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New milk deal for Dublin suppliers

A MILK supplier to the Dublin district during the coming season will be assured of the fixed liquid milk price for the same volume of milk that obtained the full price for him during the period October 1, 1956, to January 31, 1957.

This is the outcome of a recent agreement between the Executive of the Milk Producers' Association and the milk distributors.

It amounts to this that, if a supplier's average daily supply, for which he received a liquid milk price within this period, was say, 20 gallons, he is assured of a market in the liquid trade for a minimum of this amount during the coming season.

In actual fact, the wholesale trade always increases and, in practice, each supplier's quota will be higher than the basic figure. The position with the surplus milk is unchanged. The amount of the milk which will be sold as surplus from each man's supply will be based on the individual increase, which each supplier makes over his basic quota.

Quota increases

This does not mean that he would not get the liquid price for more than this quota. According as the wholesale trade increases, his quota will increase in proportion.

This new agreement will bring about little change in the existing arrangement as far as the individual is concerned. It could react unfavourably, however, with a supplier who, for one reason or another, was supplying a smaller amount of milk last winter.

For instance, if a man were clearing his herd of T.B. reactors and, as often happens, did not purchase replacements until spring, he would have an unusually low supply from November to January and, according to the new agreement, his summer quota will be based on this low supply.

A feature of the milk supply to the Dublin district is that the summer and winter supplies are gradually tending to level. The surplus for March this year will be no greater than it was a few years ago, when a severe shortage was experienced during December and January.

This year there was a heavy surplus during December and January, and the seasonal increase in March is not nearly so evident.

Record price

A BUNCH of Whitehead bullocks, aged 13 months, fetched the record price of £56 10s. each at Thurles Livestock Market this week.

These suckled calves were owned by Michael Crowe of Slatfield, Cashel.

New British beef prices

BRITISH beef prices next year will be 5s. on average per cwt. higher than last year. The method of calculating the guaranteed prices is also being very much simplified.

There will be a standard price for each week of the year. Guaranteed prices will be so arranged that farmers will not get more than 7s. above or below this standard figure.

This table gives the guaranteed price levels for the first week of each month during the coming year.

Price of top grade cattle will be 2s. per cwt. above the average rate.

Com-mencing	Standard Price	Stabilising Limits			
		Lower		Higher	
1957	s d	s d	s d	s d	s d
April 1	171 6	164 6	178 6	167 0	181 0
May 6	174 0	163 0	177 0	163 0	177 0
June 3	170 0	154 6	168 6	154 6	168 6
July 1	161 6	143 0	157 0	143 0	157 0
Aug. 5	150 0	139 0	153 0	139 0	153 0
Sept. 2	146 0	134 6	148 6	134 6	148 6
Oct. 7	141 6	140 6	154 6	140 6	154 6
Nov. 4	141 6	149 6	163 6	149 6	163 6
Dec. 2	147 6	156 6	170 6	156 6	170 6
Jan. 6	156 6	160 6	174 6	160 6	174 6
Feb. 3	163 6				
Mar. 3	167 6				

Store buyers were choosier

STORE buyers in Britain are becoming increasingly selective as the effects of the new quality premiums have time to sink in.

In general the level of business was about maintained at most centres last week, but there was always that little bit of extra interest in the better animals, and at times it was fairly hard to find a buyer for inferior animals.

In centres where the average price was lower than in the previous week the cause was invariably traced to a lack of quality in the entries.

February stores exports set

NEW RECORD

A HUGE increase took place last month in British and Six Counties imports of store cattle from the Republic.

The total for the month was no less than 73,229, against 27,298 in the previous February, while the value was £3,813,700, compared with £1,501,600—or £52 4s. a head, against £55.

The lower average value was due in part to the inclusion of 21,000 store heifers, against 9,000 in the same month last year.

Imports of fat cattle were down from 13,310 head to 12,619, and in value, from £870,300 to £746,800, or from £65 8s. a head to £59 4s.

This decline was, likewise, due in part to the fact that the total included a larger proportion of fat heifers than in the previous February.

British imports of carcass beef from the Republic fell, compared with February of last year, from 20,500 cwt. to 8,800 cwt., and in value from £236,500 to £91,800.

The reduction in quantity was equivalent to a fall of about 2,500 head in live shipments, but this should have been much more than offset by a big increase in our Continental trade in carcass meat and cattle.

CANNED BEEF

Our canned beef trade with Britain was also rather poor, being down on the same month last year from 13,500 cwt. to 11,500 cwt. and in value from £187,800 to £159,000.

The sheep and lamb figures, however, were again good, being up in number from 7,701 head to 9,191, and in value from £50,200 to £72,200.

In mutton and lamb there was an increase from 3,836 cwt., valued at £47,300, to 5,210, valued at £69,900.

The figures for pig meat imported from the Republic rose in value to £225,000, from £194,300 in the previous February.

This expansion was entirely in bacon, which accounted for £187,200, against £6,600, owing to a big switch from pork and canned ham.

POULTRY

Poultry shipments were good, being up from 3,809 cwt., valued at

Pre-pack coming

"THE main volume of New Zealand's exports to Britain must continue to be in the form of quartered beef and carcass meat," said J. C. Coleman, manager of a major meat exporting plant in New Zealand.

He was speaking on pre-packaging, and said that there was a steady development in the quick-frozen industry, with all companies doing their own experiments in the form of small shipments.

These would build up in time, but it would be many years before quick-frozen, pre-packaged steaks, roasts and other cuts became predominant. There would be tremendous labour involved and the staff just wouldn't be available.

Will cattle be scarce?

CATTLE exports during January and February were more than 100,000 higher than the corresponding figure last year.

Livestock census figures for January 1 show that cattle numbers are down by about 40,000 on the previous year. Hence, at the moment, there are about 150,000 less cattle going onto grass than we had this time last year.

Bacon in doldrums

THE normal recession in the bacon trade, which accompanies the Lenten season, appears to have intensified this year, according to an official of one of the leading curers Dublin.

The curers are at present holding very heavy stocks of bacon.

With the present market set-up, export prospects are poor because of the prevailing low price levels in Britain.

Moreover, exports of gammons are currently running at a high level and, in contrast to bacon, stocks of hams held by the curers are understood to be lower than at any time for the past two years.

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Arthur McKeveatt, of Kilkenny, Dundalk, Co. Louth, has his dairy herd of 28 Friesians strip-grazing a first-year undersown lea for the past fortnight.