

DEERSKINS.

THEIR PREPARATION AND SALE.

(Extract from *New Zealand Gazette*, No. 42, 17th June, 1937.)

THERE is no protection on deer in any part of New Zealand. The animals may be destroyed at any time, but it is, of course, necessary to have the consent of the owner or controlling authority to go on land.

Deer-skins are marketable, and, where private persons experience any difficulty in otherwise disposing of such skins, the Department of Internal Affairs will accept and pay for those skins coming up to requirements. Chamois-skins are accepted under the same conditions.

The price which will be paid for deer-skins accepted as first grade will be 2s. 3d. per lb. dry weight.

Where skins do not come up to first grade requirements they will, where considered by the Department's Inspector to be marketable, be accepted at a lower rate, or the skins may be entirely rejected. The Inspector's decision will be final, and it must be clearly understood that skins are submitted on this understanding, and that any skins absolutely rejected will be destroyed.

Persons desiring to submit skins should first communicate with the Under-Secretary, Department of Internal Affairs, P.O. Box 7, Government Buildings, Wellington, when statement forms and advice as to the destination to which the skins are to be sent will be forwarded. Statements *must* be prepared in duplicate (two copies) and sent to the same destination and at the same time as the skins. Skins received at the depots, for which there are no statement forms, will not be examined or any payment made until such statements are received.

The Department will not be responsible for losses of skins. The possibility of loss of skins in transit can be minimised by tying bundles securely and putting the name on each skin, when green, with indelible pencil.

The Department's Inspector will visit receiving depots about the end of February, April, June, September, and December.

Any freight charges not paid by the person sending in skins will be deducted from the amount payable.

Skins taken from August to December (inclusive) are lighter and of poorer quality than those taken from January to July (inclusive). Those taken during March, April, and May are the best quality and greatest weight, and every effort should be made to secure skins during these months.

The continuance of deer-skin markets is entirely dependent upon the skins being submitted in the best possible condition and so trimmed that every portion of each skin is of full value to those using the leather made therefrom.

The Department reserves the right to vary the conditions or to discontinue acceptance of skins at any time.

The following directions as to skinning, curing, packing, etc., are supplied:—

1. Skins *must* be dried by hanging over a tightly stretched wire or a pole, with the flesh side out, and thereafter folded only along the crease made from neck to tail. They *must not* be stretched by pegging out flat. During drying, which should be done in the shade in warm weather, edges must be prevented from rolling or sticking back, and frequent attention in this respect is essential. Spring clothes-pegs should be used to keep skins straight and prevent wrinkling and edges rolling.

2. Bleaching is caused by leaving out skins in alternate rain and sunshine. Bleached skins will be rejected.

3. Skins that are badly wrinkled, knife-marked, dirty, damp, moth or weevil infested, stale, torn, rat-eaten, rock-bruised, or otherwise damaged, or with fat or flesh left on, or with excessive bullet-holes, will be rejected. It is imperative that all skins be thoroughly dry before being bundled, as one damp skin will ruin many others. Any damp skins will be immediately destroyed on receipt at the depot. No fat or flesh should be on the skins. The Department's deer-destruction parties recover some thousands of skins annually, and the "First Grade" standard adopted in the grading