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SALES OF LIVESTOCK AT HOMEBUSH, SYDNEY.Reduced supplies of sheep and lambs.

The number of sheep and lambs available was about 24,000 less than the previous month's supply, total yardings amounting to 293,909 head, of which grown sheep comprised the largest proportion. Although the total penningings of sheep and lambs were lighter, the number of wethers and ewes offered was larger than in October. A total of 156,708 head was submitted for sale, or approximately 17,000 more than was available last month. The general quality was satisfactory and for the most part suited to trade needs. Moderate numbers of good light trade sheep were included but prime heavy wethers at times were in short supply. The relative scarcity of heavy wethers, however, was offset by a good representation of prime heavy ewes; although many lines were overfat and far too heavy for trade needs several lots yarded were estimated to dress in the vicinity of 100 lb.

Sheep market fairly steady.

Although some fluctuation occurred the market for sheep mostly was fairly steady and keen inquiry was evident. At the opening sales values declined, most descriptions being 1/- per head cheaper, but values fully recovered on the following sale day. Subsequently, rates remained fairly stable, although heavy sheep at times were disposed of at lower rates. At the end of the period rates for most classes of sheep were about $\frac{1}{4}$ d per lb. higher than those ruling at the early sales.

Best heavy wethers sold at from 4d to 5d but the bulk realised $4\frac{1}{2}$ d to $4\frac{3}{4}$ d per lb. Light wethers mostly cost from 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ d to 5d but some were obtained for $4\frac{1}{2}$ d per lb.

Good quality heavy ewes were secured for $3\frac{1}{2}$ d to 4d, with outstanding lots making $4\frac{1}{2}$ d, while light ewes generally realised 4d to $4\frac{1}{2}$ d, with occasional sales at $4\frac{1}{2}$ d per lb. At times, however, good light ewes were disposed of at $3\frac{3}{4}$ d per lb.

Best quality wethers made to 32/- and ewes to 28/- per head.

Lighter yardings of lambs.

The supply of lambs and suckers showed a considerable falling off, consignments aggregating 137,201 or some 40,000 head less than the October total. Having regard to the adverse seasonal conditions earlier in the year, which affected lambings, it would appear that the main drop of suckers has been marketed and supplies will continue to be relatively light.

The quality of the lambs offered generally was not up to

the October standard, medium to good trade descriptions comprising the bulk of the supply. Prime light grades were scarce but good heavy sorts made a much better showing.

Prime lamb dearer.

Although lamb was cheaper at the beginning of the period the market recovered and at closing lambs on a carcass equivalent basis cost 1d per lb. more than at the opening auctions, several advances of from 1/- to 1/6 per head taking place. Good heavy lambs and suckers, which could be purchased for 5½d to 7½d last month cost from 5½d to 7½d per lb., and light descriptions 6½d to 8½d. Most good quality light descriptions, however, were worth 7d to 8d per lb. Supplies of hoggets were relatively light and prices mostly ranged from 5½d to 6½d per lb., with occasional lots of prime heavy weights at 5½d.

Good heavy lambs and suckers in the pool sold to 35/- per head but shorn lots and light grades realised relatively lower prices.

Heavy supplies of cattle continue.

Consignments of cattle during November, 1945, were again consistently large and the aggregate for the nine sale days was 21,982 head, including 1,694 auctioned in the store section. The largest yarding was 2,765 head, which constituted the biggest single offering since January last.

Quality again showed considerable variation, with light-weight stock predominating on most sale days. On occasions grown cattle were well represented and the general quality was fairly good. A noticeable feature was the indifferent breeding of a substantial proportion of the consignments.

The pastoral outlook at the close of the month was somewhat unsatisfactory.

Bullocks again cheaper.

Consignments of bullocks were variable, although they were mostly moderate and comprised chiefly light and medium weights of a fair to good trade standard.

Average realisations were somewhat below those of the previous month, although values during the first half showed an improvement on the closing rates for November, ranging on several sale days to 53/- per 100 lb. Prices, however, receded subsequently and at the close of the period 50/- per 100 lb. was the highest noted.

Steers plentiful.

Steers were plentiful but while good quality lines were well represented a large proportion comprised lightweights of fair trade quality only. Prime weighty descriptions were relatively scarce.

The market was easier, rates reaching 55/- per 100 lb. but 46/- to 52/- was the range at closing.

Cows well supplied.

Cows were well supplied, particularly during the first half of the month, while consignments included all grades of weight and quality.

The market was very firm at opening when rates ranged to 46/- per 100 lb. Values subsequently, however, were lower, closing quotations ranging from 35/- to 42/- per 100 lb.

On a per head basis, prices ranged chiefly to £14.0.0 with an odd sale at £17.2.0. For the most part, demand for primo heavy to over-fat cows was again weak.

Variable supplies of heifers.

Supplies of heifers were variable; this class of beast was available in odd lots only at times, but it made a good showing on other occasions. Fair to good trade lightweights predominated.

The market was steadier than during October, although average rates were lower. Quotations ranged chiefly from 44/- to 50/- per 100 lb.

Medium weight vealers well supplied.

Supplies of vealers were chiefly moderate with fair to good trade medium weights constituting the bulk of the offering. Prime descriptions were scarce.

The market was weakest during the first week when values ranged from 48/- to 56/- per 100 lb. Rates subsequently showed some improvement while fluctuations were not marked. Values at closing were from 51/- to 59/- per 100 lb.

Reduced pig supplies.

Yardings of pigs were somewhat irregular and the total submitted at auction, 8,534 head, showed a reduction on the October supplies. Receipts by rail accounted for 5,160 and an additional 690 were sold by private treaty.

High values of baconers.

Baconers, as usual, were well represented while heavy to extra heavy descriptions of fair to good trade standard continued to predominate. Demand was particularly keen, especially for extra-heavy lines which commanded higher prices irrespective of quality.

Rates generally showed an increase and at closing quotations ranged to 10d per lb. for practically all grades. Very light Baconers also met competition from store buyers and in many instances values of these exceeded 10d per lb. Extra heavy descriptions above 200 lb. dressed weight were worth to 9½d per lb. On a per head basis, prices ranged to £7.18.6, the highest for some time.

Variable consignments of backfatters.

Backfatter consignments varied considerably both as to numbers and quality. A substantial proportion was of inferior grade and good quality lines were in relatively light supply.

A very strong demand continued to rule and rates at times exceeded the maximum of 7½d per lb. noted at the closing sale of October. At the final auction prime heavy sorts were quoted to 8d per lb. On a per head basis the highest price noted was £16.18.6.

Keen demand for porkers.

Pennings of porkers were limited early in the period, except for very small pigs, but supplies improved considerably at closing when all grades of weight of generally fair to good trade quality were submitted.

The market was easier at opening but demand subsequently was exceptionally keen, even for inferior pigs. Rates ranged to 16d per lb. for lightweights and to 12d for heavy sorts.

(G.C. Coloman
and J.R. Williams.