

BEEF FOR BRITAIN

TO freeze or to chill?

At first sight you might think there is little enough to argue about, but if it was beef you were discussing and you were a British housewife — would you be so indifferent then? What, for a start, is the difference between frozen and chilled beef? Well, to freeze beef for export you bring it to 22 degrees below freezing point, and once you've got it there you can thaw it out in a year's time and it will still be edible. Chilled beef, on the other hand, is at two degrees above freezing point, and it will keep for a matter of weeks only, and then only if great care is taken to keep it clean and free from bacteria. But according to the customer (who is supposed to be always right) the chilled product, when it comes to the point, is a good deal nicer to eat, full of its natural flavour, and worth paying a bit extra for.

New Zealand first started to export chilled beef, in answer to competition from the Argentine, in the 1930's. The war put an end to that, because there was no place then for a quality product that had to be eaten soon after it was landed. Besides, beef was just beef wherever it came from. There's still lively controversy in this country on the question whether it's economically sound to export chilled, as compared with frozen beef, though within the last year or so exports of the chilled product have been resumed and are now going off to Britain fairly regularly. To find out how this beef was prepared for export Bruce Broadhead, Farm Talks Officer at 1YA, recently took a tape recorder to an Auckland freezing works where the job is done. The programme he made has already been heard from 1YA, and it is now to be broadcast in *Farm Sessions* from other stations, starting with 2YA on Monday, June 14.

Mr. Broadhead follows the story of chilled beef all the way from the selection of animals—young prime steers and maiden heifers—to the ship. What impressed him throughout the assignment was the emphasis on cleanliness. Before the animals are slaughtered, he found, they are washed in a positive deluge of water. Care is also taken to keep them quiet—no dogs are allowed in the yards—so that they don't get bruised. Extraordinary precautions are taken on the beef dressing floor, where all the workers wear white overalls, and all visitors must wipe their feet on a sack saturated with disinfectant as they enter. Similar care is taken while the chilled beef is being transported by rail and on the ship itself. All these stages are described in the programme either by Mr. Broadhead or others whom he



CHILLING BEEF
Grading and weighing a carcass at an Auckland freezing works

interviews, and there are plenty of background noises to help listeners to get a vivid picture of what's going on.

Ruakura Conference Reports

THE Ruakura Farmers' Conference next week will be covered by reports (including excerpts from addresses) from all YA and YZ stations at 7.0 p.m. from Tuesday, June 15, to Friday, June 18, inclusive. Topics for the first day include fat lamb farming, meat production, beef cattle breeding in North America, early weaning of hill country hoggets, worms in sheep, and pasture improvement on the Te Awa Hills. Wednesday will be a field day, with an address in the evening by E. J. Fawcett, Director-General of Agriculture, on the future of agriculture in New Zealand. On the third day topics will include molybdenum in animal health, lime on grassland, weed control, beef production from dairy stock, grass staggers, the milk producing value of summer feeds, and summer dairy production in the Auckland Province. Addresses on the last day will be on bloat, the rearing of dairy stock, the national hybrid pig, pedigree breeding, dairy farming as a business, and the Ruakura milking machine.

A report on the Massey College Sheepfarmers' meeting, also to be held next week, will be heard in the YA-YZ *News for Farmers* at 12.33 p.m. on Thursday, and excerpts from addresses will be broadcast later in *Farm Sessions*.

N.Z. LISTENER, JUNE 11, 1954.

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