

that the use of frozen meat during periods of real shortage is the only way to meet such a situation satisfactorily and feels that the full co-operation of the butchers and of the consuming public in the matter of using frozen meat during these periods would assist materially.

The possibility of using meat as chilled for export was investigated, but expert evidence submitted showed clearly that the handling of chilled meat at the present time for the local market was not practicable.

There is no doubt, however, that meat held in cool store for a short period at abattoirs or freezing works is of material advantage in providing against short-term fluctuations of supply.

3. *Whether it is practicable to provide for butchers to purchase meat for local consumption by means of a schedule similar to that adopted for the export trade; and, if so, what margin (if any) should be paid over and above the export schedule price.*

To judge from the evidence advanced on this question, it would appear that there are three main types of domestic schedule :—

- (1) It might be made compulsory for fat stock sold for local consumption to be sold on a weight-and-grade basis under a domestic price schedule. This scheme would imply the abolition of fat-stock auctions.
- (2) A domestic schedule might be declared for fat stock required for domestic consumption, it being optional for butchers to buy, and producers to sell, either at schedule or at auction. Under this scheme prices at auction would indicate the level at which the domestic schedule would have to be fixed in order to bring forward supplies. This schedule would require to be varied weekly.
- (3) A third type of domestic schedule is a local and voluntary application of the type of schedule in (2) above. A local schedule of this sort is operated in the Auckland district by a co-operative organization of producers and butchers.

In their first statement to the Commission the New Zealand Master Butchers' Federation advocated a compulsory schedule on the lines of (1) above. They later advocated the voluntary type of schedule, presumably in the hope of securing the co-operation of producers' organizations. In the closing stages of the Commission's inquiry the federation reverted to its original advocacy of a compulsory schedule, possibly because agreement with producers' interests on any large scale appeared out of the question.

The Commission has examined this very important question closely, and it is of the opinion that at the present time it is impracticable to provide for butchers to purchase meat for local consumption by means of a schedule similar to that adopted for the export trade, and the following points have influenced it in arriving at this decision :—

- (1) Any such schedule would have to arrive exactly at the prices which would bring forward the approximate amount of stock necessary at any particular time to meet the demand. If too low a price were fixed, the amount of stock forthcoming would not be adequate. On the other hand, if the price were too high and too great a supply resulted, the difficulties of dealing with the surplus stock would be very considerable. In addition, the difficulties of avoiding substantial over and under supplies with a compulsory schedule would be very great because of unpredictable variations in feed-supplies due to seasonal conditions.
- (2) The Commission considers that an essential prerequisite to the institution of a Dominion-wide domestic schedule is the setting-up of organizations of producers and butchers to arrange for the collection, slaughtering, and distribution of stock. An example of the probable type of organization required is available in the Primary Producers' Co-operative Society, Ltd., and the Farmers' and Butchers' Co-operative Society, Ltd., which operate at present on a voluntary basis in the Auckland area. The Primary Producers' Co-operative Society, Ltd., acts as the field organization and arranges for the