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NEW SOUTH WALES
STATE MARKETING BUREAU
DIVISION OF MARKETING
AND AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

MONTHLY MARKETING REVIEW

JUNE, 1944.

Vol. 11 No. 6

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MONTHLY MARKETING REVIEW

A MISCELLANY 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 ECONOMICS, DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, NEW SOUTH WALES, AUSTRALIA.

JUNE, 1944.

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HIGHLIGHTS.

It has been announced that New South Wales has been divided into five milk zones for the purpose of fixing producer and consumer prices and granting subsidies to farmers.

Commonwealth Food Control announces that arrangements have been made to distribute large quantities of carrots at cheap rates. The public, it is stated, should be able to purchase unwashed carrots at 7 lb. for 1/-, or 2d per lb.

The Prices Commissioner has stated that action may be taken to reduce the margins allowed to wholesalers of fruit and vegetables. It has been the practice, Professor Copland said, to allow wholesalers 10% but with higher prices and larger turnover this would yield unduly high profits.

The Australian Wool Board has decided to expend at least £15,000 this year on wool publicity, primarily with a view to stimulating demand for the time when it could be met and to maintain the prestige of wool. In addition, a travelling display unit will be organised to travel country districts.

The Chairman of the Australian Wheat Board has announced new export prices for wheat. The new rate for bagged wheat is 6/11$\frac{3}{4}$d per bushel and bulk wheat 6/6$\frac{1}{4}$d, although to certain destinations where Australian wheat meets strong competition the prices fixed are 5/9$\frac{1}{4}$d and 5/3$\frac{5}{4}$d per bushel, for bagged and bulk wheat, respectively.

Egg supplies fall far short of meeting civil requirements at present and as very few were cold stored it is stated that it will be at least another month before there is any marked increase in the number of eggs reaching the market.

HISTORY OF MEAT REFRIGERATION IN AUSTRALIA.

In view of the importance the meat export trade has assumed in Australia's economy and the fact that the product is highly perishable, it is thought that a review of some of the early experiments associated with the initial shipments overseas from Australia may prove of interest. The subject is one of particular moment at the present time, having regard to the obligations entered into by Australia in supplying the United Kingdom with a proportion of its meat requirements and the likelihood that we will be called upon to play a part in relieving food shortages in war-torn Europe when hostilities cease.

In a booklet issued by Henry S. Fitter and Sons, of London, on the subject of Empire meat marketing, reference is made to early experiments in connection with meat refrigeration conducted by James Harrison, of Victoria. No mention was made of the early work of Thomas Sutcliffe Mort, who has been credited with establishing the first meat freezing works in Australia, if not in the world. A statue of Mort is located in Macquarie Place, Sydney, and the inscription thereunder includes the words: "The first to make exports of perishable food possible by refrigeration". In view of the uncertainty engendered by references already in hand with regard to the investigations of Harrison and Mort, respectively, it was decided to pursue inquiries further, and old newspaper cuttings and publications relevant to the subject were inspected at the Mitchell Library.

The investigation showed that recorded details in relation to the events leading up to and connected with the initial shipments are sometimes at variance and references to the work of Thomas Mort omit any mention of the investigations carried out by James Harrison. Similarly there appears no reference to Mort's works in the biography of James Harrison. It is to be noted that Harrison was a scientist, whereas Mort was not. It appears that Mort's role was that of initiating scientific investigation and providing the means to carry it through, the actual scientific work being performed by qualified engineers. It is possible that James Harrison and Mort's scientific partner, E.D. Nicolle, collaborated in connection with certain aspects of refrigeration, although nothing was found in the available data to verify this assumption.

As a result of inquiries, it was ascertained, firstly, that neither Mort nor Harrison was actually associated with the first successful shipment from Australia in 1880 (Mort died in 1878), although the former's theories were probably put into practical operation during the shipment. The second important fact gleaned was that the first unsuccessful attempt to ship frozen meat from Australia was made in 1873 by Harrison, whilst Mort's effort per the S.S. "Northam", which also was a failure,

/was ...

was not made until 1876. In the following paragraphs a brief survey is made of what appear to be the main events associated with early refrigeration in Australia, and shipments of meat to England generally.

In 1843 Thomas Sutcliffe Mort tried the experiment of exporting cured animal food to England, but the project failed.

James Harrison commenced to study the formation of ice by evaporation of ether in 1852. The process was patented in England in 1856 and 1857, and Harrison built the first ice-making plant in Australia, apparently in a country centre in Victoria. He found, however, that no ice-making machinery was available either in Melbourne or Sydney. He proceeded to London to exploit his invention and brought back a machine in 1859, which produced 10 tons of ice a day. This enterprise was a commercial failure.

The world's first meat freezing works were established at Darling Harbour, Sydney, New South Wales in 1861 by Thomas Mort.

In 1868 Charles Tellier, an American, pioneered meat transportation under mechanical refrigeration when he attempted sea carriage of frozen meat by placing a refrigerating machine on board the "City of Rio de Janeiro". Apparently, the experiment was not a success.

During 1873 James Harrison became notable as the inventor of a new process of freezing carcases for export. The American process then in vogue merely froze the surface of the flesh which sufficed for relatively short voyages between the United States and England. Harrison's process completely froze the entire carcase. He was awarded a gold medal at a Melbourne exhibition in recognition of his work. In the same year (1873) he was given £2,500 to take 20 tons of frozen mutton and beef to London. The cargo was shipped by the S.S. "Norfolk", but putrified during the voyage. Unfortunately for Harrison, the process that was suitable for mutton would not do for beef. Twenty years later it was found that the small blood vessels in the beef carcase burst when frozen, and when thawed out again damaged the flesh. The particular report from which the information appearing in this paragraph was extracted went on to state that beef must be chilled, not frozen. Harrison's cargo was found unusable when thawed out in London.

(In view of the subsequent development of Australia's frozen beef trade, the foregoing statement may appear somewhat of a contradiction. It should be mentioned, however, that refrigeration technique and facilities have greatly improved since those days, and during the early experiments there was a tendency to exaggerate the damage caused by freezing and the subsequent thawing. The fact remains, nevertheless, that chilled beef is superior to the frozen article, which view, as will be pointed out later, apparently was held by Thomas Mort. In a bulletin issued by the Council for Scientific and Industrial

/Research...

Research in 1939, entitled "Investigations in Chilled Beef", it is pointed out that in 1931 it became apparent that the demand in Great Britain for Australian frozen beef was diminishing and that, if the annual quantity exported remained constant it could only be disposed of at reduced prices. The British public preferred the chilled article supplied by South American countries. Owing to the distance from England and the highly perishable nature of chilled beef Australia had not been able to participate in this trade. It was therefore decided during that year that considerable help could be rendered to beef producers and exporters by pursuing scientific investigations designed to discover methods by which chilled beef could safely be shipped overseas.

The next important event took place in 1875 when Thomas Mort established meat freezing works at Lithgow. According to various reports he lost between £80,000 and £300,000 through this venture, including the unsuccessful shipment the following year. One of Mort's sons, writing in later years to a newspaper, states that he was present at the breakfast table when his father, reading from the Sydney Morning Herald, regarding an account of how a prehistoric animal was found when a glacier in Northern Europe broke and disclosed the body in a state of perfect preservation, exclaimed, "I have discovered the secret of how Australia's abundance may supply Europe's needs".

As indicated, Thomas Mort arranged a trial shipment under refrigeration in 1876. The consignment, 34 tons, was placed in the "Northam" but the experiment was a failure owing to a breakdown in the machinery caused by a burst ammonia pipe. In one extract the breakdown was stated to have been caused by chemical corrosion. Mort was extremely disappointed at this failure and died two years later. During the same year Charles Tellier met with success and by 1877 America had successfully established a frozen meat trade with England.

Following news of Tellier's success in 1876 a number of Queensland squatters cabled to England for further information and Messrs. Andrew McIlwraith and Beardmore Buchanan went to Havre to inspect the steamer "Paraguay" which had successfully carried a consignment of 5,500 carcases of mutton from South America to that port. They reported adversely on the application of the refrigerating system to requirements of the Australian trade. Shortly afterwards McIlwraith got in touch with Messrs. Bell and Coleman in England. Experiments were made with dry air at 30°F. which resulted in the conviction that Mort's freezing theories were correct.

As a result of a meeting held at Brisbane during September of 1877, a Company was floated with a capital of £25,000 to promote a dry air refrigeration process for the exportation of frozen meat. During this time, so a report states, the Sydney Meat Preserving Association was helping to maintain mutton values by refrigeration. It is probable that the freezing works utilised were established by Mort.

/Negotiations ...

Negotiations followed with Messrs. Bell and Coleman for the supply of a machine designed and arranged for shipboar use. Mr. Andrew McIlwraith chartered the S.S. "Strathleven" from Messrs. Burrell and Son, and installed the Bell-Coleman machine on board. The "Strathleven" sailed from Sydney on the 29th November, 1879, with 40 tons of beef and mutton. The consignment was frozen on board by the cold air process (it wa probably more chilled than frozen) and arrived in London on 2n February, 1880. The risk of the venture was borne by Messrs. McIlwraith McEachern and Co. The meat was found to be in a perfectly sound state and the beef realised 4½d to 5½d per lb. and the mutton 5½d to 6d at Smithfield, London. It had cost i Australia from 1½d to 2d per lb.

As the result of the venture, the Australian Frozen Meat Co. was registered in Melbourne on 6th May, 1880, and the Queensland Frozen Meat Co. was formed in Brisbane the followin day. The former company despatched successfully 4,600 carcase of mutton and 100 tons of butter by the "Protos" which left Melbourne on 18th November, 1880.

These early experiments paved the way for the buildi up of an export trade in frozen beef, mutton and lamb which at the outbreak of war in 1939 was worth approximately £9,000,000 to Australia. In addition, other chilled and frozen meat products such as pork, veals, rabbits, etc., were valued at nearly £1¾ million. Until comparatively recent years all exports consisted of frozen meat but owing to the fact that importing countries evinced a distinct preference for chilled beef, steps were taken to establish an export trade in this class of beef. In the first year in which relevant figures were published (1934-35) chilled beef exports totalled 21,570, and shipments had reached 58,963,009 lb. by 1939.

Although this article has been devoted almost wholly to refrigeration in relation to meat, we must not lose sight o the fact that the development of refrigeration has enabled an export trade to be developed in other perishable commodities, the value of which would be difficult to compute.

----oooOooo----

SALES OF LIVESTOCK AT HOMEBUSH, SYDNEY.

Supplies of sheep and lambs fall off when rain falls.

Although there was a slight increase in the aggregate pennings of sheep and lambs during May, when a total of 315,006 head was available, there was a marked falling off in supplies towards the end of the month. Some indication of the decline in numbers may be gained from reference to actual yardings which early in the period amounted to between 42,000 and 46,000 head each sale day, whereas at closing auctions only 16,000 head were offered.

In various districts, beneficial rains afforded some measure of relief from prevailing dry conditions and the shortage in supplies may be partly attributed to wet weather preventing trucking operations. The somewhat improved outlook also enabled owners to hold stock for fattening and for shearing.

Fair numbers of plain sheep yarded.

Plain to medium quality sheep continued in rather heavy supply and represented a fair proportion of the 183,603 head penned. Despite an increase of about 11,000 head in total supplies, the number of good to prime heavy grade included was comparatively small. Moderate supplies of fair to good light trade sheep, however, were available.

Sharp rise in values.

A strong demand prevailed throughout the period for good to prime sheep, although inquiry for the plainer grades was somewhat restricted. At opening sales, values advanced by from 1/- to 2/- per head, while at the following four auctions a very firm tone generally characterised the market. Subsequently, reduced supplies resulted in a substantial rise in prices and at the last four sales held in May the approximate increase in values of good to prime sheep ranged from 10/- to 15/- per head, rates reaching their peak at the closing auctions when market prices were the highest recorded for many years. In the following representative sales some indication is given of the trend in prices:

First Week

Good trade	44 lb.	wethers	(skin 7/6)	made	23/-	each	or	4¼d	per lb.
" "	40 lb.	ewes	(" 9/-)	"	22/1	"	"	3⅝d	" "
" heavy	50 lb.	wethers	(" 1/-)	"	21/1	"	"	4⅜d	" "

Second Week

Good trade	44 lb.	wethers	(skin 7/-)	made	23/4	each	or	4½d	per lb.
" heavy	54 lb.	ewes	(" 6/6)	"	21/10	"	"	3½d	" "

/Third ...

Third Week

Good trade 44 lb. wethers (skin 7/-) made 27/7 each or 5½d per lb.
" " 40 lb. ewes (" 2/6) " 16/5 " " 4¼d " "

Fourth Week

Good heavy 48 lb. wethers (skin 9/6) made 31/10 each or 5½d per lb.
" " 54 lb. " (" 8/-) " 39/9 " " 7d " "
" trade 46 lb. ewes (" 10/6) " 30/7 " " 5¼d " "

Closing Auctions.

Good heavy 56 lb. wethers (skin 13/-) made 51/- each or 8d per lb.
" trade 44 lb. ewes (" 8/6) " 33/10 " " 7d " "

Mutton costs reach high levels.

During the early part of May the cost of wether mutton ranged from 4d to 5d per lb. for light and 3¾d to 4¾d for heavy, while ewes were worth from 2¾d to 3½d and 3¼d to 4d for heavy and light grades, respectively. In the third week, however, a strong upward price movement took place and at closing rates reached particularly high levels, the cost of light wethers ranging from 4¾d to 8¼d and heavy from 4½d to 8d. Ewes were also very dear and cost from 3¼d to 6d for heavy and 3¾d to 7d per lb. for light. The highest prices ruled on the final sale of the period.

Further decline in lamb numbers.

The number of lambs available showed a further decline of about 10,000, when compared with the previous month's total supplies for May amounting to 131,403 head. The largest number available on any one sale was 20,726, while the lightest yarding was 6,169 head. Only odd lots of suckers were submitted, the bulk of the offerings comprising summer lambs of medium to good trade standard; many lines of plain, dry lambs were also forward. Very few good to prime light descriptions were penned but moderate numbers of good heavy lambs were offered.

Very strong lamb market.

A strong market ruled for lambs and suckers and prices, owing to the limited supplies, reached very high levels, increases of up to 10/- per head being evident over the last four sale days in May. Some representative sales are given below as a guide to market trends.

First Week

Good trade 32 lb. lambs (skin 4/6) made 26/5 each or 8d per lb.
" " 36 lb. " (" 5/-) " 28/1 " " 7¾d " "
" heavy 38 lb. " (" 6/-) " 30/5 " " 7¾d " "

/Second...

Second Week

Good trade 36 lb. lambs (skin 5/-) made 29/1 each or 8d per lb.
" heavy 40 lb. " (" 6/6) " 31/6 " " 7½d " "

Third Week

Good trade 35 lb. lambs (skin 4/6) made 29/10 each or 8¾d per lb.
" heavy 44 lb. " (" 6/6) " 37/6 " " 8½d " "

Fourth Week

Good trade 31 lb. lambs (skin 3/6) made 24/4 each or 8¾d per lb.
" " 36 lb. " (" 4/6) " 32/4 " " 9¼d " "
" heavy 38 lb. " (" 4/6) " 31/6 " " 8½d " "

Closing Sales.

Good trade 32 lb. lambs (skin 4/6) made 36/4 each or 1/- per lb.
" heavy 38 lb. " (" 5/-) " 40/- " " 11d " "

Extreme rates for lamb.

The average cost of lamb per pound was considerably higher than in April. The peak price in that month was 8½d per lb. whereas up to 1/- per lb. was paid in May. Light lambs during the month ranged from 7¼d to 1/- and heavy grades from 6½d to 11½d per lb., while hoggets were worth from 5½d to 9d per lb.

High prices per head.

Prices per head were consistently high and amongst some of the highest recorded were good quality wethers at 51/-, hoggets 46/-, ewes 43/- and lambs 46/-.

Cattle supplies fluctuate.

Cattle truckings during May were most variable, supplies being heavy during the first half but lighter later, following beneficial rain in many country districts. The total yarded, 18,904 head, actually exceeded the number penned during the previous month but there were only seven sale days in April compared with nine in the period under review. Auction in the store section accounted for 2,197 head.

The general quality showed considerable variation and during the first half of the period a substantial proportion of the pennings comprised stock in poor condition. The percentage of cattle of this class, however, was reduced considerably subsequently.

The timely rains previously referred to have greatly

/altered ...

altered prospects, although western areas where drought conditio have been most severe failed to benefit to any extent. Further falls are necessary in most stock raising districts.

The combined effects of drought, rain and industrial disputes caused extreme fluctuations in values. Rates during the period fell to the lowest and rose to the highest level for some time. During the period that consignments were heavy a cessation of killing at the Homebush Abattoirs caused a large accumulation of stock awaiting slaughter. This naturally had a depressing effect on the market. By the close of the month a general shorta of cattle, coupled with a considerable reduction in the number of sheep and lambs forward, had caused the demand to become the keenest since last September.

Bullocks in light supply.

Consignments of bullocks ranged chiefly from light to moderate but there was a pronounced shortage towards the close of the month. Pennings generally consisted of light and medium weights of fair to good trade standard. Prime description occasionally made a good showing as did heavy drafts.

The market opened firmer but soon weakened and 50/- per 100 lb. was the highest quotation for this class of beef. Values subsequently advanced and during the final week medium weight bullocks realised to 57/- per 100 lb. and light to 56/-. Competition from buyers who operate outside the County of Cumberland was responsible for the higher rate obtaining for the more weighty bullocks which, incidentally, were in very limited supply.

Prime steers scarce.

Steers generally were well represented throughout the month and, for the most part, the pennings comprised good trade lightweights. At times, however, particularly during the early sales, a noticeable proportion was of a plain description only. The percentage of prime animals fluctuated but generally supplies of this grade were limited.

The market followed the general trend, prices firming at opening, then declining, subsequently improving and finally reaching the highest level for some time. Quotations at opening ranged to 54/- per 100 lb. and at closing to 58/-. The general range during the cheapest period for good to prime quality was 44/- to 52/6 per 100 lb.

Cows fairly plentiful.

Cows made the best showing for some considerable time, particularly during the second half of the period when good trade to prime descriptions, both light and heavy sorts, were well represented.

/Values ...

Values fluctuated considerably and on several occasions heavy cows were worth more per 100 lb. than light descriptions. During the second week quotations for good to prime quality ranged from 30/- to 40/- per 100 lb. but at closing prime lightweights brought to 49/- and heavy sorts to 46/- per 100 lb. On a per head basis heavy cows ranged in price to £17.17.0.

Heifers well in evidence.

Heifers, also, were well represented and during the latter half of the period all weights were available, while the pennings included a substantial proportion of good trade to prime descriptions.

The market varied substantially and while 47/- per 100 lb. was the best price obtaining for prime lightweights at one period, 53/- was easily realised during the final week.

Fluctuating market for vealers.

Vealers continued to be well supplied but quality was most variable. The market was uneven in the extreme. During the first half of the period values declined to the lowest level for some time when quotations for good to prime grade ranged from 46/- to 56/- per 100 lb. Demand subsequently improved and at closing the high rate of 71/- per 100 lb. was reached for prime light and medium weights.

Increased supplies of pigs.

The numbers of pigs arriving during the period under review showed an increase, the aggregate for the five sale days being 1,232 head, of which 7,909 were received by rail. An additional 449 head were sold privately.

Strong demand for baconers.

Baconers continued to be well supplied. Medium to heavy baconers comprised the bulk of the offerings, while on several sale days extra heavy pigs made a particularly good showing. A strong demand was mostly in evidence and although values fluctuated somewhat the variations were not marked.

Heavy and extra heavy descriptions realised to £7.11.6 per head, although £7.1.6 was the highest price secured at opening. On a per lb. basis all grades from 100-160 lb. sold to 10d during the greater part of the period. A feature of the latter half of the month was the high rate of 9¾d per lb. obtained for prime pigs dressing about 180 lb. Only in respect of pigs nearing the 200 lb. mark did the dressed weight values fall below 9d per lb.

Steady market for backfatters.

Supplies of backfatters were moderate but the general quality was not quite up to the standard of the previous month,

/while ...

while there were fewer heavy descriptions penned.

Demand was steady, and rates generally ranged from 5d to 6d per lb., most sales being effected at about 5¾d. These values were slightly below the rates for April. On a per head basis the highest price noted was £14.19.6.

Irregular market for porkers.

Porkers were mostly in light supply, although good trade quality medium to heavy weights made a satisfactory showing at times. Pigs weighing more than 80 lb. met a steady demand but competition for lighter sorts was variable. Some lines sold at as low as 7d per lb., but good quality stores occasionally exceeded the equivalent value of 10d per lb. Values of heavier porkers ranged chiefly between 9d and 10d per lb.

----oooOooo----

G.C. & J.W.

ALEXANDRIA RAILWAY GOODS YARD AND SUSSEX STREET SALES.

Tasmanian and Victorian potatoes well-supplied.

Consignments of potatoes to Alexandria from local centres continued to be very light, only 1,140 bags, mostly from the Dorrigo and Grafton districts, being received. These supplies consisted of Factors with a few Satisfactions. Sales of No. 1 grade were effected at £6.12.6, while No. 2 grade was disposed of at £6.0.0 per ton.

Consignments from Victoria showed a considerable increase, 28,852 bags being received; these mainly comprised new Carmans, Snowflakes and Early Manistee. These opened up in very good condition with the exception of about 800 bags which it was necessary to regrade owing to frosty ends, wet rot and mechanical injuries. All these arrivals were made available for general trading, new grade selling at £6.12.6 per ton.

Arrivals in Sussex Street from Tasmania continued to be fairly heavy, 149,703 bags coming to hand. Fairly substantial quantities were released for disposal to the civil population, the balance going to the Federal Authorities. Rates were unchanged, No. 1 grade moving out at £6.12.6, with a few No. 2 and No. 3 grades at £6.0.0 per ton. Receivals from the North Coast in Sussex Street were limited to 156 bags of Factors which were mostly No. 2 grade and sold at £6.0.0 per ton. Arrivals at Darling Harbour included 9 trucks of Victorian Carmans, which were disposed of at £6.12.6 per ton for No. 1 grade.

Tasmanian swede consignments heavy.

Arrivals at Alexandria continued very light, only 205 bags coming to hand. These arrived in a soft condition and sold at £8.0.0 per ton.

/Tasmanian ...

Tasmanian shipments received in Sussex Street showed a marked increase when 13,853 bags came to hand as against 7,414 bags in April. Opening sales were at £10 and prices were increased later to £12. At closing values were easier at £11 per ton.

Carrots more plentiful - rates reduced.

Only 160 bags of carrots from Victoria were received at Alexandria. Portion moved out at £12 but the remainder (65 bags) brought £6.5.0 per ton at auction.

Tasmanian arrivals increased to 5,803 bags and demand showed a considerable falling off. Opening sales were made at £14 but subsequently £8 per ton was accepted.

Supplies of Tasmanian parsnips increase.

Arrivals at Alexandria were again limited. 111 bags were received from Victoria and these were disposed of at £18 per ton. Tasmanian arrivals comprised 2,119 bags; opening sales were made at £20 but later prices were reduced to £15 per ton.

Sweet potatoes and beetroot.

Arrivals of sweet potatoes comprised 58 bags from Queensland which sold at £9 to £11 per ton. Beetroot from Tasmania amounting to 79 bags was disposed of at £12 per ton.

Pumpkins plentiful and values ease.

Arrivals of pumpkins totalled 104 trucks, including 83 trucks from local centres and 21 trucks from Queensland. Opening rates for locals were at £7 which increased to £9 with few at £10 later, but subsequently £8 to £9 per ton ruled. Sales of Queensland consignments were effected at £7 to £9 with a few at £10 per ton.

Arrivals in Sussex Street from the North Coast amounted to 248 bags which sold at £7 to £8 with a few at £9 per ton.

Victorian brown onions scarcer.

Receivals of Victorian brown onions at Alexandria showed a marked decline. Supplies comprised 3,243 bags of brown table and 576 bags of brown picklers, compared with a total of 14,618 bags in April. All lots met with keen inquiry and there was no change in prices, brown table realising approximately £18.0.0 to £18.10.0 and brown pickling £17 to £18 per ton.

At Darling Harbour landing, supplies also showed a falling off and included 32 trucks of Victorian brown which realised £17 to £18.10.0 per ton. One truck was received from Queensland but no rates were disclosed.

/Supplies...

Supplies of oaten chaff again decline.

Arrivals of oaten chaff again diminished, only 112 trucks and 81 bags coming to hand. These stocks met good inquiry, sales being recorded as follows:- Medium £8, prime £9, choice £9.5.0 to £9.10.0 per ton. On the 12th May, ceiling prices were fixed for oaten chaff at £9 per ton and the bulk of sales was then made at that rate.

Wheaten chaff supplies limited.

Supplies of wheaten chaff continued to be restricted, only 20 trucks and 78 bags being offered. Sales were effected as follows:- Good sound £8.10.0, prime £8.15.0 to £9.0.0, choice £9 per ton. Maximum rates for wheaten chaff were also fixed at £9 per ton.

Lucerne chaff in request - rates continue firm.

Arrivals of lucerne chaff decreased to 27 trucks compared with 45 trucks received in April. Early sales were at the following rates:- Medium and brown lines £11.5.0 to £11.10.0; choice £12.10.0 to £13.0.0 per ton. A maximum of £11 was fixed on the 12th inst. and sales were made at that rate but on the 22nd values reverted to those ruling in June, 1943. A few sales were made, prime realising £13 with choice at £13.10.0 per ton.

Lucerne hay meets keen demand.

From the Maitland district consignments totalling 59½ trucks were received and these supplies sold readily, new soft green lines realising £6.10.0 to £7.10.0 with dry and dry green at £8 to £9 per ton. Ceiling rates for lucerne hay were fixed at £10.17.6 on 12th May, but on the 22nd rates reverted to those ruling in June, 1943. Clearances of new soft green were then effected at £7 to £8 with dry at £8 to £9 per ton.

Arrivals from other centres comprised 30 trucks which included 4 trucks of derrick pressed. A few early sales of choice lines were at £12.10.0 to £13.0.0 per ton, while derrick pressed good sound made £8.10.0 per ton. Rates were also fixed at the maximum of £9.17.6 on the 12th, but on the 22nd May rates reverted back to June, 1943, levels with good sound bringing £9.10.0 to £11.0.0; prime £11 to £12 and choice £12.10.0 per ton. Derrick pressed medium lines realised £7.10.0 to £8.10.0 and good sound £10 per ton.

Lucerne dust, threshings, pods and poultry meal.

Supplies of lucerne dust amounted to 3 trucks, sales being made at £14.10.0 to £14.15.0. Lucerne threshings consisted of 2½ trucks which brought £10.10.0 to £11.10.0, while one truck of lucerne pods sold at £10.10.0. One truck of lucerne poultry meal brought £16 per ton.

/Hay ...

Hay in restricted supply.

Receivals of oaten hay were again very light. Good sound rack lots realised £8 and prime £9 per ton, while 6 trucks of derrick-pressed good sound sold at £7.5.0. At auction, prime realised £7.16.8 per ton. Later, oaten hay, derrick pressed, was fixed at a maximum of £7.15.0 per ton and a few sales were made at that figure. One truck of wheaten derrick pressed hay arrived and realised £4.15.0 to £5.10.0 per ton for good sound lots.

Oaten and wheaten straw stocks increase considerably.

Supplies of straw showed a marked increase, 37½ trucks of oaten and 8 trucks of wheaten coming to hand. Clearances of prime oaten were made at £6.5.0 to £6.10.0, whilst choice sold at £7.5.0 to £7.10.0 per ton. On the 12th May ceiling rates were fixed for both oaten and wheaten at £6.10.0 per ton. Sales of wheaten straw were effected at that rate, although one truck of damaged lots sold at £4.0.0 per ton.

Wheat consignments fairly heavy.

Receivals of wheat at Alexandria totalled 56 trucks and 61 bags. Demand was good, F.A.Q. lines selling at 3/8 and 3/9 with a few lines of hard wheat at 3/10 per bushel. Sales by auction were ranged from 2/10 to 3/6 per bushel.

Maize more plentiful.

Arrivals of maize increased to 7,995 bags, including 1,906 bags of yellow, 1,867 bags of white from local centres, 3,641 bags of yellow and 581 bags of white from Queensland. A fair percentage was consigned to private buyers, no rates being disclosed. Other lines sold at 7/3 to 8/3 per bushel. Arrivals in Sussex Street from the North Coast aggregated 3,617 bags (chiefly yellow). Opening sales were effected at 7/3 but later 7/10 to 8/- per bushel was obtained. A few sales of white were made at 8/3 per bushel.

Consignments of oats restricted.

Supplies of oats at Alexandria were again lighter, only 7 trucks being received. No prices were recorded as consignments were direct to private buyers.

C.H.F.

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FRUIT AND VEGETABLE SALES AT CITY MUNICIPAL MARKETS, SYDNEY.

Moderate trading in fruit.

Trading generally was moderate in volume, although at times, more particularly towards the close of the month, demand was quiet.

Good inquiry for apples.

Supplies of apples were fairly heavy during the early part of the month and comprised principally Interstate consignment but there was a falling-off in arrivals subsequently. Demand for large fruit of New South Wales origin was strong and rates were firm. Jonathans sold to the maximum of 18/-, despite the fact that substantial supplies of Interstate fruit, particularly Tasmanian packs, were available at lower rates. Delicious, Rome Beauty and Granny Smiths (apart from small sizes) sold to the ceiling rate. Other varieties from local orchards were limited as to quantities, only occasional small consignments of Stayman's Winesap, London Pippin, Statesman and isolated lots of other kinds being on offer.

Jonathans from Tasmania sold at from 7/- to 12/- but up to 15/- per bushel was obtained for some Victorian lots. Interstate Delicious realised 15/- for best sizes. Other interstate varieties included Rome Beauty, Dunn's Seedling, London Pippin and Cleopatra while Victorian Granny Smiths were available late in the month.

Pears in demand.

Consignments of pears from the various growing centres of New South Wales were relatively light, but the receipt of Victorian and Tasmanian consignments, however, materially assisted in maintaining supplies. Demand generally was keen for fancy grad Packhams Triumph and Winter Cole at the maximum of 18/- per bushel Best packs of Josephine also sold to 18/-. Towards the close of th period the ceiling price of 15/- for Beurre Bosc was increased to 18/- and little difficulty was experienced in obtaining this rate for a consignment from Victoria. Small quantities of Tasmanian Doyenne du Comice were received and sales were made at up to 15/- per bushel.

New season's Navel oranges available.

Trading in oranges was confined in the main to coastal Navels and Silettas, and early in the month the market was dependent on Queensland consignments. There was a gradual increase in supplies but the quantities coming forward could only be classe as moderate at the peak. Request for Navels generally was good for counts up to 200 but smaller fruit was slow to clear at times. Silettas sold well, while supplies of Navels were limited but

/demand...

demand slackened as the flow of Navels improved and most lines were then purchased for factory purposes.

A new ceiling price of 18/- for oranges came into operation on 1st May. The price range for Navels is 64s to 88s 12/6 to 17/- and counts above 92 18/- per bushel.

Maximum rates for lemons reduced.

Fairly large quantities of lemons from coastal groves, including some very green main crop packs, were forward early in the month. Demand was mainly for coloured lines, disposals of green lots being slow, and the best prices offering had to be accepted to clear this class of fruit. Consignments declined subsequently and ready clearances were effected. The ceiling price of 25/- was reduced to 20/- on 1st May.

Grapefruit was available in small quantities and sales were made at 14/- per case.

Mandarins lightly supplied.

Supplies of mandarins from coastal sources were limited to small lots mainly of the Imperial variety. Request was good and best packs realised to 15/- per half-case. A few consignments of Glen Retreats from Queensland were on offer and those mostly sold at 30/- per bushel.

Steady demand for grapes.

Trading in grapes was confined in the main to Cornichon and Doradillo varieties, although late in the month both Murrumbidgee Irrigation Area and Victorian Ohanez were obtainable.

Inquiry for Cornichons was well maintained and the prices realised generally were above the average for previous years; special packs realised to 18/- and on a few occasions higher rates were obtained. Values for Doradillos were steady and best packs sold around 10/- per half-case. The Victorian Ohanez grapes were sold in bushel packer cases and brought up to 28/- but higher rates were obtained for Murrumbidgee Irrigation Area lots which realised the equivalent of 40/- per bushel.

Bananas under price control.

The market for bananas was somewhat quiet early in the month, and values generally were easier prior to the introduction of price control in relation to this fruit on Wednesday, 17th May. The maximum rate was fixed at 7d per lb. for Cavendish and Mons Marie varieties, and 8d for Lady Fingers and Sugar bananas.

Supplies were light towards the close of the month and the ceiling price was paid for good quality fruit, irrespective of size.

/Pineapples...

Pineapples in short supply.

Consignments of pineapples showed a marked decline and before they were brought under price control on 10th May rates were very firm, up to 40/- per case and occasionally higher being paid for selected sizes. The ceiling price was fixed at 24/- per case for 18s and higher, and counts below 18 at the rate of 1/4 each, e.g., 12s at 16/-. The quantities reaching the market late in the month were insufficient to meet buyers requirements and supplies were rationed.

High prices rule for choice passionfruit.

Passionfruit were scarce and high prices ruled for the few choice lots available, as much as 50/- per half-case and more being obtained.

Other fruits.

Papaws, custard apples and avocados were on offer. Rates for papaws ranged to 35/- per case and up to 20/- per half-case was paid for custard apples and avocados.

Rains aid vegetable crops.

Dry weather persisted until the second half of May, when fairly good rains were received over a large section of the State. The coastal belt was badly in need of moisture and the falls received, although late, are expected to materially benefit such crops as peas, cabbages and cauliflowers in the growing areas, particularly in the County of Cumberland.

Peas mostly in short supply.

The quantities of peas reaching the market until towards the end of the month were below trade requirements. On a number of days consignments were well below the thousand bag mark and on these occasions the ceiling rate of 21/- per bushel ruled for practically all lines. During the latter part of the month there was an increase in supplies which included fairly large quantities from Victoria. Consignments from the Murrumbidgee Irrigation Area also increased, while more coastal lots were coming forward.

Quality showed considerable variation late in May, noticeably in Victorian supplies, and water damage was responsible for reduced rates for a number of lines from the Murrumbidgee Irrigation Area. Generally, choice lots realised the ceiling price of 21/- but values for other grades covered a fairly wide range. An increase in the maximum rate of 21/- per bushel to 23/4 came into effect on 30th May but only a few lots of outstanding quality attained this figure.

/Satisfactory...

Satisfactory demand for choice beans.

There was a marked increase in consignments of beans from the North Coast and Queensland but the percentage of choice descriptions was relatively small, the bulk being of low grade and in some instances unsaleable.

Demand generally centred around good quality descriptions, the carryover of medium to inferior lines being fairly heavy for some days following bi-weekly receivals from the North Coast and Queensland.

Small quantities continued to come forward from the Gosford-Tuggerah district and also from favourably situated areas within the County of Cumberland. Choice offerings realised from 16/- to 20/- per bushel. The ceiling price of 20/- was also obtained for some attractive lots from the central coast.

Ceiling price for tomatoes advanced.

The market was well supplied with tomatoes during the greater part of the month. Large quantities were received from the Murrumbidgee Irrigation Area but owing to the indifferent quality of a big percentage of packs, rates were variable. Some lots, particularly of the San Marzana variety, had to be sold at low prices, while breakdown was responsible for a good deal of loss.

The announcement that the ceiling price was to be increased from 12/- to 20/- per half-case two days before it became effective on 10th May created a keen demand and large quantities were disposed of. Subsequently, inquiry was only moderate and was chiefly for choice green and coloured lines from local and Queensland growers. The new maximum price of 20/- was obtained for only a few extra choice coloured local tomatoes. Consignments from Queensland included both northern and southern packs and best quality lines sold to 16/- per half-case with a few specials higher. Supplies were increasing late in the month, about 10,000 half-cases reaching the market on Monday, 29th May. Small quantities reached the market from the North Coast and Menindee.

Increased supplies of cauliflowers.

There was a good inquiry for cauliflowers until just prior to the close of the month when supplies were in excess of the requirements of the retail trade and large quantities were disposed of to pickle manufacturers.

Realisations early in May were on a high level, as much as 40/- per dozen being obtained, but the trend was downward as supplies increased, although choicest lines did not go below 12/- per dozen. It was stated that recent rains, together with mild

/conditions...

conditions, brought early varieties to maturity quickly and growe were forced to harvest their crops to prevent deterioration and loss.

Rates for cabbages ease.

Moderate supplies of cabbages were forward. Demand was satisfactory during the first week of the month but with the dail increase in the quantity of cauliflowers on offer, there was a slackening in inquiry. A sharp fall in values occurred and clearances were more difficult to effect. Prices ranged to 15/- with some sales to 20/- per dozen early in May but prior to the close of the month rates had fallen to 8/- per dozen for selected heads.

Beetroot and parsnips sell well.

In the bunched vegetable trade both beetroot and parsni were lightly supplied and in request. Carrots, however, sold slowly at times owing to the plentiful stock of loose lines available at prices well below those ruling for bunched lots on a comparable basis.

R.M.

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The Prices Commissioner on 19th June fixed maximum rate for pineapples on a weight basis. Such prices in Sydney are 5d l wholesale and 6½d lb. retail. Professor Copland has stated that no change would be made in "ceiling" prices to growers because the new prices are equivalent to the previous rate per case.

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The Minister for Commerce and Agriculture has announced that arrangements have been completed to secure 10,000 tractors for Australia, the bulk being obtained from the United States under lend-lease. The remainder, it is stated, will come from Britain. The total value of the tractors will approximate £6,000,000.

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A plan to lift milk production to a record level was to be submitted to the Australian Agricultural Council on 19th June. The proposals include:-

Extension to other States of the New South Wales plan to set individual production targets for dairy farmers.

Mechanisation to step up production.

Fodder conservation to avoid lean-season milk shortages.

Measures to overcome rubber and manpower difficulties.

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WHOLESALE PRICES OF VARIOUS COMMODITIES IN SYDNEY (N.S.W.) DURING MAY, 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	May, 1944		31st August, 1939	
	From	To	From	To
Wheat: Home Consumption Bulk - per bushel	3/11¼d (unchanged)		2/4d	
Flour - per ton	£10.4.2 (plus £2.8.10 tax)	"	£6.12.3 (plus £6.2.9 tax)	
Bran - " "	£6.0.0	"	£4.5.0	
Pollard " "	£6.0.0	"	£4.5.0	
Eggs - per dozen	2/-	"	1/-	
Butter (choice) per cwt.	169/4	"	161/2	
Cheese:				
Loaf - per lb.	1/0½d	"	11d	
Large - " "	1/-		10½d	
Special brands "	1/1	1/3½ "	1/2d	

	May, 1944		29th August, 1939	
	From	To	From	To
Pigs (Abattoir Sales): Good to prime per head:				
Porkers -	25/6	33/6	31/6	40/6
Extra light	35/6	46/6	39/6	44/6
Light	39/6	71/6	43/6	57/6
Medium weight	60/6	75/6	50/6	54/6
Heavy	£3.15.6	£7.11.6	60/6	75/6
Baconers	£5.10.0	£14.19.6	£4.5.0	£8.10.0
Backfatters				

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

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

F R U I T.

STATE	Pineapples tropical cases.	Bananas tropical cases.	Other Fruit cases.	Tomatoes half-bushel cases.	Melons crates	TOTALS pkges.
Queensland	45,198	1,971	31,711	5,230	-	84,110
Victoria	70	46	153,664ø	20,932	-	174,712
Tasmania	-	-	95,204	553	-	95,757
Sth. Aust.	-	-	13,489	-	-	13,489
West Aust.	-	-	-	-	-	-
TOTALS	45,268	2,017	294,068	26,715	-	368,068

Note: ø Additional - 5,560 cases of Fruit during January and
12,446 " " " " February.
(The above figures have only just been received).

V E G E T A B L E S.

STATE	Potatoes bags	Onions bags	Swedes bags	Pumpkins bags	Cucs. & Chillies cases	Other Vegs. pkges.	TOTALS pkges.
Queensland	254	29	-	12,337	217	6,342	19,179
Victoria	5,483¤	19,976¤	285	10	-	8,151	33,905
Tasmania	56,962	-	6,282	-	-	853	64,097
Sth. Aust.	2,431	495	-	-	-	194	3,120
West Aust.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
TOTALS	65,130	20,500	6,567	12,347	217	15,540	120,301

Note: ¤ Additional - December - 186 bags Potatoes, 462 bags Onions.
January - 3,149 bags Onions, 6,617 bags Potatoes.
February - 7,431 bags Potatoes, 16,104 bags Onions.
(The above figures have only just been received).

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

F R U I T.

STATE	Pineapples tropical cases	Bananas tropical cases	Other Fruit cases	Tomatoes half-bushel cases	Melons crates	TOTALS pkges.
Queensland	25,403	1,920	23,950	1,531	-	52,804
Victoria	12	44	129,874	28,308	-	158,238
Tasmania	-	-	140,501	443	-	140,944
Sth. Aust.	-	-	9,802	-	-	9,802
West Aust.	-	-	-	-	-	-
TOTALS	25,415	1,964	304,127	30,282	-	361,788

V E G E T A B L E S.

STATE	Potatoes bags	Onions bags	Swedes bags	Pumpkins bags	Cucs. & Chillies cases	Other Vegs. pkges.	TOTALS pkges.
Queensland	88	8	-	11,338	313	4,341	16,088
Victoria	16,305	53,366	2,714	-	1	9,175	81,561
Tasmania	66,266	9	6,450	-	-	3,585	76,310
Sth. Aust.	1,968	492	-	-	-	2,879	5,339
West Aust.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
TOTALS	84,627	53,875	9,164	11,338	314	19,980	179,298

DIVISION OF MARKETING AND AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS : DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE - NEW SOUTH WALES
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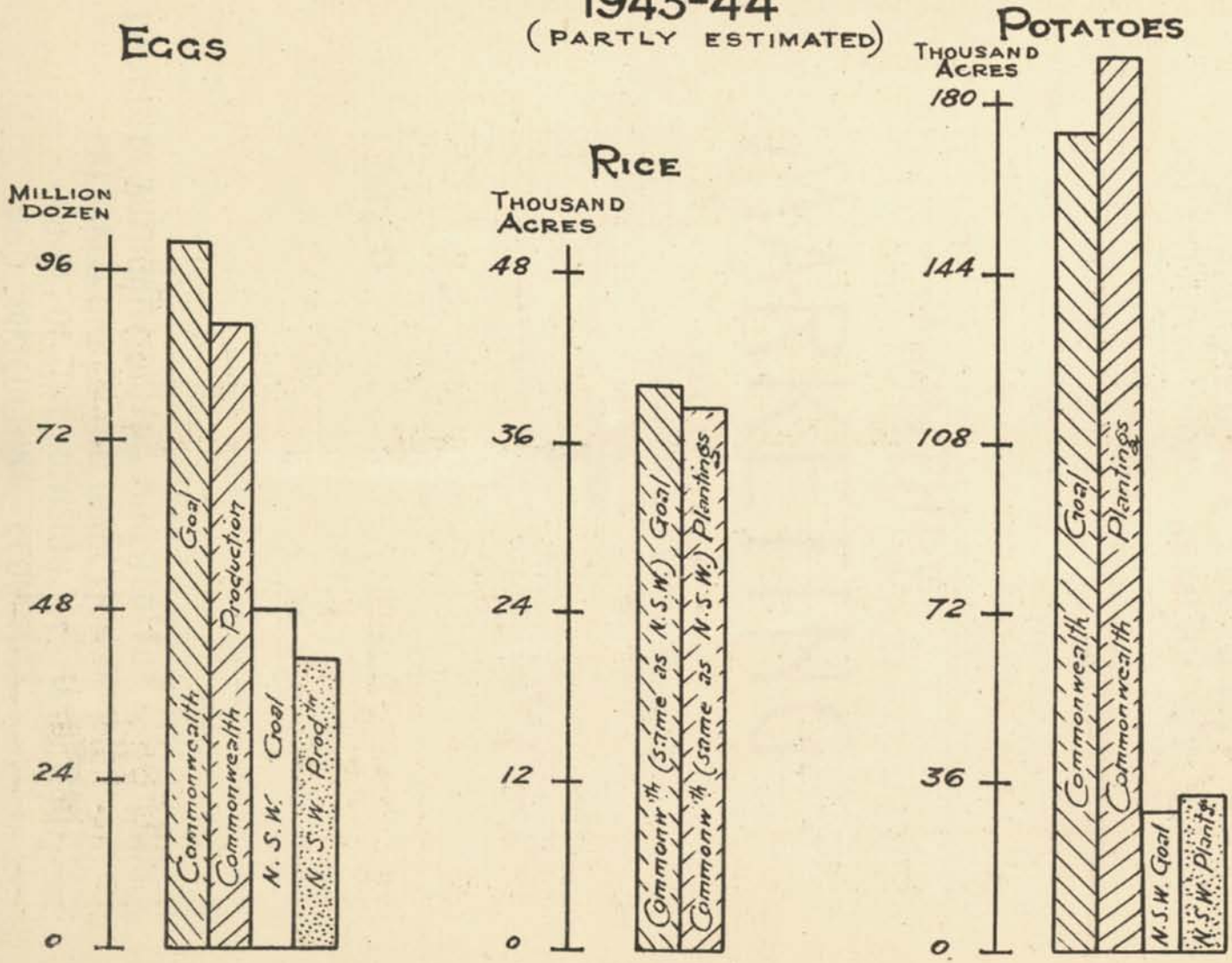

Compiled: R.b.[illegible] 31·5·44
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Checked: R.b.[illegible] 1.6·44

H. J. Byrnes.

Acting Chief, Div. of Marketing & Agr. Economics