

## SECTION 2.—FOOD AND RATIONING CONTROL

## (a) RATIONING

(i) *Sugar*

The rationing of sugar was continued throughout the year without alteration to the consumer scale of allocation of 12 oz. per head per week. This, however, was supplemented by three releases, each of 3 lb. per head, of sugar for jam. Manufacturers continued to receive 75 per cent. of the 1941 consumption. Unfortunately, the building-up of reserve stocks, which is so necessary before restrictions on sales can be removed, has been retarded because the shortcomings of coastal shipping services have caused recurrent shortages in several towns, particularly in the far South.

The flow of raw sugar to the refineries has been satisfactory, and, whilst stocks held are not heavy, there is no apparent danger of foreseeable future requirements not being met.

The United Kingdom (with an 8 oz. sugar ration) and New Zealand are the only two English-speaking countries still applying official sugar-rationing.

New Zealand continues to be a party to the Empire Sugar Agreement on prices and sources of supply, but there is now no arbitrary restriction on the amount of sugar available to the Dominion from the Pacific area. Purchases have been confined to Fiji and Queensland, where adequate stocks have been on hand to fill all the ships available.

In consequence of the heavy Cuban cane-sugar crop in 1947, the Sugar Committee of the International Emergency Food Council suspended sittings meantime.

(ii) *Tea*

Throughout the year the ration scale in New Zealand was held at the same rate as has operated since 1942—namely, 8 oz. each four weeks for each person ten years of age and over. The supplementary allowance to persons seventy years of age and over, introduced in 1946, was also maintained.

The Empire Tea Allocation Scheme ceased to operate, as scheduled, on 31st March, 1947, so that during the whole of the year we were free to purchase on the open market in India and Ceylon. Heavy purchases of tea were arranged in the first three months, but initial difficulties were experienced in transshipping from Australia to New Zealand. In recent months consignments have been coming to hand more freely, with the result that the advantages of the heavy buying in the early part of the year are now being enjoyed in the way of accumulating stocks. This policy has been followed with the object of building up a stock pile in New Zealand sufficient to enable packers to meet the full demand after rationing is terminated.

(iii) *Butter and Cream*

The rationing of butter to make available a greater volume of exports to the United Kingdom has been retained, and the domestic allocation continues at the rate of 6 oz. per person per week. In December the usual bonus of 8 oz. per head was granted for home baking of Christmas cakes. Commercial consumers receive 50 per cent. of their consumption in 1942–43. Cream-rationing, too, has been retained. It is assessed that the quantity of butter saved from local consumption under rationing during the year was 13,000 tons.

The restriction on the sale of cream to persons requiring it in their diet for medical reasons remained in operation as another means of saving butterfat for export. Difficulty has been experienced in enforcing the restriction in towns near sources of supply where numbers of milk-vendors operate in competition. Although this detracted from the value of the scheme, it still served its purpose as an indispensable adjunct to butter-rationing.