

In order that men with full technical training in forestry may be available for employment as officers in the State Forest Service it is essential that a School of Forestry be established at the earliest possible date in connection with one of the University Colleges.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE.

The 1920-21 financial year marked the end of the Imperial Government purchases of wool, frozen meat, and dairy-produce. The wool market has unfortunately been very depressed, but there are present evidences of an improvement in prices which are encouraging.

The frozen-meat market after the termination of the Government purchase proved less satisfactory than was anticipated. While all classes of exportable produce have been heavily burdened by high shipping-freight charges, it may be said that frozen meat has suffered to the greatest extent. It had been thought that an additional market for our frozen meat would have been found in America, but this market proved a disappointment; and, moreover, a large quantity of lamb and mutton sold by the Imperial Government to American buyers was reshipped to London, where it naturally affected the market for privately owned meat shipped direct from New Zealand. Notwithstanding this temporary drawback, selling-prices of lamb at the market end have remained good, and there seems reason for being hopeful as to the outlook for lamb for the coming season.

Dairy-produce maintained a high standard of values throughout the year, and the monetary return accruing constituted a marked feature of the Dominion's income.

Markets for some subsidiary products—tallow, pelts, hides, canned meats—fell heavily, but those of dairy origin (casein, dried and preserved milks, &c.) maintained good values. It is anticipated that the fall in values of tallow, pelts, hides, and canned meats will be succeeded by gradually improving markets as accumulations are disposed of and consumption becomes normal.

In connection with exports of primary products mention must be made of the shipments of fruit sent to England. These were under a guarantee from the Government of a minimum price to the shipper (either a *bona fide* grower or a growers' co-operative organization), and sold at prices which rendered any guaranteed payment unnecessary. Some small shipments of fruit were also made to Honolulu, where about three thousand cases of apples were sold at satisfactory prices. Another useful export industry, in a restricted degree, is that of honey.

The flax industry has not been encouraging. To ensure the future of this industry flax-millers must, if possible, raise the standard of quality of their output.

The quantities and assessed values of the principal primary products exported during the year were as follows (it should be noted that a considerable proportion of the wool and meat, and almost the whole of the butter, were shipped on Imperial Government account):—

| | | | | | Quantities. | Values. £ |
|--------------------------|----|----|----|----|-----------------|--------------------|
| Wool | .. | .. | .. | .. | 155,519,094 lb. | 10,297,340 |
| Frozen meat— | | | | | | |
| Mutton | .. | .. | .. | .. | 2,720,000 cwt. | 6,444,213 |
| Lamb | .. | .. | .. | .. | 1,342,193 cwt. | 3,994,398 |
| Beef | .. | .. | .. | .. | 810,322 cwt. | 1,834,113 |
| Mutton and lamb joints | .. | .. | .. | .. | 20,493 cwt. | 55,450 |
| Canned meats | .. | .. | .. | .. | 114,039 cwt. | 523,759 |
| Butter | .. | .. | .. | .. | 476,730 cwt. | 6,114,464 |
| Cheese | .. | .. | .. | .. | 1,208,263 cwt. | 6,514,519 |
| Casein | .. | .. | .. | .. | 36,310 cwt. | 134,085 |
| Dried milk | .. | .. | .. | .. | 14,635,675 lb. | 876,833 |
| Tallow | .. | .. | .. | .. | 31,626 tons | 1,853,753 |
| Pelts | .. | .. | .. | .. | 24,451,045 lb. | 2,661,517 |
| Hides | .. | .. | .. | .. | 272,213 number | 845,873 |
| Other animal by-products | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | 395,819 |
| Flax | .. | .. | .. | .. | 16,232 tons | 553,246 |
| Fruit | .. | .. | .. | .. | 1,400,369 lb. | 15,082 |
| Honey | .. | .. | .. | .. | 854,918 lb. | 30,962 |
| Total | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | <u>£43,145,426</u> |

The value of the total exports from all sources was £48,219,672.