

Wool.

The clip this season was a good one, the wool being in exceptionally good condition.

In early November the Imperial authorities intimated that it was proposed to requisition the whole of the season's clip, and after some negotiations a schedule of values was agreed upon, and steps were taken to make the necessary arrangements for valuing and taking over the wool. A staff of expert valuers was appointed, valuation centres were fixed, and the whole organization was quickly got to work, and has worked most satisfactorily throughout the season, thanks to the capable manner in which the valuers carried out their duties, and also to the efficient and thorough management of the wool-brokers throughout the Dominion in the handling of the wool. The schedule of classes and values is as follows:—

Superior merino combings	..	..	..	..	from 12d. to 14½d.
Medium to good merino	..	..	..	..	9¾d. „ 11½d.
Inferior merino	..	..	..	..	8½d. „ 9½d.
Superior half-bred	..	..	..	..	12d. „ 14d.
Medium to good half-bred	..	..	..	..	9¾d. „ 12d.
Inferior half-bred	..	..	..	..	9d. „ 10d.
Superior crossbred	..	..	..	..	10½d. „ 12d.
Medium to good crossbred	..	..	..	..	9d. „ 11d.
Inferior crossbred	..	..	..	..	7¾d. „ 9d.
Lincoln and Leicester	..	..	..	..	8¾d. „ 10½d.
Lambs, good	..	..	..	..	11d. „ 13d.
Lambs, medium	..	..	..	..	9d. „ 10¾d.

These values were taken as representing the average prices for New Zealand wools sold by auction in the Dominion in January, 1914, and 55 per cent. was added thereto for all wool purchased by the Government.

Slips and scoured wools, with the exception of slip wools derived from freezing companies' establishments, were valued on the greasy price basis. Freezing companies' slip wools were, by arrangement, despatched to London for valuation, an arrangement being made under which 75 per cent. of the estimated value was paid in New Zealand, the balance remaining to be paid after final valuation in London had been completed.

Low-grade wools which it was desirable to scour before shipment were distributed among various private scouring establishments in the Dominion, the owners of which were registered as Government wool-scourers. These carried out their work under conditions laid down by the Government, the scoured wool being afterwards valued by Government Valuers before going into store to await shipment. The work of these scourers was supervised by specially appointed Inspectors, who were selected on account of their expert knowledge.

SHEEP-SKINS.

In accordance with the desire of the Imperial Government, arrangements were made in February to requisition all sheep-skins on behalf of the Government (except those from sheep and lambs slaughtered at freezing-works) at the prices shown in the following schedule:—

	Merino Skins.	Half-bred Skins.	Fine Crossbred Skins.	Coarse Crossbred Skins.
Three-quarter to full-woolled skins	d.	d.	d.	d.
Sound	10½-11½	13-14	12-13	11½-12½
Faulty	9½-10½	11½-12½	10½-12	10½-11½
Damaged	8½-9½	10-11	9½-10½	9½-10½
Half-woolled skins				
Sound	8½-9½	11-12	10½-11½	10-11½
Faulty	8-9	10-11	8½-10	8½-10
Damaged	7½-8½	8½-9½	7-8½	7-8½
Short to quarter-woolled skins				
Sound	7½-8½	9½-10½	9½-10½	8½-10½
Faulty	5½-6½	7-8½	7-8½	7-8½
Damaged	5½-6½	6½-7½	6-7½	5½-7
Shorn				
Sound	5½-6½	8-9	8½-9½	8-10
Damaged, faulty	3-4	3-6	4-7	4-7

Lamb-skins: Sound, 11d.-12½d.; damaged, 8½d.-11½d.; seedy, 4½d.-9d.

HIDES.

Hides and calf-skins were requisitioned at the following prices:—

Ox-hides, first quality, over 45 lb. up to freezing companies' best standard	s. d. 1 1
Others, first quality	1 0
Ox-hides, second quality	0 11½
Cow-hides, first quality, up to freezing companies' best standards	1 0
Others, first quality	0 11
Cow-hides, second quality	0 10½
Bull-hides, good quality	0 9

All other grades and qualities, including cut and slipy hides, to be fixed at relative valuations.

Arrangements were made to supply the Governments of Australia and Canada with such hides as were required by them for strictly military purposes; and also for enabling tanners within New Zealand to obtain all the hides they required for their own business. The hide-purchasing scheme has worked well.