

Further economies resulted from the following restrictive requirements in regard to shipment of mutton, lamb, and pig-meat :—

- (a) Shipment of 5's and overs wether and ewe mutton to be limited to the 1938-39 proportion of total mutton export, and the boning of all ewes over 72 lb. :
- (b) Weight-range of lambs to be restricted to 23 lb. minimum and 56 lb. maximum :
- (c) All headless porkers to be shipped as sides, and headless baconers as Wiltshire sides.

In addition, experimental shipments of boned lamb, mutton, and pork were made.

Experimental shipments, on a commercial scale, of dried meat are also being made, and shipments of certain classes of meat in special packs in non-refrigerated shipping space.

EMERGENCY COOL STORAGE.

One of the major problems directly associated with the sale and purchase of primary products to the United Kingdom Government during the war period was the necessity for the provision of additional cool-storage facilities relating particularly to meat, but embracing also dairy-produce and fruit.

At the outbreak of war (September, 1939) the New Zealand Government had already taken the necessary steps to ensure that, as a condition of their slaughtering and export license, all freezing-works should immediately, and at their own expense, provide sufficient cool-storage space for the holding of 60 per cent. of their average kill of meat. This undertaking resulted in the provision of an additional 3,558,574 cubic feet, capable of holding 37,668 tons of meat. In addition, however, very shortly after the outbreak of war the New Zealand Government took steps to arrange for the purchase and importation on Government account of sufficient quantities of insulating-material to enable emergency cool stores to be erected. The Controller of Primary Industries and the Department of Agriculture were charged with the responsibility of making a general survey of the cool-storage position and of recommending the sites on which additional emergency cool storage should be erected. When this investigation was completed the New Zealand Government then provided a formula by which this emergency cool storage would be erected as additions to existing cool stores, the Government (if required) providing the necessary finance and agreeing to assume full liability for the final loss due to redundancy at the end of the war period. This further programme resulted in the erection of an additional 4,843,926 cubic feet capable of holding 51,292 tons of meat. The completion of this second programme then ensured a total storage-capacity for meat in the Dominion of 253,000 tons, excluding freezer space, which would provide a further 57,000 tons in an emergency.

CANNED MEAT.

Early in the 1940-41 season it became obvious that New Zealand should assist in the disposal of meat available for export by canning to the maximum with existing plants, and should also extend canning facilities by assisting the purchase of additional canning-plants. To this end the New Zealand Government informed the Ministry of Food in regard to canning potentialities and requested that contracts should be arranged for the purchase of specific quantities of canned meat. The result was a contract for the supply of 6,000 tons of canned corned beef. This contract proved of great value to New Zealand as a means of disposal of boneless cow beef, shipment of which in frozen form was prohibited from March, 1941. Discussions in regard to price revealed that the figure necessary to cover New Zealand costs for the 12 oz. tins could not be paid by the United Kingdom Government. After consideration the New Zealand Government decided to meet the price offered by the United Kingdom Ministry of Food, notwithstanding that some financial assistance to the canneries was thereby rendered necessary.

The canning agreement with the United Kingdom Government provided :—

- (1) Purchase by the United Kingdom Government from the New Zealand Government of a quantity of 6,000 tons of canned corned beef for the production year ending 30th September, 1941 :
- (2) Details of prices and quantities as follows :—
 - 146,770 cases, 12 by 6 lb. : First-quality taper, 43s. 6d. sterling per dozen f.o.b.
 - 15,000 cases, 12 by 6 lb. : Second-grade taper, 41s. sterling per dozen f.o.b.
 - 50,000 cases, 48 by 12 oz. : First-quality taper, 6s. 9d. sterling per dozen f.o.b.

The contract called for 3 per cent. of the total in the form of brisket beef, and $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. in the form of beef-extract. (NOTE.—Beef-extract is an essential by-product of the canning operations, and unless an export market was assured, production-costs would have been greatly increased.)

Upon the confirmation of this contract the New Zealand Government entered into negotiations with representatives of the meat-canneries in New Zealand with a view to commencing immediate production on this order, which was to be completed by the end of August, 1941.

The agreement entered into by the New Zealand Government with the cannery companies was as follows :—

“ The Marketing Department will buy the cow beef (briskets and loins) from the various North Island freezing-works at the f.o.b. contract prices, less the costs from works to f.o.b. and will charge the canneries these ‘ net works ’ prices. The railage (or coastal freight) incurred in transporting the meat from the freezing-works to the canneries will be borne by the Department.

“ The cannery companies will secure from the freezing-works the loins and briskets required, undertaking their own transport arrangements. In this regard you have assured us that there is no difficulty regarding deterioration in the meat as the result of the necessary transport.