

BEEF SALES OUTLOOK OPTIMISTIC

The London manager of Vestey's Australasian operations, Mr Derek Lloyd, said he expects prices for New Zealand lamb on the British market to remain reasonably steady for the rest of this year.

However, Mr Lloyd, who recently visited New Zealand to tour W. & R. Fletcher (N.Z.) Ltd.'s operations, said he did not foresee any marked increase in the volume of sales.

He said the prime objective for New Zealand exporters this year was to pursue increased sales in diversified markets. In this field he said that New Zealand should be disappointed with the poor sales record to Greece, and the general lack of sales to the Middle East markets.

He said the one matter of great concern was the safeguarding of New Zealand's position in Europe in light of the European Common Market's sheep meat regulation which will be introduced at the beginning of 1978.

On a brighter note Mr Lloyd said that regarding beef sales, indications were for improved prices next year.

He added that prospects for beef sales to Korea were also promising and New Zealand exporters should be pleased with the recent development of the market. (see story page 2)

During his visit to New Zealand, Mr Lloyd, accompanied by Fletcher's general manager, Mr Mark Hinchliff, and the assistant general manager, Mr Peter Johnston, inspected the company's four freezing works in the North Island and the company's other interests in both islands.

He said he was impressed with the progress being made in the construction of the new six chain mutton slaughterhouse at Nelson's (N.Z.) Ltd's Tomoana works in Hastings. Mr Lloyd also saw the beginning of work on the upgrading of the company's Patea works.

During visits to Wellington, Mr Lloyd had what he described as "useful" talks with the acting chairman of the New Zealand Meat Producers Board, Mr Adam Begg, as well as discussions with other sectors of the meat industry and Fletcher's head office staff.



The manager of Fletcher's Matura stockfoods plant in Southland, Mr Bill Coster (left) discussing the production and marketing of Denkavit milk replacer and Tomoana stockfoods manufactured at the plant, with Mr Lloyd and Mr Hinchliff.



Taking a break from his extensive tour of W. & R. Fletcher's New Zealand operations, Mr Lloyd (centre) a keen rugby follower had the opportunity to discuss the British Lions chances before their match against Manawatu-Horowhenua with from left Peter Johnston, John Dawes, the Lions coach, George Burrell, the team manager, and Mark Hinchliff.

N.Z. WILL MEET THE DEADLINES

The general manager of W. & R. Fletcher (N.Z.) Ltd., Mr Mark Hinchliff, who is also deputy chairman of the New Zealand Freezing Companies Association, has said that recent criticism by the Minister of Agriculture, Mr Duncan MacIntyre, that New Zealand Freezing companies are not moving quickly enough to meet new international hygiene standards could be misunderstood.

Mr Hinchliff said that he considered companies were progressively meeting the required standards, and well understood the implications if there was any slacking on this issue.

"Unfortunately this matter has become an emotive one and what is not generally realised is that the new hygiene regulations are being phased in over a period - its not a matter that can be accomplished totally overnight either physically or financially, if the industry is to remain viable and keep the farmer in business.

"At the moment there are two main requirements for lamb treatment; humane stunning before slaughter and the provision of facilities for head inspection, which have to be operational by October 1, this year.

"A number of works already have equipment installed for these two new practices, and others are in the process of installing them.

"I am sure that most exporting killing works will have the necessary equipment in use if not before, then by the required date.

"Other improvements required by the E.E.C. Authorities include upgrading, such as the replacement of timber by impervious materials such as fibroline in freezers and food processing areas, all of which involves a great deal of expense to the meat processors.

"As yet some of the new regulations, though accepted by the Codex meeting, have not yet been fully defined in practical terms. Consequently there has been a great deal of uncertainty among the processors who will need complete ratification before becoming involved in large expenditure.

"We have made a number of requests to government for low interest loans and other financial concessions to help the industry, which is the major earner of New Zealand's foreign exchange, to assist in meeting the estimated bill of

more than \$300 million required for all works to complete these programmes.

"This accommodation has not been granted and as a result the industry has had to find the money itself in a period of high interest rates, tight liquidity, and uncertainties in overseas markets.

"It is a massive operation but I am sure the industry will do its utmost to meet the individual requirements as they become necessary".

Mr Hinchliff said many companies, including W. & R. Fletcher's four North Island works, had made tremendous advances in their overall upgrading programmes.

He pointed out that a completely new mutton slaughter block was being built at present at the company's Tomoana works, and large scale upgrading was also underway in the Westfield, Kaiti and Patea works. Fletcher's bill alone, due to escalating costs, will amount to more than \$40 million spread over the next three years.

KOREAN BEEF SALES GROW

Korea's growing importance in the beef importing market was reflected recently by the visit to Wellington by three top level Korean government officials to investigate the export supply and cutting arrangements available from New Zealand.

The three officials, Mr Tae Hong Chung, Director, Bureau of Foreign Procurement, Osrok, Mr Chang Koo Lee, Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, ROK, and Mr In Hyun Kim, Assistant Division Chief, Osrok, were taken to Fletcher's Westfield works where a full beef display was arranged.

Fletcher's export sales manager, Mr Bruce Bishop, says Korea has a good market potential for New Zealand beef.

Mr Bishop said the confidence expressed about Korea last year (Weddel's World, July) has been borne out.

Korea only began importing beef last year, buying 1,000 tonnes from New Zealand and a similar amount from Australia.

So far this year a similar amount had already been imported and a further tender for an additional 1,000 tonnes was presently on tender. (To date Fletcher's have won all three contracts to supply New Zealand beef to Korea).

Korea's imports of beef were expected to reach 5,000 tonnes this year.

Mr Bishop said the Korean officials were impressed with the killing facilities and strict hygiene requirements that were necessary in New Zealand.

"To emphasise the importance we attach to the Korean market we put on a special demonstration of all types of beef cuts and bone-in beef at Westfield.

"So far, Korea has ordered only quarter beef and one of our main aims during their visit was to convince them of the advantages of boneless beef cuts.

"It is too soon at this stage to expect Korea to move away completely from bone-in imports to boneless cuts, but we did impress on the delegation the fact that quarter beef production is seasonal, and we have sent samples of various boneless cuts to Seoul to obtain a full evaluation at the market place."

Mr Bishop added that Fletcher's Korean agents should be fully commended for their reliable service and informed evaluation of the market situation which had been instrumental in Fletcher's domination of sales to Korea to date.

M.I.R.I.N.Z. MOVES

Dr C.L. Davey, previously Assistant Director, has taken up the position of Director of the Meat Industry Research Institute of New Zealand, at Hamilton. The previous Director, Mr Norman Law, has retired. Mr Mark Hinchliff, W. & R. Fletcher (N.Z.) Ltd, has been appointed Deputy Chairman of M.I.R.I.N.Z.



The Korean delegation inspecting a carton of beef cuts during their tour of Westfield, (from left) Mr B. Jeffries, N.Z. Meat Producers Board, Mr Chung, Mr Lloyd Souness, Westfield assistant general manager, Mr Bishop, Mr Lee and Mr Kim.

OBITUARIES

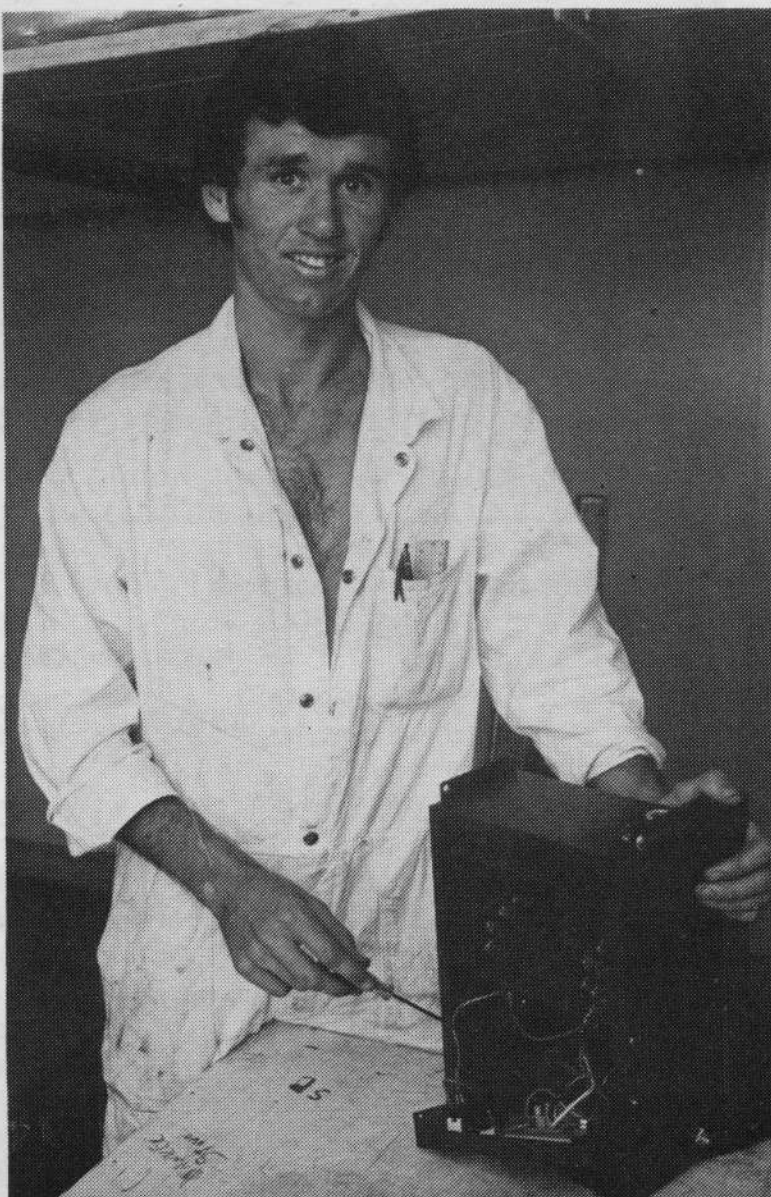
Condolences to the family of Mr Andy Beyer, who died in Auckland recently.

Mr Beyer joined the Westfield Freezing Company in 1934 and worked in the rendering department and general store before retiring in 1974 after 40 years' service.

Mr Beyer served with New Zealand forces in Greece, Italy and the Middle East during the Second World War attaining the rank of major and being awarded the Military Cross. He was a keen rugby player and represented Auckland in his youth.

A well known identity in the South Taranaki livestock world, Mr Alfred Lenz, died in Hawera recently, aged 76.

Mr Lenz was a member of the W. & R. Fletcher livestock buying staff for 30 years until his retirement in 1966.



Where Are They Now?

"Weddel's World" is keen that contact with former long serving staff members is not lost on their retirement from the group and the Editor has asked for contributions on any interesting new retirement activities they have now undertaken.

The first comes from former group purchasing officer, Mr C.F. (Con) Grant, who recently attended the 20th Triennial Conference of the British Commonwealth Ex-Servicemen's League in Edinburgh, as one of two New Zealand delegates attending the meeting.

Mr Grant has been on the Dominion Executive of the RSA for 15 years, which takes up most of his retirement time together with his involvement with the N.Z. Patriotic Fund Board, and his membership of the executive of the Wellington Provincial Patriotic Council, the Rehabilitation League and Heritage (N.Z.) Inc. These groups involve his attendance at about four or five executive meetings a week in Wellington and in what spare time he has Mr Grant plays golf and gardens.

During his visit to Britain, Mr Grant found time to visit the Weddel head offices and renew some old friendships before taking his wife on an extensive tour of Europe taking in Russia, Poland, Yugoslavia, Turkey, Bulgaria, Finland, Sweden, Denmark and East Germany.

ROUND-THE-BAYS RECORD WINNER

Westfield electrician Philip Wilson notched up a notable win when he was first home in the field of 20,000 competitors in the fifth annual "Round the Bays" run in Auckland in March.

He ran a record time for the 11 kilometre run, but unfortunately for the Westfield works, he entered individually and did not run for either of the two Westfield teams of six men apiece. Had he been an "official" team member he would have done much to raise their overall placings, even so both teams finished the course with creditable performances.

Philip, who is 23, joined Westfield in 1972 as an electrical apprentice.

KOREA TAKING OVER WOOL FROM JAPAN

Korea is fast becoming the "Japan" of the 1960's and should present New Zealand Wool Exporters with an expanding business over the next decade, according to the head of Fletcher's Wool Department, Mr Alan Chapman.

Mr Chapman, who recently toured New Zealand's far east markets in Japan, Korea, Hong Kong and Taiwan, said that because of their significant increase in wages Japanese textile producers were, despite their technical expertise, finding it increasingly difficult to compete in the export field with Korea, Taiwan and Hong Kong.

As a result they had turned inwards to the domestic market where competition was fierce and many worsted spindles had been taken out of production, with a further reduction being planned.

In addition, he said, many companies were importing cheap yarns from Korea and Taiwan which was compounding the situation.

However Mr Chapman did not see the outlook as completely bleak as the large carpet manufacturing sector should continue to be a major buyer of New Zealand wool and provide a stable market.

Mr Chapman said that to make up for the fall-off in Japanese imports for the clothing sector, New Zealand should test the Korean market, as local manufacturing potential was growing

steadily, and with low wages, Korea could become a significant producer of woollen products.

He said the Hong Kong and Taiwan markets also augured well for New Zealand. Both countries had controlled their rates of inflation and consequent wage increases, and were therefore strongly competitive in world export markets. Despite being politically ostracized by the rest of the world, Taiwan's exports continue to grow.

Mr Chapman said an important factor governing New Zealand wool exports was the maintenance of steady prices at local sales.

He said there had been a recent lack of confidence by overseas buyers following the dramatic rise in the price of wool at the end of 1976 and the consequent falling market.

Buyers had tended to stop buying until they saw a levelling of prices.

Mr Chapman said that the Wool Corporation had done an excellent job in this field recently ensuring a stability that was bringing back confidence in the market which will make overseas buyers more active.



In the Wellington Head Office wool department, Mary Ann Fitzpatrick, who holds a Diploma of Wool and Wool Technology from Massey University, sorts samples of slipe wool destined for overseas markets.

LIVESTOCK CORNER

Surveying the farm . . .



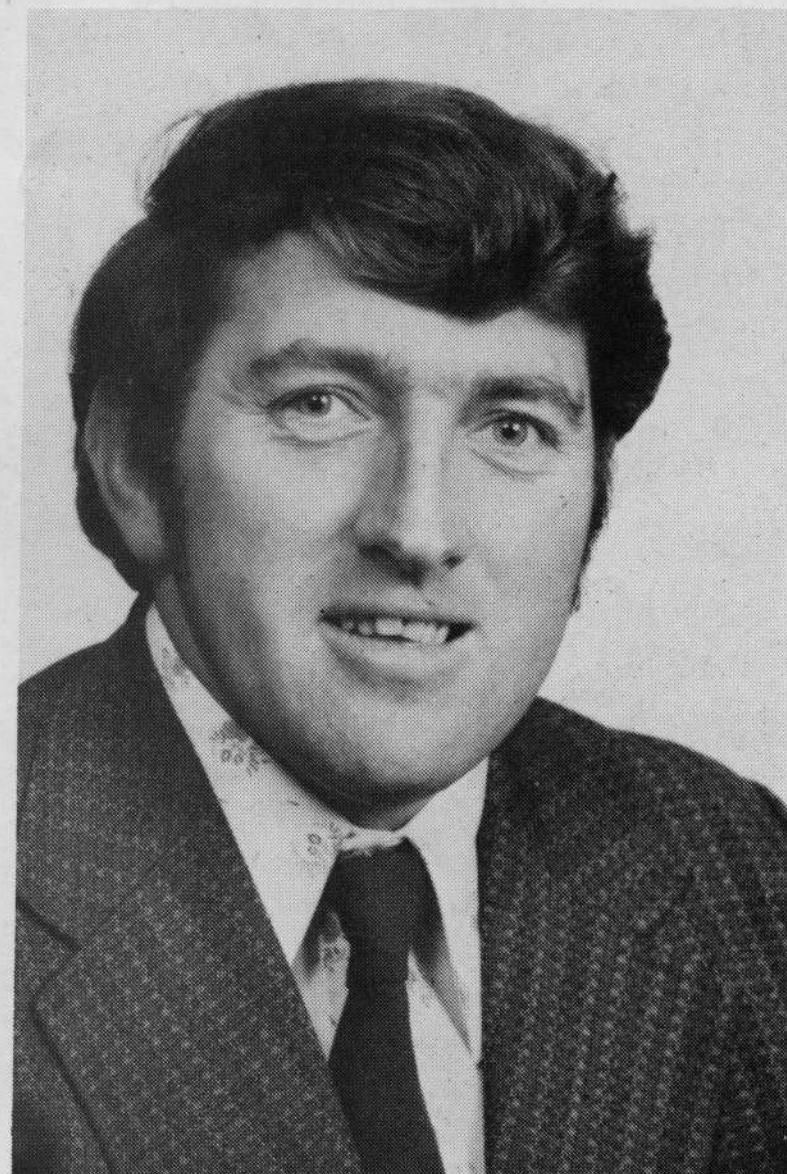
Fletcher's Auckland Provincial Livestock buying staff, Bill MacMillan (left) and Peter Williams, looking at stock at W. & R. Fletcher's Thurlow Farm with the farm manager, Graeme Macmillan (right). The 500 acre farm was bought in 1958 from the McLaughlin family who owned it for more than a century and is situated along the eastern shores of Manukau harbour near Auckland International Airport.

Thurlow farm is used to assist the controlled flow of livestock to Westfield works, which is only six miles away, to supply the large quantity of hay required by the works for on site feeding and also for various field feeding and grazing trials in connection with Fletcher's progressive Tomoana stockfoods operation.

The amenities on Thurlow Farm such as sheep and cattle yards and the fencing were mainly developed by cadet members of the livestock-buying staff under the supervision of Auckland provincial livestock manager Athol Harding in co-operation with Norman Hall who was farm manager from 1958 until his retirement in 1974.

The farm was purchased when Mr Frank Knight was Auckland provincial livestock manager and was given its name by Mr Ronald Vestey. Its coastal charm and beautiful views over Karaka farmlands and the Puhinui stream and mountain enables it to hold a proud place in the showplace properties owned by the Vestey organisation around the world.

WRESTLING WITH HIS PROBLEMS



The quality control manager at the Patea Freezing Company, Selwyn Metcalfe, recently went to the United States as coach for the six man senior New Zealand wrestling team which toured California and other western states.

The trip was Selwyn's first with a New Zealand representative team, and at only 30, he is currently the youngest member of the New Zealand judicial panel.

A qualified referee-judge, Selwyn has been associated with the sport since 1959. He won the Central Districts and Taranaki wrestling titles before turning his attention to refereeing and judging.

FOND FAREWELL TO COMPANY SECRETARY

The farewell to long serving company secretary Mr Bob Scott was marked by many humorous anecdotes from his colleagues emphasising the point that the meat industry has its humorous "cuts".

At a large staff gathering in Wellington to mark Mr Scott's retirement, general manager, Mr Mark Hinchliff, said the occasion was a particularly sad one for both himself and the company after the great amount of work given by Mr Scott during his 42 years of service with the Vestry organisation.

He added, that apart from within the company, Mr Scott was also held in high regard in banking and other business circles throughout New Zealand.

The head of the production department, Jack Lord, added that many people would remember Mr Scott for the kindness and help he had given them particularly in buying and selling houses when on transfer within the group.

He also recalled one occasion when Mr Scott was going to the company's Kaiti works and dutifully informed everybody of his visit — except his wife.

The head of the cost department, Mr Eric Williams, also referred to Mr Scott's valuable assistance in the house market and recounted that one land agent had once told him that he had learnt more about the house business by sitting in a car with Mr Scott than he had in three years in the business.

Mr Williams said that Mr Scott had always been invaluable in times of occasional differences with London. One of those involved 10 cables — four reading "we do not understand", three "explain"; and finally "not clear — repeat in another form".

He recalled a meeting when the discussion ended in complete disagreement, with all heads falling lower, and Mr Scott's falling the lowest. Suddenly Mr Scott looked up disarmingly and said: "Mr Chairman, as you know the situation as regards (a) is so and for (b) it is so, therefore the answer can only be ..." following which the meeting broke up immediately, in accord.

Mr Scott, in his reply, remembered the day he went to the group's headquarters in West Smithfield, to apply for a job with Vestey's as he wanted to go overseas, and was taken on a circuitous tour by a young "dolly bird". After several meetings with the accountant and Lord Vestey he was told he would be sent to Australia, and he went, with the "dolly bird" later becoming his wife.



Mr Scott being presented with a handsome silver tray to mark his retirement by general manager, Mr Hinchliff.

STAFF MOVEMENTS Appointments

Head Office: Brent Watts, Staff Administration Manager; Alan Reid, Resident Engineer, Patea.

Westfield: Peter Rasmussen, Assistant Boning Foreman; Lesley Gates, EDP Machines Supervisor; Ron Binnie, Senior Accounting Clerk.

N.Z. Stockfoods: Hank Sollart, Accountant.

Auckland Meat Company: K.E. Rasibeck, R.D. MacDonald and A. Furse all appointed shop managers.

Transfers

Les Bruce from Patea to Head Office as Production Co-ordinator. Fraser Smith from Kaiti to Head Office as a Project Engineer.

CHAMPION ATHLETE

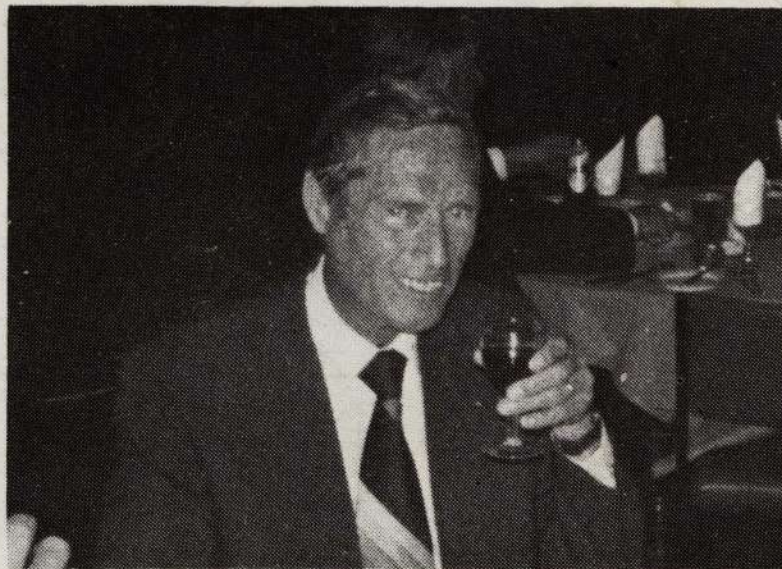


Westfield Bacto-Laboratory technician Sharon Thompson upheld the company's proud sporting tradition by winning the New Zealand women's 1500 metre championship in the recent national titles. Sharon has been interested in athletics since her early secondary school days and first represented Auckland in 1972 at the age of 15.

Retirements



Boning room assistant at the Westfield Freezing Company, Mr John Corbett (left) being congratulated on his retirement from the company by the works manager, Mr Allan Parker, after a presentation and function to mark the event. John asked for an early retirement for health reasons after having spent 23 years with the company, nine as an assistant foreman in the boning room.



Hendriekus (Driek) Romeyn of the accounts department, accepts a toast from his fellow head office staff at a function to mark his retirement after 12 years' service with W. & R. Fletcher (N.Z.) Ltd. A popular figure, Driek was also presented with a cheque by the general manager, Mr Hinchliff, on behalf of management and staff.



Mr H.S. (Stewart) Pauling, W. & R. Fletcher's shipping manager joined the company in 1934 as a junior clerk. He transferred to head office in 1938 as a junior in the shipping department and returned to Patea three years later to take over the work's shipping operations. Mr Pauling was transferred back to Wellington in 1948 as shipping manager. He says the most dramatic change he has seen in the business is the advent of complete containerisation, which he says is taking the romance out of shipping, as vessels will no longer call at works ports, with the product being handled remotely through the container ports. With nearly 30 years experience in his field he is regarded in shipping circles as the "doyen of New Zealand shipping managers." Mr Pauling has always had a keen interest in all sports, particularly cricket, and in his youth he represented Taranaki as a fast bowler with a best season's figures of 104 wickets for an average of 6.42 runs in provincial and club games. His present interest is golf, and on a 14 handicap he has won the Fletcher group trophy twice, as well as winning a number of tournaments run by shipping lines.

COMPANY PROFILE