

MEDIA RELEASE

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Alliance Group primed for bobby calves processing

Leading food company Alliance Group is primed for bobby calves processing as the season gets underway this month.

The co-operative's plants at Dannevirke, Levin, Nelson, Pukeuri (Oamaru) and Lorneville (near Invercargill) will be processing bobby calves from July through to October. Processing began at the company's Levin plant on 12th July with other plants expected to begin over the coming weeks.

Heather Stacy, General Manager Livestock and Shareholder Services, said the bobby calves season is an important period for the company.

"We're encouraging farmers to speak with their livestock representatives about booking space for processing at the earliest opportunity.

"The United States and the Middle East are our key markets for products. We export manufacturing veal to the US but also a considerable volume of legs for the food service sector. In the Middle East, there is demand for legs, middles and loins."

Prices in the US are on a par with last year while they are marginally up in the Middle East, although this is on the back of unusually strong prices, she said.

Earlier this year, a number of new regulations designed to ensure the welfare of bobby calves and protect New Zealand's reputation were introduced.

"We welcome these regulations and we're committed to maintaining the highest standards and best practice systems and procedures.

"We take our animal welfare responsibilities very seriously and the welfare of calves is important to safeguard the international reputation of New Zealand's red meat sector.

"We have dedicated animal welfare officers on site as well as qualified independent veterinarians employed by the Ministry for Primary Industries to assess both the condition of animals prior to slaughter and the treatment and handling of stock in yards to ensure that we meet the required standards."

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NOTES TO EDITOR

Alliance Group is a co-operative owned by approximately 5,000 farmer shareholders.



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