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NEW SOUTH WALES

STATE MARKETING BUREAU

DIVISION OF MARKETING
AND AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

MONTHLY MARKETING REVIEW



MAY, 1944

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ISSUED BY AUTHORITY OF THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE PREPARED UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE ACTING CHIEF OF THE DIVISION OF MARKETING AND AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS

SYDNEY

MONTHLY MARKETING REVIEW

A MISCELIANY OF MATTERS RELATING TO THE MARKETING OF PRIMARY PRODUCTS, AT HOME AND ABROAD.

ISSUED BY AUTHORITY OF THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE AND PREPARED UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE ACTING CHIEF OF THE DIVISION OF MARKETING AND AGRICULTURAL TOONOMICS, DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, NEW SOUTH WALES, AUSTRALIA.

MAY, 1944.

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HIGHLIGHTS.

The Minister for Commerce has decided, in view of the serious vegetable outlook, to establish a Committee in New South Wales to discuss problems of production and marketing. It is understood that the Committee will consist of representatives of Food Control, the Department of War Organisation of Industry, Prices Branch, the State Department of Agriculture, and a representative of the vegetable growers.

It has been announced that the State Government has decided to provide an additional £50,000 to assist necessitous cereal growers, orchardists, dairy farmers and potato growers who have suffered because of drought.

The Prices Commissioner has announced that the maximum wholesale price of ripened bananas sold in Sydney will be 7d per lb., with an additional ld per lb. for Lady Finger and Sugar varieties. The "ceiling" wholesale price for pineapples sold in Sydney will be 24/- per case.

A Commonwealth Food Control survey discloses that a record total of 53,481 tons of tomatoes were processed in Australia during the season just end 3, which represents an increase of 54% compared with the previous year.

The Federal Government has decided to pay a fourth advance of 3d per bushel to growers who contributed to the No. 5 Wheat Pool (Season 1941/42). This will bring net payments to growers for No. 5 Pool wheat to 3/4.4d per bushel and means the distribution of a further £2 million to producers.

Rome Beauty and Stayman's Winesap apples have been included in the higher "ceiling" price group. The new maximum price of 18/- per bushel came into effect on 8th May, 1944.

GRADING OF MEAT

(By Messrs. J.R. Williams and G.C. Coleman, Division of Marketing and Agricultural Economics.

The Position in the U.S.A.

Meat grading in the United States of America had its genesis in 1902 when the Agricultural Experiment Station of the University of Illinois listed and defined all existing meat designations. Nothing further transpired, apparently, until 1916 when the United States Department of Agriculture, using the Illinois study as a guide, set up its first tentative standards for classes and designations of beef. These were shortly followed by tentative designations for lamb, veal, mutton and pork. The designations were not intended as quality guides to consumers, but were planned merely to simplify the Government's reporting of marketing information.

In 1923 the buying manager of a large American steamship line decided to order his meat according to these grades and thus became the first consumer to use the service. He had decided that something should be done to establish a position where a buyer could be reasonably certain that his supplies would be maintained at a required standard. As matters stood the quality of his orders, as in the case of the small individual consumer, varied from day to day.

In 1926 these tentative grades were further examined and revised and subsequently issued as official United States standards. Despite the fact that grades were now available to consumers if they asked for quality labelled meat, it was producers, not consumers, who got behind grading and pushed it along.

On 2nd May, 1927, the grading of meat by stamping actually commenced. At first it was restricted to Choice and Prime grades of steer and heifer boof. By 1928 the experiment had proved sufficiently successful to include 'Good' grade. A little later the service took in all grades of beef, lamb, veal and mutton of all classes on a fee basis to cover costs.

Until this stage grades had been fixed for each class or type of beef; that is, a "Good" grade existed for instance in each case for steers, heifers and cows. This was deemed confusing to the consumer and action was taken to eliminate class designation in retail selling, although they were retained on grading certificates for the information of operators. This action also guarded against the danger of unscrupulous dealers selling a grade of one class when a similar grade, but of another class of beef, was requested.

Beef thus became graded for retail selling on the basis of quality, finish and conformation and in respect of five grades, viz., Prime, Choice, Good, Commercial and Utility. /Quality...

- Quality is defined as colour, texture, grain and degree of marbling of the beef.
- Finish is judged on the quantity of fat, its colour, character and the way it is distributed in the cut of beef.
- Conformation is the general "build" and appearance of the beef For consumers its importance lies in the fact that a cut rating high in conformation has a large proportion of edible meat to bone.
- Prime: Produced only from specially fed and well-bred steers and heifers. Quantity is limited and it is used almost exclusively by hotels, restaurants and clubs.
- Choice: Highest grade of beef commonly available to consumers.

 Cuts are usually relatively fat and require considerable trimming.
- Good: Meets needs of consumers deciring best quality at moderate prices and is sold in all sections of country throughout year. Carries sufficient fat for average needs. From this grade down the manner of cooking requires attention. Tougher meat can become fore tender with proper cooking.
- Commercial: For consumers able to buy beef only if prices are below average. Has very little excess fat. Includes relative young cow beef.
- Utility: Lowest Government graded meat usually available to consumers. Includes meats which are not tender, but which can be made palatable by careful and imaginative cooking.

Grades for the kinds of meats remain unchanged. For vealamb, mutton they are: - U.S. Prime, U.S. Choice, U.S. Good, U.S. Medium and U.S. Plain. Medium and Plain for these meats correspont to Commercial and Utility Grades for beef.

Neither the Government nor producers claim that the grahas reached final perfection. Experience has shown, however, that present grades are a fairly dependable guide to quality for consuand are a great advance over grades that vary with the house that sells the meat. The grading source reaches into all important meapacking centres and in respect of beef represents about 10 per ce of the total amount of meat Federally inspected for wholosomeness (as at June, 1940). The percentage is slightly lower for other kinds of meat. Meat grading is voluntary and any retailer can see Government graded meat by ordering it from his releaser.

Grading is carried out by trained experts and costs about three-hundredths of a cent a pound. The grade marks appear over a over again on the whole length of any most carcase as U.S. Choice

or whatever the grade might be. A round purple stamp on a carcase indicates that it has been inspected and passed by the U.S. Government as fit for human consumption.

Grading Meat in New Zealand.

The grading of meat in New Zealand was recently provided for by the issue of regulations under Section 26 of the Board of Trade Act of 1919. Information furnished by the Director-General of Agriculture of New Zealand indicates that the issue of the regulations followed a series of conferences organised by the New Zealand Standards Institute at which all interested parties were represented. The various grades and classes of meat to which prices, as fixed by the Price Tribunal, would apply, was determined at these meetings.

It was decided that grading of the carcases be carried out at the abattoirs which deal with practically all meat consumed locally. Definitions in regard to the various joints and cuts of meat were also agreed upon. As regards the actual branding it was decided to adopt a system of colour marking of the carcases at the point of slaughter, the distinctive grade mark being applied by trained personnel. Graders have been appointed at principal centres, but at the smaller abattoirs special tuition has been given to meat inspectors who will act in a dual capacity.

In December, 1943, the system was in operation in the Wellington abattoir district, all meat consumed therein being graded and marked at point of slaughter. It is anticipated that grading will be applied to all abattoir in the near future. Meat intended for export fr New Zealand is subject to a special marketing order issued in 1941, but stock for local consumption is marketed in the normal manner by auction.

The grading specification specially emphasises that the object of the scheme is not to prejudice the sale of meat of any particular grade but to enable purchasers to distinguish one grade from another and to secure that which best suits their requirements.

The specification issued under the regulations defines in considerable detail the joints and cuts of veal, beef, pork, lamb and mutton, e.g., Rump Steak - Rump steak shall be a cut of steak taken from between the rump knuckle bone of the buttock and the point of the hip bone. Fore Quarter Mutton - A whole forequarter shall be the joint comprising the fore leg, the neck, and shoulder. It shall extend up to and include the fourth rib. The spec fication also defines corned meat, dripping, lard, sausage-mon suet and tripe, etc.

The various grades are as follows:-

Veal: First grade, second grade and boner.

Beef: First, second and third grade.

Pork: First, second and boner.

Lamb: First and second /Hoggets....

Hogget: First.

Mutton: First, second, third and boner.

The specification defines the various classes of animal such as cow, heifer, ox, barrow, wether, etc., while the various grades are indicated in considerable detail, e.g.,

First Grade Beef:

- (a) General requirements the carcases shall be of exen or heifers.
- (b) Conformation the carcases shall be heavily and uniformly fleshed throughout. The rounds and loins shall be well developed and rounded. The chucks shoulders and plates shall be thick and well fleshed. The neck and shins shall be relatively short.
- (c) Finish. The carcase shall be almost entirely covered with smooth fat. Cod (or udder), kidney or aitch fats shall be abundant but not excessive. The fat shall be firm and creamy in colour. The floor shall be firm and of good colour.

First Grade Lamb.

- (a) General requirements: The carcases shall be of ewe or wether lambs of either Down breed or cross-breed.
- (b) Conformation: The legs and loins shall be full and compact. The fore quarters shall be fine.
- (c) Finish. The flesh shall be light in colour and firm, interlarded with fat. The fat shall be uniformly white. Only a slight colour tinge of yellow shall be allowed. The carcase generally shall be pleasant to the touch and the fat firm and smooth.

In regard to the actual branding it is provided that every carcase of fresh meat which has been graded shall be brande by means of an inked roller drawn down each side of the carcase. The specification indicates both in writing and by diagrams how and where these lines shall be drawn in connection with each respective grade. It is also provided that the lines or stripes representing the various grades in each class shall be of a different colour, e.g., first grade beef shall be marked in red.

When any joint or cut does not bear the grade, brand of mark assigned to the carcase from which it was severed, it is necessary to display a ticket or placard clearly indicating the grade in question.

Frozen carcases apparently are not anded, but are /marked....

marked with a ticket bearing the word "frozen" in addition to the respective grade. It is also implied that no frozen meat shall be sold by retail unless the word "frozen" is clearl indicated on a ticket. The sale of any joint or cut of boner grade meat for human consumption is prohibited. Retailers are obliged to prominently display a notice indicating the various grades and facsimiles of the prescribed brands.

What of Australia?

The question of grading meat in Australia is one that has been exercising the minds of many of those interested in the industry for some time, but so far little has been done in this direction, although it is understood that a modified form of grading has operating Queensland during the past few years. At times the question has resolved itself into one particular aspect of grading, such as the branding of lamb.

Prior to the fixation of ceiling prices, values of the respective grades of stock found their own level at the saleyards, and the need for a system of grading was, in the main, for the purpose of preventing the exploitation of the consumer and aiding in the building up of uniformity in quality and improving selling methods at the retail end. Conforming to the Government's desire to stabilise values, the Prices Commissioner has, with few exceptions, been obliged to fix ceiling price levels for various types of meat, irrespective of quality owing to the absence of grading standards. Theoretically, of course, the ceiling level should operate in respect of prime quality and plainer grades of beef or mutton should sell at rates correspondingly lower. With a commodity in short supply, however, there is a tendency for the maximum price to become the minimum.

Since price control has been in operation, the tendency ha become more and more marked for a reduction in the margin between the selling values of plain and prime stock, this being particularly noticeable with cattle. Some margin, of course, still exists, but it is possible that in the future this will shrink still more following the fixing of maximum retail prices in respect of various cuts of meat which began to operate on 17th January, 1944. Hitherto, maximum prices for the various cuts were fixed at the rates ruling in the various shops as at February, 1943. A stipulated rate for each cut was not then determined but butchers were required to submit schedules showing the prices charged by them on 26th February, 1943, and they were not allowed to exceed the prices on these schedules so that the prices varied at the different shops.

The fixing of prices of a com odity such as meat without some sound and practic 1 method of carcase grading has to some exten militated against the achievement of the objectives of price control and the consumer is still open to exploitation. It should be understood, of course, that many butchers may be required to pay high prices for other than best quality meat from wholesale operator /who ...

who have been obliged to do likewise owing to the fact that they are required to buy on the open market.

The view has been expressed that grading is a necessity under normal peace time conditions and it seems that it is no less a vital requirement in war time.

There is a luther angle to the question which is becoming increasingly apparent and which has been indicated in the foregoing. If returns received from the sale of prime stock do not show a reasonable margin above realisations for plainer descriptions, stock raisers will have loss incentive to undertake the production of a standard of quality capable of competing favourably with that of other meat-producing countries on overseas markets.

As already indicated, the present tendency, in many instances, is for the various grades of quality to sell at prices approximating the fixed ceiling level and the producer of good quality stock is thus placed at a disadvantage.

It is felt that a system of meat grading, if introduced would be calculated to give the best return to coducers of the best quality and thus result in a general improvement in the standard of our flocks and herds.

A grading scheme of the kine would ensure that the consumer would not be paying for an article inferior in quality to the one demanded. The housewife would also be educated in the value of the different cuts from a dietary standpoint and their utilisation.

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The Commonwealth Government has announced that it has been decided to pay a subsidy of 2d a gallon on all milk product for direct human consumption in the Sydney Milk Board's collection, inclusive of milk produced in the zone and sold for human consumption outside the Sydney metropolitan area. The subsidy will be retrospective to April 17, and will op ate for five months.

This will place the producers' returns in Sydney on a basis of 1/8 a gallon delivered to the city during the winter months.

The Milk Board, by majority report, after public inqui had recommended payment of a subsidy of 32d a gallon on milk delivered at factories within the Board's zone.

SALES OF LIVESTOCK AT HOMEBUSH, SYDNEY.

Supplies of sheep and lambs fall-off substantially.

The number of sheep and lambs available during April showed a considerable decline when compared with the previous month's aggregate. Supplies during the period amounted to 313,813, representing a decline of approximately 102,000 head.

Plain sheep numerous.

The yardings of wethers and ewes totalled 172,287 head or about 54,000 less than were offered during the previous month. The quality generally could only be regarded as fair; plain sheep comprised a fair proportion of the consignments, while good numbers of medium trade sorts were also included. Occasional drafts of prime heavy sheep were offered but supplies fell far short of buyers' needs. Fair to good light trade sheep were moderately represented.

Market irregular.

The market for grown sheep displayed a good deal of irregularity. While values ruled fairly steadily at opening sales, the following auctions were characterised by a strong upward trend, prices advancing by from 1/- to 3/- per head. This improvement, however, was lost on the next sale day. Subsequently prices advanced by 1/- per head but again declined by from 1/- to 2/- per head. For a time rates held reasonably steady but at closing auction values again improved by from 1/- to 2/- per head. Plain and inferior grades of sheep were for the most part dull of sale and on several occasions difficult to dispose of. In reviewing the month's operations, the following representative sales will serve as a guide.

First Week

Second Week

Good trade 42 lb. wethers (skin 10/6) made 25/1 each or $4\frac{1}{4}$ d per lb. " 46 lb. ewes (" 9/-) " 21/7 " " $3\frac{1}{4}$ d " "

Third Week

Fourth Week

Good trade 16 lb. wethers (skin 7/6) made 23/9 each or $4\frac{1}{4}$ d per li " 6 lb. ewes (" 8/-) " 19/6 " " 3d " "

Cost of mutton virtually unchanged.

Although prices fluctuated somewhat, the average cost of mutton when compared with that of the previous month was for the part substantially unchanged, despite the fact that light wethers realised to 5d and heavy to 4½d per 1b. Generally good to prime light wethers were worth from 3½d to 4½d per 1b. and heavy 3¼d to 4½d. Heavy ewes sold as high as 3½d and light to 4d per 1b., but operators mostly paid from 2¼d to 3½d for good heavy grades and 2¼d to 3½d for light descriptions. Other grades of sheep cleared at lower levels.

Lamb in reduced supply.

The number of lambs available was considerably below to total offered in March, supplies for the period amounting to 141,526 or a decline of about 48,000 head, the most noticeable falling-off occurring towards the end of the month. Summer lamb again comprised the bulk of the yardings, while plain to medium grades were numerous. Generally good to prime light lambs were in short supply but lambs from 36 lb. upwards (dressed) were fairly well supplied. While many satisfactory lots were auctioned, lambs generally lacked the necessary finish to be regarded as prime. Od lots of extra good heavy lambs were included.

Prices fluctuate.

A keen demand generally prevailed for good to prime labut in common with the grown sheep market prices of lambs fluctual considerably. At times values reached fairly high levels. In the following record of actual sales, some indication of the variable state of the market is given:-

First Woek

'Second Week

Good trade 32 lb. lambs (skin 4/-) made 23/9 each or 71d per lb. heavy 40 lb. " (" 5/6) " 25/8 " " 6d " "

Third Week

Good trade 34 lb. lambs (skin 4/-) made 25/2 each or 7½d per lb. Prime heavy 38 lb. lambs (" 5/-) " 27/10 " " 7½d " " /Fourth

Fourth Week

Good heavy 38 lb. lambs (skin 5/-) made 25/- each or 6 d per lb.
" trade 28 lb. " (" 3/6) " 20/5 " " 7 d " "
" 33 lb. " (" 4/6) " 25/- " " 7 d " "

Higher rates for lamb.

Although a variable market prevailed the average cost per pound for lamb was higher than during the preceding month. At times, prime light lambs reached to 8½d per 1b. as compared with 8d in March, but on the other hand prices reached as low as 6¼d per 1b. Mostly, however, good light lamb cost from 6¾d to 7½d per 1b. Prime heavy lambs sold to 7½d per 1b. and at times extra heavy grades were obtained for 5¾d but generally the heavyweight lamb realised from 6d to 6¾d per 1b.

Very few hoggets were available but when offering prices ranged from 44d to 54d per lb., according to quality. At times drafts of outstanding quality were cleared at 6d per lb.

Cattle supplies maintained.

Cattle truckings during April, with few exceptions, continued to be consistently heavy. The aggregate for the seven sale days was 18,397 head, of which 2,274 were auctioned in the store section. Quality generally was again most variable and a substantial proportion of the yardings comprised lightweight stock of a very unsatisfactory quality standard. At times, however, particularly early in the period, the proportion of good quality cattle was unexpectedly high in view of the further deterioration of the pastoral position in the State, rainfall during April again being very disappointing in most districts. It is understood, however, that many producers are now consigning cattle for marketing which, in a more favourable season, would be held until the winter months.

Bullocks firm.

Bullocks continued in comparatively light supply with good trade descriptions predominating. Many inferior bullocks were noticed but prime lines occasionally made a good showing. Heavy bullocks were scarce but medium weights comprised a substantial proportion of the consignments.

A firm market ruled and fluctuations were of a minor character. Quotations at closing were: Heavy 44/- to 47/-, medium weight 46/- to 50/-, light 47/- to 51/- per 100 lb. On most sale days, however, lightweights realised to 52/- per 100 lb.

Quality of steers variable.

Steers again were plentiful throughout the period but /there...

there was a considerable variation in quality. On occasions plate and medium descriptions comprised a substantial proportion of the pennings. Generally, Lightweights predominated.

Demand was steady and throughout the greater part of the month quotations for good to prime descriptions ranged from 47/to 54/- per 100 lb. Values showed a temporary decline of 10/- per head on the final sale day.

Prime cows firm.

Truckings of cows were very uneven both as regards numbers and quality. Quality mostly ranged from fair to good true. The proportion of heavy sorts offered was variable. The market remained steady for prime descriptions, heavy cows generally being quoted to 43/- and lightweights to 44/- per 100 lb. A fair degree of fluctuation, however, was noticed in rates for other grades of quality.

Improved values of heifers.

Heifers made a very fair showing, although lightweight comprised the bulk of the supplies. Towards the close of the mon truckings fell off and prime descriptions were noticed, chiefly in odd lots.

Values increased compared with the March rates. Quotateranged to 53/- per 100 lb. during the first half of the period to the final sale day equivalent rates covering good to prime quality ranged from 43/- to 51/- per 100 lb.

Vealers plentiful.

Vealers were well supplied, good trade medium weights predominating. A stronger market ruled during the first half of period and values reached 63/- per 100 lb. Dema d weakened somewlater, closing quotations being 53/- to 58/- per 100 lb.

Further reduction in pig supplies.

Due principally to the Easter holidays the number of P submitted at auction during April showed some reduction, the tot being 8,258 head of which 6,219 were received by rail. Pigs disposed of by private treaty aggregated 640.

As indicated in the previous issue of the Review, number of pigs awaiting slaughter at the close of March were accumulated. The position was aggravated by the shorter killing periods at Easter and on the first sale day of the month and market was adversely affected. By the middle of April, however, the position had improved greatly. Later, the Abattoirs were able to handle fairly promptly all pigs arriving for slaughter. It is understood that the Abattoirs were keeping pace with arrivals at the close /of ...

of the month, about 850 head daily being killed.

Market for baconers mostly firm.

Baconers were well supplied throughout the period and all weights were represented. The proportion of extra heavy descriptions, however, varied considerably from sale day to sale day. Quality ranged generally from fair trade to prime but, for the most part, good trade sorts greatly predominated. A noticeable percentage of the consignments arrived in an over-fat condition and it is the desire of the Government that the production of this type of pig be discouraged. On the final sale an outstanding consignment of 220 heavy to extra-heavy baconers arrived from Woodstock. These were in prime condition and averaged £7.0.8 per head.

Due to the accumulation of plus awaiting slaughter the market on the opening sale day was very weak and values declined by from 5/- to 7/- per head. Frime heavy baconers were least affected and on a per head basis sales were effected to £7.4.6. Light baconers sold from £3.15.6. Carcase equivalent rates for pigs dressing 100-160 ranged from 8\frac{3}{4}d to 9\frac{1}{2}d per 1b. Subsequently the market improved and by the final sale day rates for all grades from 100 to 180 lb. ranged to 10d per lb. Quotations for extra heavy sorts dressing 180/200 lb. were 9d to 9\frac{1}{2}d per 1b. On a per head basis prices ranged to £7.10.6.

Strong demand for backfatters.

Consignments of backfatters varied in numbers but pennings for the most part were mederate. Fair to good trade medium weights predominated, although prime heavy weights made a good showing. One heavy backfatter realised £14.0.6. Except on the opening sale day, demand continued to be very strong and quotations again ranged to 62d per 1b. for both light and heavy descriptions.

Limited supplies of porkers.

Porkers were well supplied on the opening sale day but consignments otherwise were somewhat limited. However, good trade medium and heavy weights constituted the bulk of the offerings medium and heavy weights constituted the bulk of the offerings and domand was mostly fairly good. Prices, however, displayed the usual degree of fluctuation, especially for a smaller perkers which are purchased principally as stores. On the final sale which are purchased principally as stores. On the final sale day the attendance of store buyers was very small and some day the attendance worth only 74d per lb. Best values noted lightweights were worth only 74d per lb. Best values noted for heavy perkers and good quality stores were in the vicinity of lod per lb.

FRUIT AND VEGETABLE SAIES AT CITY MUNICIPAL MARKETS, SYDNEY.

Stone fruits practically finished.

With the completion of marketing of practically all ston fruits about mid-April and the limited supplies of oranges availab trading for the most part centred around apples and pears, although grapes and tropical fruits were well supported.

Local apples meet good inquiry.

Large quantities of apples were available at times (principally Jonathans) which came to hand from local sources as well as from Tasmania, Victoria and South Australia. Local fruit, particularly large sizes, was in demand and the maximum of 18/-per bushel was obtained for extra fancy gnades. Small sizes proved slow of sale. Interstate Jonathans sold up to 15/- per bushel earlin April but owing to the indifferent quality of a large preportion of supplies it was difficult to obtain above 12/- subsequently, while small sizes sold from 7/-. The market for Granny Smiths was confined to local fruit which found a steady inquiry both for dessert and culinary requirements. Generally rates ranged to 16/-, although on a few occasions the ceiling price of 18/- per case was obtained.

Both local and Tasmanian Dolicious were on offer. Best packs of locally-grown fruit realised the maximum of 18/- and opening rates for Tasmanian lots ranged to 18/-, but lower prices had to be accepted later. Other varieties forward comprised main small consignments of Rome Beauty, London Pippin and Cleopatra. Up to 15/- per bushel was paid for Romes but lower rates ruled for the other two varieties.

Maximum rates for three varieties of pears increased.

Supplies of pears were somewhat restricted early in the month owing to the price of varieties other than Williams being fixed at 15/-. On 17th April the ceiling rate for Fackham's Triumph, Winter Cole and Josephine was raised to 18/- and following this announcement there was a considerable increase in receivals, noticeably from Victoria, of the three varieties mentioned. Local consignments also were a little more plentiful. Good demand ruled and little difficulty was experienced in selling choice fruit at the top level of 18/-. Some Tasmanian Winter Coles, Comice and Bourre D'Anjou were obtainable; 18/- was paid for Winter Coles and up to 15/- for the other two kinds. Small consignments of local Beurre Bose and Howells were received.

Oranges scarce,

Only a few small consignments of Valencia oranges were received. Most of the fruit was reserved for hospital needs, few retailers securing any supplies. Towards the end of the month,

consignments of Queensland Navels and Joppas commenced to arrive. Both types of oranges opened up in satisfactory condition and were keenly sought after at prices ranging to 26/-. The fruit coming to hand from New South Wales coastal groves was still lacking colour, nevertheless disposals were effected readily owing to the shortage of supplies. On 28th April a new ceiling rate for oranges was announced, viz., 18/- per bushel.

Lemons more plentiful.

Supplies of lemons were very light until towards the close of April when consignments increased considerably. Rates were very firm and the maximum of 25/- per case of counts 200 and over was paid, while supplies were limited. Subsequently, with increased quantities offering, values had a weaker trend, green main crop fruit being difficult to place. On 29th April it was announced that the ceiling rate to apply on Monday, lst May, would be 20/-, a reduction of 5/- per bushel.

Stone fruits in request.

Very good domand ruled for J.H. Hale peaches until the supply was exhausted, up to 17/- per half-case being realised. Canning varieties from the Murrumbidgee Irrigation Area sold steadily and Victorian consignments also met a satisfactory request. The market was bare of this fruit about the middle of the month. President plums from cool stores were obtainable throughout the month and choice packs sold up to 20/- per half-case.

High rates rule for bananas.

With only light consignments coming forward, the market was very firm. Prices, which reached high levels towards the close of the month, ranged to 70/- per case.

Grapes sell well.

Demand for black muscat grapes was well maintained throughout the month and very satisfactory prices were obtained for choice packs, many lines selling above 20/- per half-case. Marketing of Cornichons continued and realisations for this variety were also above average. On a few days rates ranged to 18/- with occasional specials to 20/-. White varieties met a steady request and prices covered a fairly wide range, Doradillas selling to 12/-, while Waltham Cross realised to 16/-, with a few packs still higher.

Supplies of pineapples lighter.

Consignments of pineapples showed a decline. Bi-weekly receivals early in the month amounted to about 8,000 cases but this quantity dropped to about 4,000 later. Opening prices ranged to 20/- but with the maller quantities offering, values rose to much higher levels towards the close of April when up to 36/- and occasionally more was obtained.

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Other Fruit.

There was a scarcity of passionfruit and up to 45/- per half-case was realised for the few choice packs available.

Small quantities of custard apples from Queensland sold at rates generally ranging up to 18/- per half-case. The supply of papaws was light and prices were firm at up to 35/- per tropical case.

Adverse weather affects vegetable production.

Seasonal conditions were again unfavour ble to vegetable crops. The incidence of frosts in inland growing districts caused much damage and loss to bea crops, while the dry weather was another factor which affected production of other vegetables.

Peas in short supply.

Consignments of peas showed a marked falling-off and towards the close of the month the quantities reaching the market were insufficient to meet trade requirements. Frosts were responsible for a good deal of loss in growing areas of the Contral Tableland. The principal supplies were received from the Murrumbidgee Irrigation Area and all good quality lots realised the maximum of 21/- per bushel. It was expected that Victorian consignments would reach this market early in May and thus help to relieve the shortage.

Beans plentiful and demand restricted.

Large quantities of beans from coastal and inland sources were on offer. Demand, apart from choice lines, generally was restricted and at times the carry-over of medium and lower grades was heavy. On a few occasions purchases of surplus stocks by the Defence Foodstuffs Section of the Department of Supply and Shipping materially assisted the market.

At the close of the month supplies from local sources were showing a decided decline and values tended upward. Rates for choice lines were mainly around 10/- to 12/- late in April but they varied a good deal earlier and at times it was difficult to obtain above 6/- per bushel.

Choice, coloured tomatoes realise maximum price.

The principal supplies of tomatoss were received from the Murrumbidgee Irrigation Area, a few inland districts and from Victoria. Receivals from within the County of Cumberland became smaller as the month progressed and only light consignments were available at the close. Apart from the Gosford District, coastal supplies were limited. Little difficulty was experienced in disposing of good quality local lines at the ceiling rate of 12/- per half-case particularly coloured packs. Inland lots showed a good deal of variation in quality and only a limited percentage realised the maximum rate. Victorian tomatoes also were variable in quality and

the price range was fairly wide at from 10/- to 24/- per bushel.

Cauliflowers realise high prices.

Generally consignments of cauliflowers were only moderate, about 70 tons, being the largest quantity received on any one day. Demand was satisfactory on most occasions, and rates were maintained at relatively high levels for choice heads. The peak price reached was 48/- per dozen on Friday, 21st April; values mostly ranged to was 48/- per dozen on Friday, 21st April; values mostly ranged to 30/- for selected large cauliflowers, although low rates were accepted on some days. Supplies were principally from the Bathurst district but coastal marketing was expected to commence at an early date.

Cabbages sell well.

The market for cabbages was a disfactory and only on a few days was there any appreciable carry-over. The general quality was good and some extra choice large heads were included in offerings. Realisations for best lots ranged from 16/- to 20/-, while up to 24/- per dozen was obtained.

Bulk lines of root vegetables more plentiful.

Fairly heavy consignments of sweet potatoes were received from the North Coast, but owing to supplies of table tubers being reasonably good, demand was slow and values were weak.

Carrots were also heavily stocked towards the close of April and except for a few special washed lots lower prices had to be accepted.

There were only limited quantities of modes on offer and the ceiling price of 12/- per cwt. was obtained. Only small quantities of parsnips were forward and best lots sold at the maximum of 28/- per cwt.

Other vegetables.

Bunched vegetables met a strong request and rates for all lines, apart from spinach, were firm.

Boetroot was in short supply towards the end of the month.

With the reduced supplies of lottuce offering, values improved and choice lines sold up to 12/- per case.

R.M.

ALEXANDRIA RAILWAY GOODS YARD AND SUSSEX STREET SALES.

Heavy consignments of Tasmanian potatoes.

Arrivals of potatoes at Alexandria from local centres declined considerably, only 2,211 bags being received compared 18,956 bags in March. The bulk of the tubers arrived from the Dorrigo and Moss Vale districts. It was necessary for a small percentage to be regraded owing to second growth, mechanical injuries, etc. A good demand continued to rule for all lines of offer (which comprised mostly No. 1 Factors) at £6.12.6 with No and No. 3 grades at £6.0.0 and Chats at £6.0.0 per ton.

Supplies from Tasmania were fairly heavy, 171,040 bags being received in Sussex Street. Those comprised mostly Bismarcks, Brownells, Arran Chiefs and Up-to-Date. A fairly good percentage was made available for general trading surposes, the remainder to the Federal Authorities. Rates remained unchanged, No. 1 grantlessed at £6.12.6, with No. 2 and No. 3 grades at £6.0.0 per termined unchanged.

Consignments received from the North Coast at Darling Harbour landing comprised 2 trucks of Factors which sold at £6. per ton for No. 1 grade.

Increased supplies of swedes from Tasmania.

There were no swedes received at Alexandria during the month but arrivals in Sussex Street totalled 7,414 bags. Portice the consignments was taken over by the Federal Authorities; the remainder sold early at £11.0.0 but later the price was reduced £10.0.0 per ton.

Carrots and parsnips in light supply.

Only 135 bags of carrots reached Alexandria and these disposed of at £18.0.0 per ton. In Sussex Street, 3,153 bags from Tasmania were available. At opening, £20 per ton was obtained trates were subsequently reduced to £15.0.0 per ton.

Parsnips scarce.

No supplies came to hand at Alexandria during the per Only 140 bags arrived in Sussex Street from Tasmania and these brought £20 per ton.

Sweet potatoes and beetroot.

Consignment of sweet potatoes from Queensland consist of 739 bags. In the early part of the month sales were made at £14.0.0 to £15.0.0 but later disposals were effected at the retrate of £10.0.0 to £11.0.0 per ton. Beetroot congrised a small quantity

quantity totalling 91 bags from Tasmania, which sold at £12.0.0 per ton.

Pumpkins plentiful and cheaper.

Supplies of pumpkins were again fairly heavy and totalled 98 trucks, of which 63 trucks were received at Alexandria from local centres, as well as 35 trucks from Queensland. Agents were compelled to accept reduced prices to clear stocks. Opening sales were at £11.0.0 but values gradually declined to £8.0.0 for local with badly graded lots early at £8.0.0 to £9.0.0 and Triambles at £7.0.0 per ton.

Queensland lines also opened at £11.0.0 but they subsequently sold at £8.0.0 to £9.0.0 per ton.

Supplies received in Sussex Street from the North Coast included 61 bags, portion of which sold at £7.0.0 to £8.0.0 per ton. Included in the consignments received at Darling Harbour landing were 2 trucks each from local centres and Queensland which sold early at £11.0.0 per ton.

Exceptionally heavy arrivals of Victorian onions:

Arrivals of Victorian brown table lots at Alexandria showed a marked increase, 13,340 bags coming to hand in addition to 1,278 bags of brown picklers. There was a good inquiry for all lines and sales were recorded as follows: Brown table £17.15.0 to £18.10.0; brown pickling £17.0.0 to £18.0.0 per ton.

Consignments to Darling Harbour also showed a considerable increase and included 46 trucks of brown table and 3 trucks of brown pickling onions. These realised approximately £18.0.0 to £18.10.0, with brown pickling £17.10.0 to £18.0.0, with a few early at £21.0.0 per ton.

Oaten chaff - supplies decline and rates advance.

Receivals of oaten chaff again showed a falling-off and totalled 122 trucks. No difficulty was experience in disposing of all lines available as follows:- Good sound £7.0.0 to £7.10.0, prime £8.0.0 to £8.10.0, choice £8.5.0 to £8.15.0 per ton. In the last week of the period rates were increased to £8.10.0 for good sound, while prime sold at £8.15.0 to £9.0.0, with choice lines at £9.10.0 per ton.

Wheaten chaff scarce - values firm.

Consignments of wheaten chaff showed a considerable falling-off, only 15 trucks reaching the yards. Rates continued firm, clearances of good sound lines being effected at £7.0.0 to £8.10.0, while prime moved out at £8.0.0 to £9.0.0 per ton.

/Lucorne

Lucerne chaff sells at firm rates.

Arrivals of lucorne chaff con isted of 45 trucks. Read sales were effected, clearances being made of heated lots at £10 medium at £9.0.0 to £11.10.0, good sound at £10.0.0 to £11.10.0, prime at £12.0.0 to £12.10.0, and choice at £12.15.0 to £13.0.0 ton.

Lucerne threshings and dust.

Consignments of threshings amounted to about 330 bags which were in request at £9.0.0 to £11.0.0 per ton. Lucern dust (249 bags) also sold well, brown lots selling at £13.0.0 and great £14.0.0 to £14.10.0 per ton.

Lucerne hay in shorter supply.

Supplies from the Maitland district totalled 41 trucks a decline of 20 trucks compared with last month. All lines met inquiry at higher rates which were: A few inferior new soft greates £2.0.0, well-made new green £7.0.0 to £8.0.0, a few dry greates. 10.0 to £9.0.0 per ton. Supplies from other centres also showed a falling-off, only 27½ trucks including 3 trucks of derrick-pressed coming to hand. Clearances were effected as follows: Grassy lots £7.0.0, medium £9.0.0, good sound £10.5.0 to £10.10.0, prime £11.5.0 to £11.15.0 to £11.15.0 to £12.10.0 per ton. Sales of derrick-pressed inferior were made at £4.10.0 and good sound at £8.10.0 per ton.

Hay supplies exceptionally light.

Receivals of oaten hay were very limited and comprised only 4% trucks. Rack lines sold at 19.0.0 for prime lots with choice at £9.10.0 to £10.0.0 per ton. Meadow hay consisted of 3 trucks; sales of derrick-pressed were made at £7.0.0 with medium £5.0.0 per ton. One truck of oaten and meaten mixed derrick-present brought £5.10.0 to £5.15.0. One truck of derrick-pressed wheaten also arrived but rates were not disclosed. Good sound derrick-pressed wheaten (50 bundles) sold at £5.0.0 per ton.

Reduced supplies of straw - rates remain unchanged.

Supplies of straw showed a sharp decline, only Solt trucks reaching the market. Rates were as follows: - Damaged lots £4.10.0, prime £6.0.0 o £6.15.0, choice £7.0.0 to £7.10.0 per to

Wheat consignments again fairly light.

Receivals of wheat at Alexandria amounted to 27 trucks Most lines were of F.A.Q. grado which sold at the maximum rate of 3/8 per bushel. There were 4 trucks of under-quality submitted a auction, 2/- to 3/5 per bushel being realised.

Maize supplies increase.

Consignments of maize to Alexandria totalled 6,505 bags, comprising 2,405 bags of yellow and 771 bags of white from local centres and 1,474 bags of yellow and 1,855 bags of white from Queensland. There was a good demand for any lines on offer. Sales of local yellow were effected at 7/3 with a few prime small yellow lines from the North West at 7/6 per bushel. Only a limited quantity of white maize was available and this sold at 7/6 per bushel. Queensland yellow also sold at 7/3 and at auction early in the period 104 bags of yellow brought 7/- with 140 bags of yellow and red 6/7 per bushel. Supplies received in Sussex these from the North Coast comprised 2,650 bags of yellow and clearances were made at 7/3 per bushel.

Exceptionally light supplies of oats.

There was a marked decline in out consignments to Alexandria which totalled only 10 trucks and 90 bags compared with 48 trucks in March. The bulk of the consignments was consigned direct to private buyers, but 2 trucks submitted at auction realised 3/0½ and 3/1 per bushel.

G.H.F.

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WINT WHEAT FORECAST - U.S.A.

According to a statement issued by the Grop Reporting Board of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, it is estimated that 662,300,000 bushels of winter wheat will be harvested from an area of 40,943,000 acres, equivalent to a yield of 16.2 bushels per acre.

The estimate is 60,000,000 bushels above that issued early last month.

The average production of winter wheat during the ten year period 1929-1938 was 571,100,000 bushels.

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IMPORTATION INTO THE UNITED KINGDOM OF CANADIAN FOOD PRODUCTS

The Acting Official Secretary, N.S.W. Government Offices, London, advises that during three recent months shipments of butter amounting to 7,000,000 lb. were sent by Canada to Britain, and have been invaluable in helping to maintain the ration. Canada has also sent dried egg to Britain. Last year she sent 686,000,000 lb. of bacon, and her target this year is 7,000,000 hogs. Pork products, cheese, and evaporated milk are among other Canadian imports.

WHOLESALE PRICES OF VARIOUS COMMODITIES IN SYDNEY (N.S.W.) DURING APRIL, 1944, AND CORRESPONDING FIGURES AT 31st AUGUST, 1939.

The following table gives particulars of the range of prices in Sydney, as collected and recorded by the Division of Marketing and Agricultural Economics in respect of various commodities for the period indicated:-

Commodity	April,	1944	31st August, 193	
	From	To	From	To
Wheat: Home Consumption Bulk - per bushel	3/13	lad (unchanged)	2/4d	
Flour - per ton	£10.4 (plus £2.8	4.2 3.10 tax)	£6.12.3 (plus £6.2.	9 tax)
Bran - " " Pollard " "	£6.0	0.0 (unchanged)	£4.5.0 £4.5.0	12
Eggs - per dozen	2/-	n	1/-	19
Butter (choice) per cwt	. 169/4	11	161/2	
Cheese: Loaf - per lb. Large - " " Special Brands per lb	1/0	id " " " " " " " " " " " " " " " " " " "	11d 10½d 1/2	APPEL OF
Course Arrest course called	April,	1944 To	29th August, From	1939 To
Pigs (Abattoir Sales): Good to prime per h d				
Porkers: Extra light Light Medium weight Heavy Baconers Backfatters	36/6 40/6 55/6 £3.15.6 £5.10.0	45/6 68/6 72/6 £7.10.6	31/6 39/6 43/6 50/6 60/6 £4.5.0	40/6 44/6 57/6 54/6 75/6 £8.10.

Note: The pig sales nearest 31st August, 1939, were those held on 29th August, 1939.

RETURN OF FRUIT AND VEGETABLES IMPORTED INTO NEW SOUTH WALES BY LAND AND SEA - FEBRUARY, 1944.

FRUIT.

STATE	Pineapples to pical coses.	Bananas tropical cases	Other Fruit cases	Tomatoes half-bushel cases	Melons crates	TUTALS 1 ges.
Queensland Victoria Tasmania Sth. Aust. West Aust.	41,295	1,930 201	27,831 127,615 - 8,179	14,939 4,752	17	85,996 132,687 8,179
TOTALS:	41,407	2,131	163,625	19,691	8	226,862

VEGETABLES.

STATE	Potatoes bags	Onions bags	Swedes bags	Pumpkins bass	Cucs. & Chillies cases	Other Vegs. pkges.	TOTALS pkges.
Queensland Victoria Tasmania Sth. Aust. West Aust.	121 3,852 45,445 1,192 4,965	25 10,440 817	137 933	11,928	152	2,635 7,828 1 2,957	14,861 22,257 46,379 4,966 4,965
TOTALS:	55,575	11,282	1,070	11,928	152	13,421	93,428

MARKETING DIVISION MEAT PRODUCTION M. 44.1. N.S.W. AND COMMONWEALTH STATISTICS TONS 600,000 BEEF AND VEAL MUTTON AND 480,000 LAMB 360,000. 240,000. PORK. BACON AND HAM 120,000 . Compiled Reful 25.44 Drawn: EHS. 2.5.44 Checked Poff 2.5.44 Acting Chief, Dir. of Marketing & Agri. Economic