

winter feed for the requirements of stock to be carried over to next season; provision of financial assistance by the Government for companies to provide additional storage-space; and the necessity for increasing the storage accommodation for cheese. Our deliberations resulted in the following joint memorandum from both Boards being sent to you :—

“Wellington, 11th September, 1918.

“The Board of Agriculture and the National Efficiency Board have carefully examined the figures in returns which have been furnished to them, relative to the output of meat, butter, and cheese, the quantity of produce in store at the present time, the cold-storage capacity in the Dominion, and the proposed additions thereto.

“We have had the benefit of two interviews with yourself, and in addition have had the advantage of long conferences with Dr. Reakes, Mr. Cuddie, and Mr. Taylor, who gave valuable information on the various subjects under consideration.

“*Meat.*—We have to report that we think the figures *re* meat compiled by the Department of Imperial Government Supplies provide safe estimates of the amount of storage and production. The number of carcasses likely to be shipped up to 31st December was substantiated, provided the vessels promised arrived safely. The latest information available shows that the additional cold storage which is being provided is even greater than was at first estimated. In estimating the number of freight carcasses likely to be shipped after 1st January there are only the number of vessels provided last year as a guide. Should the same number of vessels be available this year as during the corresponding period of last year, there would (at the end of the season) be left more carcasses in store than there are at present, which might result in a precarious position for the following season, and for which preparation should be made.

“The freezing companies are in many cases making arrangements for extra storage, which unless the annual production very largely increases may not be fully required in normal times. Where additional storage is necessary, the producers should assist such companies by providing further capital for such purpose.

“There is no guarantee as to the number of vessels which will be available from 1st January onwards; therefore ordinary prudence dictates that preparation should be made by producers to meet a possible suspension of slaughtering and freezing operations before the end of the coming season.

“*Dairy-produce.*—The information furnished shows that sufficient storage for cheese has been, or is being, provided for in the South Island, but that in the North Island it would be prudent to provide some addition to the storage beyond that already arranged for.

“The evidence in respect to butter is more satisfactory, as the additional freezing accommodation now being provided will afford reasonable safety.

“Those interested in the production of dairy-produce should, like the meat-growers, contribute towards the capital required for such increase in storage.

“We are therefore of opinion—

“(1.) That the Minister should take such steps as may be necessary, in the event of a congestion of storage becoming sufficiently acute, to provide for the canning of second-quality meat.

“(2.) That, in order to conserve storage-space, it is desirable that companies should be encouraged to can a larger proportion of suitable meat than usual, and with a view to aiding in this matter a further endeavour should be made to induce the Imperial Government to purchase the canned product.

“(3.) That companies should be urged to provide for an increase in the present canning plant, and the Government should give every possible assistance to enable them to obtain such additional plant.

“(4.) That, to provide for such a contingency, freezing companies which have a supply of tinplate for canning purposes should, by regulation, be prohibited from disposing of it for any other purpose without the consent of the Minister.

“(5.) That farmers should be warned that there may be a necessity to carry over a proportion of sheep and lambs, and that they therefore should make due provision for additional winter feed.

“(6.) That the Government should meet in a generous spirit such freezing companies as are prepared to increase their storage-space, but require financial assistance from the Government to enable them to do so.

“(7.) That, with regard to butter, sufficient cold-storage space is likely to be available if the number of ships that are expected do arrive.

“(8.) That, with regard to cheese, additional cool storage for approximately 50,000 crates should be provided, principally in the Taranaki and Wellington districts, distributed as may be advised by the Dairy Division of your Department.

“In conclusion we would specially point out that while the aggregate storage-space which will be available in the Dominion as a whole indicates a margin, it must be borne in mind that conditions vary in different districts, and while there may be sufficient space available in one district, in another district the stores may become seriously congested. Companies should therefore utilize the available storage-space to the best possible advantage.