

(x) *Prosecutions*

202. During the year ended 31st March, 1947, a considerable number of breaches of the rationing regulations was reported, and, as in the past, the most serious breaches were committed in respect of meat. Allegations that "black marketing" in meat was rampant throughout New Zealand have not been confirmed, although such activities are very difficult to detect. No evidence has been forthcoming to show that there are any but trifling offences of this nature. Instructions to prosecute offenders in respect of all the rationed commodities were issued in 128 cases, resulting in convictions being entered in 88 cases. There were 13 withdrawals, 3 dismissals, and 24 cases have either not yet been heard or decisions have not yet been announced. Fines totalling £1,925 were imposed, but in no case was imprisonment ordered.

(b) *FOOD CONTROL*(i) *Supply Position*

203. Supplies of imported foodstuffs have been difficult during the year, but reasonably satisfactory quantities have been obtained in most cases. The allocations made to us by the International Emergency Food Council in Washington have been most reasonable in view of world shortages. Equitable distribution has proved difficult, but merchants and retailers have co-operated with the Office to the fullest extent. The needs of rehabilitated ex-servicemen, hospitals, and public-works camps were given special attention in all cases.

(ii) *Availability of Supplies in 1947*

204. Many commodities have now been removed from the controlled list by the International Emergency Food Council, and it is hoped that New Zealand will be able to import increased quantities during 1947. Particulars of some of the commodities which were in short supply are as follows:—

205. *Dried Vine Fruits* (1946 allocation, 5,000 tons; source of supply, Australia).—This allocation compared favourably with pre-war imports, but was not sufficient to meet our increased demands.

*Supply Prospects*: The allocation approved for 1947 is smaller than last year's, and unless an increase can be arranged it may be necessary to supplement from other sources.

206. *Dried Apricots* (1946 allocation, 100 tons; source of supply, Australia).—This quantity was insufficient for general distribution, and the total quantity was imported by this Office and allocated to hospitals.

*Future Supplies*: Reasonable quantities will be imported from Australia, Iran, and South Africa during 1947, and shipments are expected at an early date. Supplies will also be imported from U.S.A. late in the year.

207. *Rice*.—New Zealand's allocation of rice was again approved for supply to Asiatics and for ship's stores and hospitals only. Present indications are that there will be no domestic distribution during 1947. The total allocation was imported by this Office, and the distribution was arranged through the New Zealand Wholesale Merchants' Federation.

208. *Canned Fruit* (1946 allocation, 50,000 cases; source of supply, Australia).—As the allocation was insufficient for general distribution the full quantity allocated was imported by this Office, and a Christmas distribution was arranged.

*Future Supplies*: The 1947 allocation has not been announced, but indications are that more substantial quantities will be available.