

Dates.—Increased quantities were allocated to New Zealand from the 1947 Iraq crop, but the shipment did not reach here until early in 1948.

Figs.—For the first time for several years, supplies of figs were available. Control by the International Emergency Food Committee has now been released.

Prunes.—Reasonable supplies were available throughout the year.

Salt.—With the exception of coarse salt for industrial purposes the supply position was reasonable. Considerable difficulty was experienced in procuring adequate supplies of coarse salt, and these difficulties were aggravated by the lack of transport.

(ii) *Supply Prospects*

Dried Vine Fruits.—The 1948 allocation of dried vine fruits from Australia is considerably in excess of that made in 1947, and, subject to the shipping being available, quite reasonable supplies should reach this country this year.

Dried Apricots and Peaches.—Only limited quantities have been allocated from Australia, but it is hoped that additional supplies will be imported from South Africa.

Prunes.—On account of the United States dollar position, only limited quantities of 1947 season's Californian prunes were imported. These supplies arrived early in 1948, and the distribution was controlled by this Office in a manner to ensure that the usual importers, though they were not granted import licences, received a fair and reasonable share of the goods available.

Canned Fruit.—One hundred thousand cases have been allocated to New Zealand from the 1948 Australian pack, and the importation and distribution will be arranged through the usual trade channels. For the first time for several years the New Zealand pack has been reasonably good, and at least 50,000 cases have been distributed by the manufacturers.

Jam.—Due to the very favourable fruit season, local manufacturers will be able to supply full requirements.

Rice.—Owing to the pressing need in countries where rice is a staple food, it has been necessary for the International Emergency Food Committee to continue to control the allocation of rice. The New Zealand allocation for 1948 has been approved for supply to Asiatics, ships' stores, and hospitals. Present indications are that rice will not be available for domestic distribution until mid-1949 at the earliest.

(c) GENERAL

(i) *Procurement*

The following items were purchased by the Office on a Government-to-Government basis for distribution through normal trade channels:—

	Approximate Value.
	£
Coffee-beans (ex United Kingdom Ministry of Food) ..	58,000
Rice	40,000
Coconut (produce of Samoa)	82,000
Tea (auction sales—Ceylon and India)	2,500,000

(ii) *Purchases for Government Departments*

During the year the Office continued to function as the foodstuffs-purchasing authority for Government Departments, including the defence Services. In the main, requirements were obtained by direct imports from overseas and by direct purchases from local manufacturers. Contracts arranged included such perishable goods as meat, bread, fish, &c. Supplies of meat to the defence Services were regularly examined by officers of the Department of Agriculture, and it is pleasing to record that there were no adverse reports from that Department of contractors not fulfilling the terms and conditions of their contracts.