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Food Products

By C. G. HERDMAN Vice-President, Marsman & Company, Inc.

DURING the month of September arrivals of imported food staples were far above normal. There were quite heavy arrivals of canned meat, particularly corned beef, liverspread, Vienna sausage, and potted meat, as well as trial shipments of chopped beef, a new item in this market. Imports of some items of canned meat, in fact, were so large that supplies now on hand will not be consumed for several months and importers are selling at cost or below as they find it necessary to move stocks in order to meet bank commitments.

Arrivals of canned fish from California were comparatively small, but on the other hand very ample quantities have arrived from South Africa and from Japan.

Canned milk, both evaporated and sweetened condensed, also the various packs of powdered milk, were received in very good quantities, and stocks on hand today are more than ample.

Wheat flour arrivals during the month in the Philippines were well above 800,000 bags, against an estimated consumption of 600,000, and this commodity also is temporarily in oversupply.

There were several shipments received of fresh frozen meats, and at the same time fairly large numbers of live cattle intended for slaughter were imported. It is evident that meat supplies are at present in good supply throughout the country.

Imports were much larger than normal on canned fruits and vegetables and miscellaneous items of foodstuffs. All in all, local markets are today better supplied with practically the entire range of imported foodstuffs than has been the case for quite an extended period.

It is unfortunate that President Magsaysay has not yet taken action to implement the Act passed in the Special Session of Congress to eliminate the 17% exchange tax on imports of wheat flour. Unless action is taken promptly, flour importers will unavoidably be facing very material losses and will of necessity be forced to increase the selling price of flour to bakeries and other consumers, which will, of course, result in an increase in the price of various forms of bread to consumers. An increase of **P**1 per 50-lb, bag on the wholesale price of flour to bakeries, would appear inevitable, and this would probably force an increase of approximately 15% to 20% in the bakery prices of bread to consumers; this would mean a marked increase in the cost of living of the average family.

THE retail trade throughout the country shows no improvement whatsoever. In fact, retailers complain that sales are poorer than for a long time, due to the marked decrease in individual purchasing power. Prices on abaca and copra have improved slightly, but money in circulation appears to be very short. Provincial collections are constantly more difficult.

Textiles By A. MARGOLLES

Acting General Manager Neuss, Hesslein Co., Inc.

SEPTEMBER has seen a marked change in the New York textile market, with a general strengthening in all sections backed by firm raw-cotton prices.

On September 8 the U.S. Department of Agriculture reported an estimated new cotton crop of 11,832,000 bales, or 838,000 bales less than the estimate of August 1. Since then, there have been reports that the crop is continuing to deteriorate because of drought and excessive heat in