

# LOWER COST TO PUBLIC.

## Very Great Benefits from Regulation of Package Cereal Trade.

Benefits amounting in the aggregate to many thousands of dollars have been secured for the public and substitution on a large scale of corn, barley, etc., for wheat has been effected by the Food Controller's regulations governing the sale of cereal products in packages. The prohibition of the sale of such products in original packages of less than twenty pounds, and the refusal to issue licenses if the price charged to the consumer be out of proper proportion to the cost of the raw material have kept the price of these products from advancing despite the increase in the cost of most of the cereals in bulk. There can be no doubt that had it not been for the attitude taken by the Food Controller the price of many of the package cereals on the market would have been increased—in some cases by as much as five cents per package.

### More for the Same Money.

A large number of applications for licenses have been refused or action delayed, pending changes by the manufacturers to comply with the Food Controller's regulations. One firm selling a cereal product in two-pound packages has agreed to increase the net weight of the contents from two to two and one-half pounds, leaving the selling price the same, as a result of the Food Controller's ruling that the price charged to the consumer was out of proper proportion to the cost of the product in bulk and his refusal to issue a license until a satisfactory readjustment was made. The difference will be made up by some reduction in the cost of the package and other selling expenses. Moreover, this firm has announced its intention to substitute 20 per cent barley thus reducing its use of wheat by this amount.

### Products Available in Bulk.

A number of manufacturers have entirely changed their plans and have decided to stop the sale of cereal specialties in small packages for the period of the war. They will continue to sell in packages of twenty pounds or more and the contents will be sold in smaller lots in bulk by retail dealers. Another company which has been manufacturing a 90 per cent wheat product has agreed to substitute 33 per cent corn and increase the contents of the packages from ten to twelve ounces without any increase in price. This will be made possible by doing away with the wax wrapper and re-

ducing package and general selling expense. In the case of another product the manufacturer substituting all corn for wheat which was formerly 95 per cent of the preparation and is increasing the net weight of the package, thus reducing the cost per pound to the consumer.

In the case of a number of package specialties it has been found that the public were being charged a price which, in the opinion of the Food Controller, is too high. The Food Controller is insisting that the cost of packages must only represent a small part of the selling price. High advertising expenses, too, will not be considered as a justifiable cause for an excessive price.

### Net Weight to be Guaranteed.

Very important advantages are promised to the consumer by reason of the requirement that the weight of the net contents must be legibly stamped on each package. It has been found that in many cases there is a wide difference in the contents of packages of the same size. Under the new regulations, however, the manufacturers will be required to guarantee that the package contains at least the amount printed upon it.

There is reason, also, to believe that purchase of cereal products in bulk has been stimulated by the Report of the Special Committee of the Food Controller's Office. The Report emphasized that even at today's prices, which are closer to the bulk prices than they were before the war, cereals in bulk are still cheaper to the consumer than those sold in packages.

## SELECTING SEED POTATOES.

Care should be taken in the selection of good seed potatoes for the coming season. Some of the crop failures last year were due to the use of poor seed. It is also desirable that there should be some uniformity in the variety of potatoes planted. Mixed consignments are not in favour with the dealers or consumers.

Mr. A. D. Wilson, State Food Administrator for Minnesota, stated recently that farmers must expect a loss on their potatoes this year and must market their product even below the cost of production. This is made necessary by the large surplus. He suggested that potatoes of poorer quality which would not bring a fair price on the market be used to fatten hogs.