

A feature of this season's production of dehydrated meat has been the marked improvement in the product as the result of extensive research and improvements in technique. The meat is now being packed in 6 lb. cans, for which a special canning plant had to be built and installed. Fat is added to the requisite content of 40 per cent. and the meat juices are returned to the product. The meat at present being treated is bull beef and bobby veal mixed in equal proportions, with the addition of best-quality edible beef tallow.

After the end of the period covered by this report, but before its publication, a cablegram was received from the United Kingdom Government requesting that New Zealand should cease production of dehydrated meat, as the outlet was now confined to Service requirements, which were covered for 1945 by stocks in sight. Consequently, production stopped on 30th September, 1944, and boneless bull beef and bobby-veal were released for shipment in frozen form.

PIG INDUSTRY

The Pig Marketing Emergency Regulations, which were gazetted on the 1st April, 1943, have continued in force during 1944. These regulations fix maximum prices at which pigs may be purchased by operators for slaughter, and prescribe the scale of basic values of frozen pig-meats acquired by the Department. Pursuant to these regulations, the Marketing Department has acquired all frozen pig-meats, the object being to ensure that the available supplies of such pig-meats were distributed in an equitable manner amongst the trade, having regard to the requirements of the Armed Forces and of the civilian trade. The prohibition on the consumption of pork in New Zealand has continued, and the Marketing Department has been the sole buyer of pork since the 20th May, 1943.

During the year under review, increases in prices payable to producers of pig-meats have been authorized by the Government and paid by the Marketing Department for the frozen pig-meats acquired by it. The main increases have been as follows:—

From 1st October, 1943: An increase in the price of porker pigs from a top price of 6½d. per pound. "heads off" to 6½d. per pound "heads on." This adjustment was equal to approximately a 10 per cent. increase in producers' returns for this class of meat.

From 20th January, 1944: Increases in the prices for heavy-weight baconers, together with an extension of the upper weight limit for heavy-weight baconers from 170 lb. to 200 lb.

From 1st May, 1944: An all-round increase of ½d. per pound in the prices payable to producers for all classes of porker and baconer pigs.

From 1st June, 1944: The seasonal increases for the winter and spring period on the scale established last year, plus the all-round increase of ½d. per pound referred to in the preceding paragraph.

The Pig-meats Advisory Committee, comprising representatives of the producers, operators, and bacon-curers, has continued to function, and has done excellent work in advising the Government on matters connected with pig-meat supplies and allocations to meet the requirements of the Armed Forces and the civilian trade.

The Pig-marketing Emergency Regulations already referred to apply in the North Island only. In the South Island the Marketing Department has continued to buy frozen pig-meats from freezing companies for supply to the Armed Forces at prices established by the "on hooks" prices payable to producers in May of 1943. These prices were increased by ½d. per pound from the 1st May, 1944, as in the case of the North Island.

NOTE.—The Hon. the Minister of Marketing announced on 31st October, 1944, that an increase of ¼d. per pound above the summer schedule for porkers and baconers, as set out in *Gazette Notice No. 42*, dated 25th May, 1944, would apply for the period 20th November, 1944, to 31st May, 1945, with corresponding adjustments in the winter schedules. This increase also applies to the South Island prices as from 20th November, 1944.

DISPOSAL OF 1943-44 SEASON'S KILL

The following statement shows the production and disposal of each class of frozen meat killed for export during the 1943-44 season:—

	Pro-duction.		Disposal.					
	Net Weight.	Canning.	Dehydra-tion.	United States Joint Purchasing Board.	New Zealand Army.	Local Market.	Shipments to United Kingdom and Middle East.	Total.
	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.
Lambs	157,946	..	..	7,896	35	12	150,003	157,946
Wethers	15,850	..	..	1,804	52	21	13,973	15,850
Ewes	46,202	..	..	..	..	99	46,103	46,202
Quarter beef	28,374	..	..	25,912	700	..	1,762	28,374
Boneless—								
Cow and ox	19,230	17,048	..	2,182	..	..	..	19,230
Bull	3,540	..	1,548	..	..	..	1,992	3,540
Veal	6,805	..	650	..	..	202	5,953	6,805
Veal sides	975	..	..	975	..	..	..	975
Baconers	10,143	..	..	3,478	535	3,630	2,500	10,143
Porkers	7,084	..	..	6,969	50	50	15	7,084
Choppers	684	..	..	238	..	446	..	684
Offal	9,490	..	..	2,581	..	248	6,661	9,490
Total	306,323	17,048	2,198	52,035	1,372	4,708	228,962	306,323