and members of the New Zealand Meat-producers Board in a preliminary conference, at which broad aspects of the possible purchase of the Dominion's export meat products by the United Kingdom were discussed. Two further conferences were held during September, and it was agreed that the Meat-producers Board would be consulted throughout the period of negotiation between the two Governments.

On the 4th October the Minister of Marketing, after consultation with the Meat-producers Board, called a conference of representatives of all freezing-companies, meat-exporters, and bacon-curers, together with members of the Board and officers of the Departments of Agriculture and Marketing. At this meeting the following Executive Committee was elected to represent the meat trade at all further conferences between the industry and the Government:—

Meat Board representatives: Messrs. T. A. Duncan, H. D. Acland, D. Allen.

Freezing companies' representatives: Messrs. J. P. Mackay, A. Rowlands, W. O. Campbell.

Meat-exporters' representative: Mr. W. Richmond.

Bacon-curers' representative: Mr. C. Hauseman.

This Committee had frequent conferences with the Meat Board, and, in addition, the following persons were appointed as members of the Price Committee for the purpose of assisting the New Zealand Government throughout the detailed price negotiations with the United Kingdom Government: Messrs. T. A. Duncan, D. Allan, and H. E. Worsp (Meat Board); J. P. Mackay and A. Rowlands (freezing companies' association).

The Government is indebted to this Committee for the valuable assistance rendered.

After a series of conferences between the Ministers of Marketing and Agriculture, members of the Meat Board and the meat-trade representatives, the marketing procedure to be operative during the period of Government purchase was embodied in the following letter addressed to the Chairman of the Meat Board by the Hon. W. Nash on the 18th November, 1939:—

“Dear MR. DUNCAN,—

I desire to confirm the discussions between us in regard to the procedure to be followed in connection with the purchase of meat for the United Kingdom Government.

“The Government is prepared to accept the following recommendation which was placed before the Hon. the Minister of Agriculture and myself as being the unanimous decision of your Board in consultation with the freezing companies and meat-exporters—

“‘The method of procedure should be that the Marketing Department pay the fixed f.o.b. prices for all classes of meat purchased by the United Kingdom Government to the freezing companies and operators; the price paid to the grower being left in the hands of the trade. The trade to provide the Department of Agriculture with returns showing the prices paid to farmers and what deductions have been made to cover the intervening charges from farm to f.o.b., together with any further information required in order to enable the Department to decide whether the prices being paid are fair and reasonable.

“‘The open door to farmers to be maintained, subject probably to conditions which will be laid down by the Marketing Department involving the possible pooling of farmers' individual consignments.’

“In accepting this method of procedure, the Government only does so provided the operations of the freezing companies both as regards freezing services and buying operations