

and friends at prices below that at which recognized retailers were enabled to purchase. This position has been rectified to the point where retailers only are enabled to purchase at wholesale rates, although suppliers to a dairy factory may purchase sufficient quantities for their own requirements at the fixed wholesale price. Similar practices existed in the cities, where groups of individuals purchased at wholesale rates and distributed amongst their own members, thus depriving genuine resellers of part of their livelihood.

Another matter to which attention has been given is the question of butter brands. Butter for consumption in New Zealand has, in the past, been packed under hundreds of different brands, in many instances the same dairy factory packing its butter in ten, twenty, or even more different wrappers. At the present time only a manufacturer's or licensed distributor's registered brand may be used for any one quality of butter.

Prior to control being exercised on the local market, any person could engage in butter distribution, and in many instances some of these by reason of their other activities or connections were not suitable to act as butter distributors. Apart from uneconomic overlapping, this system, because of the lack of satisfactory facilities, did not tend to provide the best service or quality to the consumer. The issue of licenses under the regulations is now subject to careful investigation as to the suitability of the applicant and into any possible financial or other interest which he may have in any concern manufacturing or selling butter; this is to ensure that no group of resellers shall have an advantage over any other group or individual. It is further incumbent upon a licensee to have available an efficient delivery service of which he must be the owner. He must be prepared to give regular and satisfactory delivery within the area defined by his license to all persons eligible to purchase butter at wholesale rates, and his premises must be suitable for the carrying-on of a butter-distributing business.

The available statistics provided by the returns under the Butter Marketing Regulations have enabled the Division to meet the problem of winter supplies and storages, and the Dairy-produce Section has done much valuable work in arranging for suitable supplies of butter to areas of short supply and short production. Particular instances of assistance rendered in this manner are found in the South Island, especially Westland, Canterbury, Otago, and Southland, to which parts large quantities of butter have been forwarded through the Division to supply local demand where the winter so reduces production that factories are unable to meet even their local requirements. Supplies have been drawn from factories in those parts of the Dominion where the winter production is sufficient to meet the local demands and also provide a surplus.

In Wellington and Auckland, butter-patting plants have been installed by the Division with the object of supplying city requirements daily with a fresh hygienically prepared supply of butter as well as giving those factories desirous of supplying the city markets the facilities for doing so. These plants will also be of great service to dairy factories whose make of butter at certain times of the year, particularly during the winter months, is so reduced as to make the operation of their own patting plants more or less uneconomic.

LOCAL MARKETING OF CHEESE.

New Zealand is well known for its comparatively heavy consumption of meat, and this no doubt has a considerable bearing on the small amount of cheese consumed. This could be increased with advantage, and the Division is accordingly working on a plan to this end.

EGGS AND EGG-PULP.

For many years conditions under which eggs are marketed in New Zealand have required attention and the lack of some central body with sufficient authority to influence marketing has been felt by producers.

The main problem with egg marketing is the "flush" period, approximately from September to January, during which time egg-production is at its highest. As a consequence, prices are at their lowest at this period, and the absence of any co-ordinating body allows unrestricted transfers of supplies to markets which are unable to absorb them at prices payable to the producer. Thus the advantage to the poultry-keeper of the period of highest production has been largely nullified by the low prices received. A further factor is that of production by domestic flocks which, mainly due to unscientific rearing, come into production at this period, and thus accentuate the marketing difficulty. For these reasons the Division has rendered assistance to the poultry industry in the following manner:—

Last season the Division supervised and handled the export of eggs from New Zealand by giving a guarantee of 1s. 1d. per dozen in grading-store for all eggs exported. This action was taken in order to ensure that a minimum selling-price could be assured to the producers so far as the local market was concerned, and, whilst a comparatively small quantity of eggs was actually exported, the effect upon the market as a result of such export immediately made itself apparent.

The net result of the transactions show that sales realizations were short by £468 of the amount paid to suppliers.