

manufacturers it was maintained at 75 per cent. of the 1941 consumption. Rationing of this commodity in Commonwealth countries remains only in the United Kingdom, but New Zealand continues to be a party to the Empire Sugar Agreement on prices and sources of supply. Our supplies of raw sugar are being drawn from Fiji and Queensland. Improvements in ocean and inland transport should overcome difficulties which have arisen in certain local areas.

(ii) *Tea*

Tea was derationed in New Zealand as from 1st June, 1948. To that date the ration scale had remained at 8 oz. each four weeks for each person ten years of age and over. After rationing was lifted, retail sales declined to a marked degree, apparently because consumers were prepared to use their own reserves built up as protection against possible shortage, but subsequently sales recovered. This country's requirements of tea continued to be purchased from India and Ceylon on the open market and no difficulty is foreseen in keeping our supplies at a satisfactory level.

(iii) *Butter and Cream*

As was the case in 1948, butter rationing continues in the United Kingdom, Australia, and New Zealand. We are thus able to maintain exports to the United Kingdom in greater volume than would otherwise be possible. The local ration scale for private domestic use remained constant throughout the year at 6 oz. per week, but as a Christmas concession an additional grant of 8 oz. was made in December, 1948.

An important change in procedure became effective as from 25th October, 1948, when the necessity for each consumer to register with a particular retailer was withdrawn. Under the new method consumers merely surrender coupons currently valid to obtain their purchases, while retailers obtain their stocks in return for coupons received from consumers.

The restriction of the sale of cream to those persons requiring it for medical reasons continues. Some difficulty was experienced during the year in enforcing the restriction in some areas (more particularly where producer-vendors are operating), but, notwithstanding this, the scheme continues to serve a valuable purpose as an adjunct to butter rationing.

(iv) *Meat*

Meat rationing in this country was discontinued as from 27th September, 1948.

(v) *Bacon and Ham*

As a means of restricting the consumption of bacon and ham, all licensed bacon-factories, while meat rationing was in force, were obliged to adhere to quotas limiting their local sales. When, on 27th September, 1948, meat rationing was lifted, the quota restriction applying to bacon and ham was removed.

(vi) *Petrol Rationing*

In order to assist in the restriction of dollar expenditure, petrol rationing was reintroduced as from 15th November, 1947, when an endeavour to ration through the resellers was made. This method proved unsatisfactory, and was replaced as from 1st March, 1948, by a simplified form of the wartime system of rationing by coupons and licences.