

Shipments during—	1915-16.	1916-17.	1917-18.	1918-19.
April	498,971	540,204	340,374	490,339
May	389,223	500,097	338,507	365,688
June	302,293	605,890	239,793	94,855
July	761,641	740,845	229,402	75,290
August	602,647	555,630	453,178	98,327
September ..	795,766	609,362	96,059	264,780
October	474,055	465,983	321,127	394,722
November ..	282,450	321,497	743,065	133,486
December ..	241,734	235,316	394,941	369,577
January	514,036	440,168	904,810	217,749
February ..	498,964	272,910	369,043	317,679
March	542,586	800,539	335,303	549,936
	<hr/> 5,904,366	<hr/> 6,088,441	<hr/> 4,765,602	<hr/> 3,372,428

It will be noticed that the maximum quantity of meat in store to the 31st March, 1918, was 3,483,324 60 lb. carcasses on the 30th June, 1917, and that this quantity has been very considerably exceeded by the maximum quantity in store on the 31st March, 1919, which was 6,567,871 60 lb. freight carcasses.

The shortage of shipping-facilities has again necessitated an extension of the freezing-accommodation throughout the Dominion.

When the Department originally commenced the storage capacities of the various works amounted to 2,200,000 freight carcasses.

In my previous report I referred to the increase to 4,400,000 freight carcasses, and a further increase to 6,336,399. This latter figure has now been increased, and the total refrigerated accommodation amounts to 7,405,272 60 lb. carcasses, including 4,896,561 in the North Island and 2,508,711 in the South Island.

These figures represent the capacity for uncut carcasses, and the arrangement whereby freshly killed carcasses of mutton and lamb intended for export are specially cut and packed considerably increases the capacity of the various works.

Freezing companies are paid an extra $\frac{1}{2}$ d. per pound for all meat so specially treated, and it is estimated that the saving in space as a result of the adoption of this process averages from 25 per cent. to 30 per cent.

CHEESE.

The requisition of cheese on behalf of the Imperial Government has been continued, and the following is a brief summary of the conditions of the contracts which have governed this purchase since the inception of the requisition :—

During the 1915-16 season one-third of the first-grade factory cheese produced in New Zealand was purchased by the Imperial Government on the basis of $7\frac{1}{4}$ d. per pound f.o.b.

During the 1916-17 season the whole of the output of first- and second-grade factory cheese was purchased at the rates of $9\frac{1}{2}$ d. and $9\frac{1}{4}$ d. per pound f.o.b. respectively.

During the 1917-18 season the prices were fixed at 10d. and $9\frac{3}{4}$ d. per pound for first- and second-grade factory cheese respectively, and, in addition, dairy cheese was purchased at $8\frac{1}{2}$ d. and 8d. per pound for first and second grades.

Arrangements were also completed to enable the shipment of third-grade factory cheese on the condition that it would be valued on arrival in the United Kingdom, and purchased at a price not exceeding $9\frac{1}{4}$ d. per pound. This condition was accepted, and the subsequent valuation of the cheese in London enabled the Imperial Government to authorize the payment of $9\frac{1}{2}$ d. per pound, instead of the maximum of $9\frac{1}{4}$ d. previously fixed in the negotiations.

During the present (1918-19) season the whole output has again been purchased, and the prices fixed at $10\frac{3}{4}$ d., $10\frac{1}{2}$ d., and 10d. for first-, second-, and third-grade factory cheese respectively.

Dairy cheese also has been purchased at $9\frac{1}{4}$ d. and $8\frac{3}{4}$ d. respectively for first- and second-grade quality.