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administration; T. J. Bennetts and J. L. Carroll, chairman of the committee.

LUTEY'S FAIR PRICE COMMITTEE IN ACTION PARES DOWN H. C. OF L.

Committee Holds Its First Meeting Today and Draws Schedule of Present Prices for Staple Commodities. The 131 Food Dealers in Silver Bow County Are Requested to Conform With the Prices Fixed at the Meeting Today. Complaints on the Part of the Public Will Receive Attention.

A slight reduction in prices of foodstuffs in Butte was agreed upon today by the "fair price" committee of grocers named by William Lutey, county chairman of the merchants division of the United States food administration. The new prices will apply to the 131 food dealers in Silver Bow county, and they are effective at once. They will be revised at least once a week and oftener if necessary. The "fair price" committee will hereafter meet periodically in Chairman Lutey's food conservation office, 103 Pennsylvania block. Any complaints as to food prices will be probed by the committee.

At this morning's meeting the committee formally organized with J. L. Carroll chairman and Charles H. Gallagher as secretary. Mr. Lutey and T. J. Bennetts are other members.

Deals With Staples.

The committee in fixing prices dealt solely with staples or articles that are the essential items of food in all households. A glance at the accompanying table shows that the margin of profit on these articles will average 15 per cent. The profit on butter, which amounts to 11 per cent, is lowest, while that on rice, of 25 per cent, is the highest.

Mr. Lutey explained that in deciding upon fair selling prices the committee did not take into consideration with every item the cost of doing business. The margins or percentages of profit will vary. The costs enumerated are the actual costs to the retailers in bulk or quantity purchases delivered at their places of business. The fair selling price must include the cost and a fair profit to cover the expenses of doing business. These points were taken into consideration by the committee.

Retailers' Expenses.

The retailer's average cost of doing business in Butte ranges from 15 to 20 per cent of his sales. That means that the margin of profit is as great, otherwise he is conducting his business at a loss as far as those items sold under these margins of profit are concerned.

Regarding flour, the question of quoting both Montana and eastern flour was considered, and the committee decided, at least for the present, to quote only the best Montana product.

It is the wish of the fair price committee that the 131 food dealers in Silver Bow county will conform to the prices agreed on by the committee. All complaints on food prices will be welcomed by the committee and should be addressed to Room 103 Pennsylvania block, where they will be given the attention of the committee

PRICES FOR CONSUMERS FIXED BY "FAIR PRICE" COMMITTEE OF GROCERS

Commodity.	Retailers' cost.	Retailers' selling price.
Sugar, Mont., fancy	8 1-3@8½c	10c
Flour, Pt., 49 lbs.....	$2.65@2.80	$3.25@3.50
Corn meal, 9 lb.....	60@63c	75c
Rolled oats, 9 lb.....	60@63c	75@85c
Navy beans.	11½@13c	3 lbs 50c
Rice	7½@ 9c	10@12½c
Milk, large cans	12@13c	15c
Hams, choice	29@30c	33@34c
" fancy	31@32c	35@36c
Bacon, choice	39@40c	43@45c
" fancy	44@45c	48@50c
Butter, choice	44@46c	50c
" fancy.	48c	55c

WARMEST DECEMBER DAY IN THIRTY-SIX YEARS

Helena, Mont., Dec. 18.—The wind is blowing 48 miles an hour in Helena today and the temperature is 59 degrees above zero, the warmest it has been here on any December day in 36 years, or since the local weather bureau station was opened. The wind has blown 1,101 miles since Friday afternoon at 3 o'clock when the chinook started. A velocity of 50 miles an hour was attained here yesterday. A continuation of the chinook for the next 36 hours is the prediction, although slightly lower temperatures are expected tonight and tomorrow.

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