

BOBBY CALF POOL OPERATIONS

The Division has continued to carry out the general administration of Bobby Calf Marketing Pools, and during the year five new pools were formed and gazetted. Practically every dairying district in the Dominion is now disposing of its calves through the pooling system, and the total number of gazetted areas is 134.

Following discussions with executives of the industry, the regulations governing the operations of the pools were revised and consolidated. These new regulations—now known as the Bobby Calf Marketing Regulations 1946—came into force on the 1st February, 1946. The main new feature of these regulations is rotational retirement of pool committee members.

Annual meetings of producers are now being held again after an enforced lapse through the war years, and a great deal of interest is being taken by farmers in the management of their pools.

Pools were encouraged during the year to collect all calves offering out of season, and, by their co-operation, a considerable quantity of exportable veal was thus saved. The number of calves graded as “underweight” is also smaller, not only increasing the amount of veal available for export, but also making for general improvement in the treatment of calves between farm and slaughterhouse.

Present indications are that the net return to the producer per calf during the year should reach the high level of 12s. over all calves collected, and the industry's prospects for the coming year appear sound.

EGG SECTION

Production during this year has shown no increase comparable to that of last year, but the quantity of eggs passing through approved marketing channels has greatly increased. This has been brought about mainly by the inducement of the 3d. per dozen egg subsidy which is paid on all eggs received by approved marketing floors. It has enabled a greater and more continuous supply of eggs to reach civilians in all egg marketing areas.

DISTRIBUTION

By means of the central egg floors organized in seventeen districts (which since last year include Nelson) eggs have been equitably distributed week by week within each, either by individual ration or by quotas to retailers; those “vulnerable groups” who need eggs most (children under five years of age, expectant and nursing mothers, invalids, and hospitals) have received a full ration at all seasons; war and shipping priorities have been fulfilled; and supplies have been moved from the better-supplied into the more-needy areas. With hostilities ended, the demand from Armed Forces has naturally become less, but, on the other hand, the demand from overseas shipping is greater. The 3d. per dozen subsidy has increased considerably the intake of the floors through which it is paid, viz. :—

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Year ending 31st March, 1944	7,448,491
Year ending 31st March, 1945	10,850,528
Year ending 31st March, 1946	12,705,095

These figures represent eggs which have passed through the central floors in the main consuming areas and thus into organized distribution. The subsidy which is approved up to June, 1947, is for the present to be extended quarterly at the Minister of Marketing's discretion.

Most of the marketing areas can at least supply their own requirements. Wellington, however, is a large consumer area that can produce only a small percentage of its needs close at hand. It therefore has to rely on transfers from other areas, and the Division, as an integral part of its marketing programme, arranges weekly transfers to be made