

CANNED MEAT.

The canning agreement with the United Kingdom Government for the 1941-42 season provided for purchase by the United Kingdom Government of the following quantities of canned meat for the production year ended 30th September, 1942 :—

	Tons.
Corned beef	12,000
Corned and boiled mutton	10,500
Canned brisket beef	200
Ox-tongues	400
Bobby-calf tongues	200
Sheep and lamb tongues	1,200
Pig-tongues	400

Canning contracts covering these quantities have been allocated amongst the various canning companies in proportion to their productive capacity.

Resulting from an increase in prices payable by the United Kingdom Government for canned beef, the Marketing Department's purchase-prices payable to canning companies were correspondingly advanced. The price payable by the United Kingdom for the 12 oz. corned-beef pack, whilst representing an increase of 9d. per dozen sterling on last year's contract price, was still out of relation to the price payable for the 6 lb. pack, having regard to New Zealand's production costs. After negotiations with the canning companies, agreement was reached on an adjustment of prices as between the two packs.

Boneless cow beef is sold by meat operators to canners at a price fixed by consent of the Primary Industries Controller. This price is on the basis of 3-55d. per pound at canner plants, and the cost of delivery, &c., is a charge against a railage pool operated by the canners. The agreement also provides that canners will operate on the basis of utilizing as far as possible the meat in a fresh state in so far as killings at their own works and Southdown Works are concerned. Frozen meat from other works is to be drawn in as equitable a manner as is practicable.

In order that meat operators should not be unduly penalized, the Marketing Department arranged to purchase from them all boner cow beef held in store on the same basis as was agreed upon in respect of other classes of meat—i.e., payment after three months in store.

In the case of ewe mutton, the Marketing Department purchases the ewes on a carcass-weight basis and, after paying freezing companies an agreed price for boning, sells the resultant boned meat to the canning companies at the price of 2-375d. per pound delivered at cannery sidings. The resultant loss is debited to the Meat Pool Account, already referred to in this report.

The increase in this year's contract quantities of canned beef and mutton from 6,000 tons to 22,500 tons has necessitated considerable reorganization of the canning industry, the purchase of new plant, and the erection of additional cannery buildings and accommodation. Finance for this work was arranged by the New Zealand Government under provisions similar to those relating to the erection of emergency cool storage (see page 23 of annual report for year ended 31st July, 1941). Canning companies which hitherto had manufactured little or no canned beef or mutton have been brought into full production as the result of a complete survey of the entire canning facilities of the Dominion. Overtime has been worked at most of the canning establishments, with a view to securing the additional production which is desired by the United Kingdom Government.

The full range of prices payable by the Marketing Department for canned meats purchased under the current (1941-42) season contracts is as follows :—

	Per Dozen f.o.b. (N.Z.) Currency.		Per Dozen f.o.b. (N.Z.) Currency.
Corned beef—	£ s. d.	Brisket beef—	£ s. d.
First-quality taper soldered 6's ..	3 3 3½	First-quality soldered 6's ..	5 17 7
Second-quality taper soldered 6's ..	3 0 2	First-quality soldered 4's ..	4 3 1
First-quality round soldered 6's ..	3 3 3½	Canned tongues—	
First-quality taper soldered 12 oz. ..	0 10 6½	Ox and calf—	
First-quality round sanitary 12 oz. ..	0 10 4	First-grade 6's ..	10 5 0
Corned mutton—		Second-grade 6's ..	9 7 9
First-quality taper soldered 6's ..	2 13 10	Sheep and lamb—	
Second-quality taper soldered 6's ..	2 10 8½	12 oz. ..	0 16 8
Boiled mutton—		1 lb. ..	1 0 9
First-quality round soldered 6's ..	2 13 10	Pig 6's ..	7 1 7
		Bobby calf 12 oz. ..	0 19 1

SAVING OF SHIPPING AND STORAGE SPACE BY DE-BONING AND TRIMMING OF EXPORT MEAT AND BY PROCESSING.

The economies in space detailed in last year's report were continued. The full effect of these economies has made itself apparent in space saving effected during the present season.

MANUFACTURE OF DEHYDRATED MEAT, AND CONTRACT WITH MINISTRY OF FOOD FOR PURCHASE OF 1,200 TONS PER ANNUM.

The year has seen considerable development of the experimental work initiated last year in connection with the manufacture of dehydrated meat. A contract has now been secured from the United Kingdom Government for the supply of 1,200* tons of dehydrated meat per annum. It is estimated that this contract quantity is equal to 6,800 tons of carcass meat, and that shipment as dehydrated meat will save a corresponding amount of refrigerated space. Like canned meat, dehydrated meat is shipped in unrefrigerated space, and it has the advantage over canned meat that,

* Since increased at the request of the United Kingdom Ministry of Food as follows : (a) For shipment calendar year 1943, a minimum quantity of 2,500 tons of dried mutton and/or beef; (b) New Zealand to be prepared to increase the quantity to 5,000 tons in 1944; (c) preparation and pack 1943 contract to conform to Ministry of Food specifications, and price to be based on the existing rate, subject to mutual adjustment in the light of experience.