

1916.

NEW ZEALAND.

MEAT PURCHASED BY IMPERIAL MEAT-SUPPLY
DEPARTMENT

(PARTICULARS RELATIVE TO SALE AND DISPOSAL IN GREAT BRITAIN OF).

Laid on the Table of the House of Representatives by Leave.

DISPOSAL OF MEAT.

Beef, except the small proportion which is of inferior quality, is utilized for feeding the Army.

Mutton.—In August, 1915, the High Commissioner cabled that the Government was then holding all wethers (and presumably maiden ewes also) for feeding the Army. For some time past, however, New Zealand mutton has been regularly quoted on the Smithfield Market. Evidently only a portion of our mutton-supplies is so sold, the balance being used for the troops. The proportion utilized for Army purposes is not known, but the quantity placed upon the market is only small, as is shown by an extract from a letter from Sir Thomas Robinson to the High Commissioner on the 23rd May, reading as follows: "The quantity of New Zealand meat which it is possible to release for civil consumption has now been reduced to such small proportions that its scarcity on the market is very noticeable, more particularly so during the period when supplies from Ireland have been unobtainable."

Lamb.—All lamb is utilized by the Imperial Government for the purpose of sale for consumption by the civil population. The quantity placed on the market daily is controlled by the authorities, and large quantities are held in store.

SALES AND SELLING-PRICES IN ENGLAND.

The system under which our meat is sold in England is as follows: Such meat as is liberated for sale by the Board of Trade is sold by agents nominated by the shippers here, who must be approved and accredited by the British Board of Trade. They sell to wholesale merchants, who must sell direct to retailers, dealing being forbidden.

WHOLESALE PRICES.

The High Commissioner's last cabled market report, dated 15th July, gives the following quotations: New Zealand mutton, 8½d. per pound; New Zealand ewe mutton, 8¼d. per pound; New Zealand lamb, 9½d. per pound.

The f.o.b. prices paid in New Zealand for these classes of meat are: New Zealand mutton, 4½d. per pound; New Zealand ewe mutton, 4d. per pound; New Zealand lamb (Canterbury), 5½d. per pound.

To these f.o.b. prices must be added the charges incurred before the meat can be realized on by the Imperial authorities. The exact amount of London charges cannot be ascertained, but it is considered that, including a reasonable estimate of these, it costs the Imperial Government at least 2½d. per pound, and probably 2½d. per pound additional to the f.o.b. price here, before the meat can be realized on. Taking the lowest estimate of 2½d. the figures work out as follows:—

	F.O.B. Price, plus Charges (2½d.).	Market Price in England (July 15).	Profit made by Imperial Government.
Mutton	7d.	8½d.	1½d.
Ewe mutton	6½d.	8¼d.	1¾d.
Lamb	8½d.	9½d.	1½d.

Thus, on a 36 lb. lamb a profit of 4s. 1½d. is shown in favour of the Imperial Government. But it must be remembered that the supply of New Zealand meat on the market is now very limited, and this has tended to bring about abnormal market conditions.