

SURVEY OF SEASON.

Although the killings of export-quality meat during the season totalling 326,515 tons, did not quite reach last season's (1940-41) figure of 330,344 tons, on the whole a good fattening season was experienced in practically all districts, and quality was well maintained.

Lamb killings at 11,049,772 showed a reduction of 190,229 carcasses from the record kill established last season of 11,240,001 carcasses. The killings of pigs and prime cattle showed a substantial drop, whilst increases were recorded in wether mutton, ewe mutton, and boner cows. A feature of the season was the extensive boning-out of meat which was necessitated by the decision to can all f.a.q. and boner cows and all ewes. In addition, all quarter beef continued to be exported in boneless form.

The entire exportable kill of ewes was purchased by the Marketing Department on a carcass-weight basis, but instead of being exported these ewes were to be boned out for canning. An improvement in the shipping position has enabled approximately 25 per cent. of the ewe kill to be shipped to the United Kingdom in frozen telescoped form. The Meat Pool Account will therefore benefit to the extent of the increased returns from ewes exported in frozen form, compared with their use for canning.

Boner cows were purchased by the meat operators on the basis of 20s. per 100 lb. delivered at nearest port works. This price took effect from 19th January, 1942, when the Minister of Marketing announced an increase in the price for canned beef (referred to later in this report) under the contract between the New Zealand and the United Kingdom Governments. The operators sold the resultant boned meat to the canneries at a price fixed by consent of the Primary Industries Controller.

In regard to bull beef, the Minister of Marketing, after a conference with the Meat Board, announced a subsidy payment of 6s. per 100 lb. dressed carcass weight on all bulls slaughtered at freezing-works on and after 8th June, 1942, and passed by the Government Inspector as fit for human consumption.

The subsidy of 2s. per head on "passed" bobby calves was continued during the 1941-42 season. The improved shipping position this year enabled bobby-calf meat to be saved for export, and the net proceeds from the sale thereof will be applied to offset the expenditure incurred by the Government in the subsidy payment referred to, after which the balance, if any, will be available for distribution to the producers of bobby-calf meat.

PRICES FOR 1941-42 SEASON'S MEAT PURCHASED BY MARKETING DEPARTMENT FOR EXPORT.

The f.o.b. New Zealand currency purchase-prices payable to freezing companies and meat-exporters for the various classes and grades of frozen meat are set out in the Meat Marketing Order 1942.

Purchases made by the Department from freezing companies and exporters for the twelve months ended 31st July, 1942, total £22,993,192 (New Zealand currency). Debits to the United Kingdom Ministry of Food total £19,558,267 (New Zealand currency) for the same period. The total weight of meat purchased for shipment was 400,616 tons, giving an average payout to freezing companies and meat-exporters of 6·15d. per pound for all descriptions of meat and edible offals.

The following table shows particulars of meat purchased during the twelve months ending 31st July, 1942, classified under main descriptions of meat purchased :—

Class of Meat.						Tons.	Purchase Value (N.Z. Currency).	Average Price per Pound (N.Z. Currency).
Frozen—							£	d.
Lamb	..	..	..	..	..	213,152	14,757,892	7·42
Mutton	..	..	..	..	..	101,394	3,208,505	3·39
Beef and veal	..	..	..	..	..	53,844	2,610,709	5·19
Pork	..	..	..	..	..	23,459	1,784,416	8·15
Sundries	..	..	..	..	..	8,767	631,670	7·72
Total, frozen meat						400,616	22,993,192	6·15
Preserved—								
Corned beef and mutton	..	..	..	..	..	12,852	1,214,193	..
Tongues, &c.	..	..	..	..	..	735	157,713	..
Total, preserved meat						13,587	1,371,906	..
Total, frozen and preserved meat						414,203	£24,365,098	..

SHIPPING.

The Department has continued during the season to allocate shipping space as equitably as possible amongst the freezing companies in proportion to their stocks of meat in store, consistent with the quickest "turn round" of overseas vessels, and with the best use of available shipping tonnage to prevent works from becoming congested. As recorded in last year's annual report, war conditions have created many difficulties in the planning of shipping allocations and shipping programmes. It is pleasing to record that, despite these conditions, it has been possible so to allocate shipping tonnage that no freezing-works has had to cease killing owing to congestion of freezing-works stores. The Department again records its thanks to the Overseas Shipowners' Allotment Committee for its ready co-operation, and to the New Zealand Railways Department for its continued assistance in organizing rail transport arrangements to provide main port loadings of ships.