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GENERAL NOTES AND NEWS.

The Division's official forecast of the current season's oat crop places the likely yield of grain in New South Wales at 8 million bushels, whilst hay production is expected to total 400,000 tons. These yields are based upon conditions existent at 26th October, 1945.

The Chief of the Division, together with other Departmental officers, recently attended conferences in Melbourne convened by the Commonwealth Government to discuss post-war production and marketing of eggs, vegetables, potatoes and vegetable seeds. A series of conference resolutions have been forwarded to the Departments and producer organisations concerned.

Officers of the Division are to be associated with Field Officers of the Department of Agriculture in conducting surveys of properties considered suitable for subdivision for the settlement of returned servicemen. The Division is also charged with the major responsibility of preparing a handbook of lectures on farm management and agricultural economics for use in the training of ex-servicemen prior to engaging in rural pursuits.

The Rural Advisory Committee in surveying the outlook for the Australian wheat industry is to furnish a report to the Premier covering developments over the past few years and the statistical position with particular reference to likely demand. Immediate action to institute a Commonwealth-wide producer-controlled marketing scheme will be recommended as well as acreage control with grower registration.

At a recent meeting of the Markets Advisory Committee a considerable amount of discussion centred on the increasing congestion in the City Municipal Markets Area. Steps are being taken to place various suggestions before the organisations of the interests involved in order that some scheme to minimise traffic congestion may be evolved and given effect to at the earliest possible moment.

It has been reported that the reduction of 50% in the refined sugar ration and the discontinuance of an allowance of sugar for use in jam-making has already had an effect on the sales of those stone fruits (particularly small sizes) which are normally purchased by the housewife for culinary purposes. It is expected that this feature will become more pronounced as supplies of stone fruits coming forward to the City Markets show the usual seasonal increase.

A freak storm on Sunday, 18th November, did considerable injury to vegetable crops in certain of the growing areas of the County of Cumberland near Sydney. This damage, with its consequent effect on production, was reflected in the prices of certain lines, noticeably lettuce, which showed a substantial advance virtually overnight.

The Director-General of Agriculture recently stated that because of a dry September and October, Australia's wheat yield for the present harvest was now estimated at between 120 m. and 130 m. bushels. Earlier in the year it had been thought that the harvest would reach 160 m. bushels.

N.S.W. butter production for the first four months of the current season was 8,857 tons, compared with 8,654 tons for same months last year.

Up to the beginning of October contracts for approximately 8,000 acres had been accepted from potato growers in early districts and 11,000 acres in main crop districts. The revised 1945-46 potato production target for New South Wales is 33,400 acres.

The N.S.W. Egg Marketing Board reports an intake of 1,442,833 dozen eggs from consignors during the week ended September 22. This is a record. The progress total of egg production so far this year is 15 per cent. above last year's level.

The following 1946-47 crop production targets have recently been set for New South Wales: Wheat - 5,200,000 acres for grain; Oats - 1,250,000 acres for all purposes; Barley - 35,000 acres for grain; and Maize - 115,000 acres for grain.