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NEW SOUTH WALES
STATE MARKETING BUREAU
DIVISION OF MARKETING
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

MONTHLY MARKETING REVIEW

JULY, 1941

Vol. 7 No. 3

ISSUED BY AUTHORITY OF THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE
PREPARED UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE
CHIEF OF THE DIVISION OF MARKETING.
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MONTHLY MARKETING REVIEW

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

Released during the Second Week of each Month.

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

JULY, 1941.

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HIGHLIGHTS

It is estimated from figures supplied by the National Council of Wool Selling Brokers that the wool clip now being shorn in Australia will amount to 3,590,000 bales, being an increase of 84,000 bales as compared with last season.

Minister for Commerce expects that Britain's purchases of Australian butter for the 1941/42 season will be 60 per cent. of the total shipped last year. It is expected, however, that considerably larger quantities of cheese will be taken.

New South Wales Chief Secretary is endeavouring to improve the marketing of fish. With the co-operation of fish agents at the fish markets a high standard of efficiency and hygiene has been obtained, with the result that fish condemned has been substantially reduced in the last two years. He considered, however, that there was still room for improvement.

The Minister for Customs states that for the third year of the war, refrigeration space for shipping of meat will amount to only 27,000 tons, which would be used for lamb. Beef will be sent to troops in the Middle East. The export of frozen mutton would be prohibited and the entire exportable surplus canned.

According to newspaper reports, an Australian canning production for the Department of Supply and Development comprises 18,000,000 pork and beef sausages per month from August, 1941. These huge orders come from the British authorities in the Middle East and from India.

Observance of the voluntary form of grading dressed poultry is steadily increasing, states the Hon. Secretary of the Table Poultry Council of New South Wales. Many of the largest firms in Sydney are adopting the Council's scheme and it is hoped that within the next few months most of the poultry firms in Sydney will be using authorised grading tags.

MARKETING OF EGGS IN WESTERN AUSTALIA.

Marketing of Eggs Act, 1938, Western Australia.

In the issue of the "Monthly Marketing Review" of January, 1940, there appeared a resume of the Marketing of Eggs Act, 1938, of Western Australia. This Act was assented to in January, 1939, and was the outcome of persistent efforts by producers, extending over a considerable period, to have the poultry-farming industry in Western Australia placed on a more satisfactory basis. Comparison of the Act with the original Bill disclosed that certain sections of the latter were drastically amended during the course of its passage through Parliament. Further amendments were made to the Act in December, 1939, but no steps, as far as can be ascertained, have yet been taken by egg producers towards the constitution of an Egg Marketing Board.

Advices regarding industry operations in Western Australia indicated that, whilst a Marketing Board had not been established, producers of that State had endeavoured to tide over present difficulties, especially those brought about by sudden fluctuations of prices, by the institution of a voluntary stabilisation scheme. The following information regarding the operation of this scheme was supplied to the Chief of the Division of Marketing (Mr. A.A. Watson), during a recent visit to Western Australia, by a well-known firm working under the scheme.

Egg Stabilisation Pool.

The Egg Stabilisation Pool is operated on a purely voluntary basis and is for the purpose of stabilising prices only and one or two matters incidental thereto. It is controlled by an Egg Stabilisation Committee comprising three producer representatives, and three representatives of agents, with Dr. G.L. Sutton, representing the Government, as Chairman.

Wholesale prices of eggs are fixed by the Committee at rates reflecting its judgment as to supply and demand and the producer is paid accordingly by the agent to whom he consigns his eggs, irrespective of whether the eggs are sold or not. A stabilisation charge of one half-penny per dozen is made in respect of all eggs consigned to the pool. All surplus eggs held by the agents are sold to the Committee at the prices paid to the producer. These eggs are candled and cold stored and sold by the Committee in Kalgoorlie and other inland centres and also for ships' stores, etc. Any loss sustained by the Committee in selling these eggs for which, as has been said, it has paid the fixed prices, is met from the Stabilisation Fund.

In addition to the stabilisation fee of one half-penny per dozen (it was originally one-eighth of a penny), the producer pays a selling commission of five per cent. on realisations plus a case maintenance charge of 2d per full-size case and 1d per half-

/case .....

case. The cases are of two capacities, namely, 25 and 12½ dozen. New cases and fillers are purchased by the producer, the agents undertaking to keep them in good condition for the above-mentioned charges. The agent who supplied this information stated that the maintenance charges do not pay. The producer also pays an account sale fee of 6d on every consignment and ¾d per dozen for candling and grading.

Grading and Stamping of Eggs.

There are four firms or agents handling eggs under the above scheme, the operations of each of them having regard to a Regulation gazetted under the Agricultural Products Act of Western Australia. The egg grades in use in Western Australia are as follow:-

Special	...	2¼ oz.
Standard	...	1⅞ oz. to 2¼ oz.
Pullet	...	1⅝ " " 1⅞ "
Cooking	...	under 1⅞ oz.
Pulp	...	" 1⅝ "

At least one of the firms in question stamps their eggs. The stamps used show the number of the girl responsible for the candling and grading, the grade of the egg, and the name of the firm.

Girl egg packers employed under this scheme are required to pass a test instituted by the Western Australian Department of Agriculture, as to their proficiency as candlers. The test covers both practical and theoretical aspects and has regard, also, to speed. On passing this test, the girl is issued with a certificate and a number. If there are too many complaints regarding a girl's packing, the Department of Agriculture may deprive her of her certificate and thereupon she can no longer be employed as an egg packer under the scheme. The firm employing the girl is also required to hold a certificate entitling it to function under the scheme and may be deprived of its certificate.

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For some time past the Egg Marketing Board, Sydney, New South Wales, has been investigating the possibilities of the use of a new type of fibre-board egg-container to take the place of wooden egg-cases. During the 1940 export season, with the approval of the Department of Commerce, the equivalent of 25 cases of eggs was shipped to London in fibre-board containers. Reports received were that both the eggs and containers arrived in a very satisfactory condition. It was pointed out, however, that the eggs were unloaded in London and went into consumption with a minimum amount of handling; on the other hand, the journey to London was somewhat protracted owing to war shipping delays. Further and more extensive experiments are contemplated.

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MARKETING FACILITIES AT SINGLETON, NEW SOUTH WALES.

In the June, 1941, issue of the Monthly Marketing Review appeared information concerning the public marketing facilities at Tamworth. Similar particulars follow of the public markets at Singleton, one of the principal rural centres (as distinct from the coal-fields towns) of the Hunter-Manning Statistical Division.

Singleton is situated on the Hunter River, 148 miles north of Sydney, and has a population of approximately 3,700. The surrounding district is noted for dairying and pig-raising, and the greater portion of the cultivation on holdings is devoted to fodder crops (maize, lucerne, oats, sorghum, etc.). However, within 30 miles of Singleton appreciable quantities of citrus (principally oranges and mandarins), stone fruits, notably peaches, and vegetables are produced.

Market of the Singleton Central Co-operative Society, John Street, Singleton.

This market is conducted by the Singleton Central Co-operative Society, most of the shareholders of which are dairy farmers. Established 32 years, the market is said to be active and expanding.

Auction sales of farm produce, fruit and vegetables are held each Tuesday, commencing at 11 a.m., and private treaty sales take place throughout the week. The goods submitted are from the areas adjoining Singleton and adjacent thereto. The market caters for the local trade, and, besides selling the farmers' produce, handles foodstuffs likely to be required by the farmers.

Markets of Messrs. Grainger & Falkiner Pty. Ltd., John Street, Singleton.

These privately owned markets could be divided into the following sections:-

Front portion, wherein fruit, vegetables, produce and miscellaneous second-hand goods are displayed.

Central portion, containing poultry pens.

Rear portion, for hides and skins.

Roofed pens and yards, with concrete floors, situated a short distance away from the other premises, for penning, drafting and sale of pigs and calves. (This section is claimed to be as up-to-date as any in New South Wales).

Auction sales are held each Tuesday, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. These markets are active and are said to be improving. They have been established over 40 years.

/The ....

The pigs and calves are mostly drawn from district dairy farms, but some are received from the Upper Hunter; average yardings approximate 250 head of each. Pigs penned on Tuesday, 20th May, ranged from suckers to backfatters and included stores and sows with litters. A number of vealers was noticed amongst the calves. In addition to local butchers, Aberdeen, Newcastle and Metropolitan (Sydney) buyers attend these sales. Direct consignments from farms to Aberdeen and Newcastle have caused some diversion of business in recent years.

In the skin and hide section, the offering of rabbit skins from Singleton and the Upper Hunter is stated to be extensive, amounting to between ½ and 1 ton per week during the winter months; about 60 hides and 100 sheepskins, chiefly from local butchers, are submitted each week.

Between 200 and 250 pairs of poultry from the Singleton locality are sold each sale; these comprise mainly fowls but some ducks and turkeys are included.

Fruit in season, principally stone fruits, grapes and citrus, is received from the surrounding districts, and amounts to between 300 and 400 cases per week at peak periods. Apples and pears are sold "on consignment" from the Apple and Pear Board.

Vegetables from local growers are auctioned, the quantities and varieties varying according to the time of the year and the seasonal conditions.

Markets of Messrs. Wm. Bailey & Son, Campbell Street, Singleton.

Established over 40 years, the markets owned by Messrs. Wm. Bailey & Son consist of:-

A large galvanised iron building, with wooden floor, in which fruit, vegetables, produce, eggs and miscellaneous second-hand goods are displayed and sold.

112 Poultry Pens.

65 Pig Pens, with galvanised iron roof, concrete floors, and loading platforms.

80 Calf Pens, with gravelled floors, galvanised iron roof and loading platforms.

This firm also handles hides and skins.

Auctions are held each Tuesday, commencing at 11 a.m. Supplies of calves and pigs are drawn from the Singleton district

/and ....

and from other parts of the Hunter River area. The bulk of the animals is transported by motor lorry. Buyers from Sydney, Newcastle and Aberdeen, as well as local butchers, attend. Realisations are in line with Homebush prices, allowing for transport costs.

The pigs yarded included all types, whilst some vealers were noticed amongst the calves. The poultry consisted mainly of fowls, with some ducks, and odd turkeys and geese.

Apart from a small supply of apples "on consignment" from the Apple and Pear Board, the fruit, vegetables and produce on display were from local sources. A feature of the fruit section was the packing in cases of approximately one-quarter bushel capacity, presumably to meet the requirements of the housewives. These cases were not uniform in measurements, but varied with the different fruits; some were cherry cases, but most appeared home-made. A number of these quarter-cases of fruit was auctioned, and realised mostly 2/- each. Tomatoes, mandarins, oranges, lemons and apples were available in quarter-cases, whilst lemons were also submitted in paper bags holding one or two dozen each.

Vegetables, too, were offered in lots to suit the housewife, e.g.,

Beans - Paper bags holding 1 peck.
Potatoes - " " " 1 quarter
Chokos - " " " 1 dozen
Beetroot and swede turnips - Lots of 3 to 4 bunches.

Around the wall of the shed were fixtures into which each customer's purchases could be stacked until the auction ended, if so desired.

Livestock Saleyards, Singleton.

The Livestock saleyards are situated about two miles out of Singleton, in the Patrick Plains Shire, and are owned by the Shire Council. Regular auction sales are held every Wednesday, whilst special sales take place at intervals to meet the desires of agents.

Records made available by the Shire Council show that disposals at the Saleyards have been:-

Class of Stock	Annual Average for 19 years to Dec., 1927.	1938	1939	1940
		Head	Head	Head
Sheep	6,926 head	13,897	9,489	10,856
Cattle	34,499 "	34,348	24,679	21,575
Horses	669 "	469	253	262

/Supplies.....

Supplies are drawn from various centres, depending to a large extent on seasonal conditions, both locally and elsewhere. During the past few years, owing to adverse seasons in the Hunter Valley and, more recently, in the New England, a greater proportion of the fat cattle has been received from Queensland. Normally, any deficiency in supplies from nearby localities would be made up from the New England or Northern Tableland district of New South Wales. The drought also affected the Singleton district demand for store cattle, and caused a steep decline in yardings.

The fact that the Saleyards are situated about three miles from the railway is not as great a drawback as might be expected. Cattle trucked to Singleton for sale are spelled before submission, and the spelling paddocks lie between the railway and the saleyards. Very few fats are trucked away from Singleton; most of these are bought by either local or Maitland butchers, and the latter take any purchases to Maitland by road. Store cattle are mostly bought by local and district farmers or graziers and go by road to the properties.

The sheep submitted are limited in number and are principally for slaughter locally or in nearby towns.

The following is the schedule of yard dues payable on stock sold:-

	per head
Store Cattle	2d
Dairy and Fat Cattle ..	4d
Sheep	1d
Horses	1/-

No charge is made for stock offered but not sold.

Disadvantages of present markets.

The opinion was expressed that the present calf and pig markets, situated as they are within the town boundaries, lead to some traffic congestion and occasion a certain amount of annoyance to nearby residents, particularly when animals arrive by rail and are penned overnight. In addition, buyers must attend two markets to gauge the total available offerings.

A further factor is that each local butcher now operates his own slaughter-house, a system tending to increase costs and reduce the efficiency of supervision.

A suggestion was made that Singleton is a sufficiently important centre to justify a municipally or co-operatively owned and operated central slaughter-house (or abattoir), with calf and pig saleyards adjacent thereto, and by-product works attached.

C.K.

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HOMEBUSH LIVESTOCK MARKETS.

LIGHTER OFFERINGS OF SHEEP AND CATTLE: HEAVIER CONSIGNMENTS OF PIGS.

Lighter offerings of sheep and lambs.

There was a marked falling off in the numbers of sheep and lambs consigned from country centres to the Homebush Saleyards during June. Export restrictions and the fact that graziers are holding sheep for the ensuing wool clip and lamb drop were, no doubt, the main contributing factors towards the lighter yardings. Pennings throughout the period aggregated 248,003 head, or approximately 58,000 less than the May total. It is expected that light supplies will continue, for some time yet, or at least until the main body of new season's sucker lambs is available later in the year.

Smaller pennings of sheep.

Although fair numbers of wethers were offered, ewes were particularly scarce, consignments being considerably curtailed owing to the commencement of lambing in a number of centres. During June, 135,509 sheep were penned, this being some 44,214 below the total for May. The scarcity of feed in some parts of the State and the effects of frosts on pastures were reflected in the increased proportion of medium to fair trade sheep yarded. Very few drafts of good quality ewes were noticed, aged plain descriptions predominating. Amongst the wethers, however, there was a fair representation of good to prime grades, mostly on the weighty side and carrying big skins. In the light sheep, mainly fair to good trade qualities were available, only occasional lots of prime grade being included. Amongst the heavy sheep penned were some outstanding lines of prime crossbred wethers and ewes.

Lower closing rates for sheep.

During June rates for the better grades of sheep showed some improvement over the average of those ruling during May, but with medium to plain descriptions the advance was not so pronounced. Early in the month the market rose by from 1/- to 1/6 per head and by the end of the third week, as the result of a stronger demand, a further increase of 1/- to 1/6 each was apparent, making a total gain of from 2/- to 3/- per head. During the final week, prices fell, the decline being from 2/- to 2/6 per head and, in some instances, more, so that it could be said that the advance in rates was practically lost by the end of the month's operations.

Some indication of the market fluctuations is conveyed by the following actual sales:-

At the opening auctions, a pen of good trade wethers, weighing approximately 40 lb., sold at 17/8 each, equivalent to 3$\frac{3}{4}$d per lb., while a line of 40 lb. ewes realised 16/2 per head,

/or ....

or 2⅝d per lb., and a consignment of heavy wethers, about 54 lb. in weight, brought 21/11 each, costing 3d per lb. Subsequently, following on improved realisations, good trade wethers, weighing 44 lb., were disposed of at 21/7 per head, making 3¾d per lb. Later, however, prices eased somewhat and 44 lb. wethers sold at 19/4 each or 3¼d per lb., and at the end of June wethers of similar weight cost 19/2 per head, or 3d per lb. The variation in rates of heavy wethers was equally apparent, but, owing to the shortage of supplies, prices of ewes for the most part did not fluctuate as much.

Average values somewhat higher.

Although at the end of June, sheep were obtained at prices below those paid earlier in the period, average realisations per lb. were higher than those ruling throughout May. In June, light wethers cost as high as 3¾d per lb. and heavy descriptions made up to 3¼d, as compared with 3¼d and 3d, respectively, in the previous month but mostly light wethers made from 3d to 3½d per lb. and heavy brought from 2½d to 3d. On one occasion operators paid as much as 3d per lb. for light ewes and 2¾d per lb. for the heavy grades, but general realisations were from 2d to 2½d per lb. for heavy and 2¼d to 2¾d per lb. for light weight sorts.

Some very satisfactory prices per head were obtained, prime heavy wethers making as much as 26/- each and ewes realising to 20/- per head. Many sales of wethers were recorded at from 23/- to 25/- per head, but by far the largest proportion of the good quality grade brought from 17/- to 22/-, while plain and medium trade lines were disposed of at lower prices. In common with May, the general standard of the ewes could not be regarded as good and only occasional high realisations were noted. On the whole, however, rates were satisfactory, values of the better grades ranging from 14/- to 18/- each and other descriptions bringing from 6/- to 13/- each, according to quality.

Further decline in supplies of lambs.

The restrictions on the export of lamb continued throughout June: Consequently, consignments to Homebush were by no means heavy and the number available was some 14,000 head below that of the previous month. An aggregate of 112,494 head was offered, the highest daily total being 16,200 and the smallest 12,100 head, which, however, appeared sufficient for local needs. There was a good penning of medium quality lambs, and the supply also included quite a few prime heavy descriptions. Light trade lambs showing any quality or finish were frequently difficult to buy, many animals of this class being on the plain side. Some pens of new season's suckers were offered; the consignment was very attractive, both in shape and appearance, and would average about 35½ lb. dressed weight, while the heaviest suckers included would dress approximately 40 lb. Some exceptionally heavy pens of

/lambs ....

lambs, as well as lambs and hoggets, were noticed, many lines dressing well over 50 lb. - a little too heavy for local trade needs.

Improvement in lamb prices.

Early in the month under review, rates for lamb remained fairly steady. Owing to the reduced numbers available, in the second week values showed some improvement. Throughout the following fortnight, demand was particularly good and prices of practically all classes of lambs rose, the total increases varying from 3/- to 4/6 per head, values of light lambs advancing by from 1d to 1½d per lb. and those of heavy by ¾d per lb. Towards the end of June, however, rates for heavy lambs practically lost the earlier gain, but light descriptions, although somewhat cheaper, did not quite reach as low prices as they were selling at the beginning of the month.

Typical realisations are given hereunder to illustrate the price variations:-

At the first sale in June, operators obtained 30 lb. lambs for 16/4 each or 4¾d per lb., while 38 lb. lambs cost 19/3 per head or 4¼d per lb. Following on the improved realisations, a pen of good trade suckers, weighing approximately 28 lb., was disposed of at 17/1 each, equivalent to 5¾d per lb., and heavy lambs, about 38 lb. in weight, sold at 22/8 each, costing 5d per lb. Still higher prices ruled subsequently, when good trade lambs, of 34 lb. weight, brought 22/4 per head, or 6d per lb. Before the end of the month, however, heavy 44 lb. lambs were secured for 21/11 each, or 4d per lb. A draft of choice new season's suckers, weighing approximately 34 lb., sold at 22/2 each, making the very satisfactory price of 6½d per lb.

Better average realisations for lambs.

On the whole, rates for lamb were better in June than in the previous month and, although there again was a fairly wide margin between the highest and lowest prices per pound for the carcase, the difference was not nearly so substantial. On occasions, heavy lambs only realised 3½d per lb., while at other times they brought up to 5d per lb.; mostly, however, they were worth from 3¾d to 4½d per lb. Light lambs showing quality and finish were scarce and at times cost as much as 6½d per lb., but generally they sold at from 5½d to 6d per lb., according to quality and finish. Medium to good trade lambs comprised a good proportion of the supplies and were worth from 4d to 5¼d per lb., quality and appearance determining the actual price paid. New season's sucker lamb, of which about 2 trucks were available, were disposed of at rates ranging from 6d to 7d per lb., the whole draft averaging approximately 6⅝d per lb.

/On .....

On the whole, prices per head were good and the satisfactory figure of 24/- each was obtained for several lots of lambs. Many lines made from 20/- to 23/- per head, but a good proportion of the supplies brought from 15/- to 20/- each. Medium to plain lambs sold at lower levels and, on occasions, when this class was well represented in the pennings, auctioneers experienced difficulty in effecting satisfactory clearances.

Variable consignments of cattle.

Consignments of cattle during June, 1941, were more irregular than those of May, the monthly total of 13,875 head being a little lower. Numbers auctioned in the Store Section amounted to 1,868. Quality was somewhat variable and on the whole only fair. A distinct improvement, however, was noticed on the final sale day, when the percentage of medium to fair trade stock was small As during May, lightweight beasts greatly predominated.

Stock are reported to be in fairly good condition, but hand feeding is proceeding in places in the Southern half of the State, where good rains are urgently required.

Supplies of bullocks mostly light.

For the most part bullocks were in limited supply and the pennings comprised chiefly lightweights of fair to good trade quality. On a few occasions, however, this class of beast made a much better showing and several attractive drafts of prime medium weights were noticed. The market was weakest on the opening sale day, when quotations for good to prime bullocks were - medium weight 36/- to 38/- and light 38/- to 40/- per 100 lb. Values soon recovered and towards the close of the month a fairly strong market prevailed, lightweights being quoted to 44/- per 100 lb. and medium weights to 43/-.

Steers well supplied.

Steers were generally well supplied throughout the month but until the close of the period the percentage of quality descriptions was small. Except on the initial sale day, when quotations ranged from 38/- to 43/6 for good to prime quality, values were very satisfactory and generally were higher than those of the previous month. During the final week quotations for prime light reached to 49/- per 100 lb.

Variable offerings of cows.

Consignments of cows were variable both as to quality and numbers. However, the yardings generally were light to moderate with quality chiefly fair trade. All grades of weight were represented. Good to prime cows met a firm demand and values showed an improvement compared with rates for May. During the second week,

/quotations .....

quotations for light descriptions ranged from 36/- to 41/- and heavy from 35/- to 38/- per 100 lb. On the final sale day, light weights sold to 39/-, but quotations for prime heavy weights were unaltered.

Quality heifers in demand.

Truckings of heifers were fair, but the percentage of quality descriptions generally was insufficient for requirements. In most instances, prime beasts were available in odd lots only. In common with other classes of stock, values advanced early in the period and, during the greater part of the month, average quotations ranged from 39/- to 45/- per 100 lb.

Good trade vealers well supplied.

Vealers generally made a good showing, all grades of weight being well represented. Quality was variable but chiefly was good trade. Demand was particularly keen and during the final week quotations for good to prime ranged from 52/- to 58/- per 100 lb. A weaker tendency was in evidence, however, on the final sale day.

The market generally during June was very strong and values more than recovered from the fall which occurred in May. Indications on early July sales are that prices should be maintained at levels very satisfactory to the producer, although not quite so high as the peak levels of June.

Record consignments of pigs.

The number of pigs submitted at auction during June, 1941, 11,773 head, was probably the largest on record for any one month. On the first sale day, a total of 4,108 was disposed of which, so far as can be ascertained, was a daily record except, perhaps, during a Christmas sale. A smaller number of pigs, however, was sold privately in the Metropolitan Area, and totalled 2,025 head. Consignments forwarded by rail for auction approximated 6,998. During the corresponding period of 1940, auction sales accounted for 6,363 head.

Heavy consignments of porkers.

Porkers were heavily supplied. A noticeable percentage was in store condition, but otherwise quality could be described chiefly as fair to good trade. The proportion of really prime porkers was variable, and on the whole only light. With the abnormal supplies on the opening sale day, values declined 4/- per head, when prime light porkers, dressing 60 lb., sold to 35/6 per head and 90 lb. pigs to 47/6. On the subsequent sale days, values advanced 5/- per head, only to ease again at the close, when corresponding quotations were 37/6 and 48/6 per head. On the whole, the market showed an improvement on May levels.

/Lightweight....

Lightweight baconers well supplied.

Baconers were well represented throughout the month, although they were chiefly of lightweight description. Fair to good trade sorts predominated, although many consignments of prime baconers were received from country centres. Values of this class of pig also showed an improvement on May prices, and, on the second sale day, quotations for good to prime descriptions ranged from 54/6 (100 lb.) to 69/6 (150 lb.). Rates, however, eased somewhat subsequently and at the final auctions, corresponding quotations were 50/6 and 62/6.

Prime backfatters scarce.

Except on one sale day, the pennings of backfatters were somewhat small, especially heavy descriptions. Prime sorts were also fairly scarce and quality on the whole was chiefly medium to fair trade. Values fluctuated, being highest on the second sale day, when quotations for good to prime pigs dressing 200/350 lb. ranged from 4d to 5d and 3¾d to 4¾d for those exceeding 350 lb. These rates were not maintained and values declined about ¾d per lb. by the final sale day.

G.C. & J.W.

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INDIA'S POTATO CROP.

The following information, based on an article by the Agricultural Adviser to the Government of India, is contained in a recent report by the Assistant Australian Government Trade Commissioner in India:-

A century ago the potato was almost unknown in India, but today it is probably the most widely-known of all vegetables, value of annual production being about £A.9,500,000. The total area under potatoes during the five years ended 1939 is estimated at 448,700 acres. An upward trend in acreages is noticeable, the increase since 1930/31 being estimated at 11.8 per cent. The annual production is some 49,100,000 maunds.

It is pointed out that unless suitable steps are taken, the position of potato-growers will be adversely affected by war conditions, as certain areas are dependent on seed imported from Italy.

In stressing the importance of cold storage of potatoes, it is stated that the annual loss due to unscientific methods is estimated at £A.1,657,000. Another regrettable feature is the abnormally low yield as compared with other parts of the world. This is said to be largely due to the poor quality of seeds, high incidence of diseases, inadequate manuring and the absence of varieties suitable for local conditions.

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CITY MUNICIPAL MARKETS, SYDNEY

MOST FRUITS SELL SLOWLY; GREEN VEGETABLES DEAR.

Apples in lighter supply.

Smaller supplies of apples were available throughout June. Granny Smith, Rome Beauty, Delicious, Jonathan and Cleopatra varieties comprised the bulk of the consignments received. Buyers experienced considerable difficulty in obtaining fruit suitable for retailing at 1/- per dozen, red varieties in particular being scarce. Prices levels generally rose during the latter half of the month.

Consignments of pears were lighter than during May and, in addition, the number of varieties gradually decreased, so that at the close the principal lines offering were Packhams, Winter Cole and Josephine. On the whole, vendors were able to clear stocks readily.

Navel oranges slow of sale.

Early in the month consignments of Navel oranges from coastal orchards showed a decline but later supplies were again fairly substantial. These offerings were augmented by gradually increasing quantities from the Murrumbidgee Irrigation Areas. Agents found it difficult to effect clearances, particularly during the latter part of June. At the commencement, prices showed a slight increase, but subsequently they fell to below opening levels.

Choice, large mandarins in request.

Choice, large mandarins were scarce and values rose 2/- per bushel case. On the other hand, small fruit was plentiful and had to be sold at particularly low prices.

Considerable quantities of lemons were forward and, despite low quotations, agents were unable to avoid carrying-over stocks.

Values of bananas remain steady: Pineapples cheaper.

Although the demand for bananas was rather restricted, very little variation in prices occurred.

The rates for pineapples ruling at the end of May were maintained during the first few weeks of June. Subsequently, however, the receival of larger consignments resulted in a fall in price levels. Closing values were from 6/- to 9/-, with some extra specials 10/- per tropical case.

/Queensland .....

Queensland strawberries on offer.

Small quantities of Queensland strawberries were available on the Sydney market in June. During the final fortnight quotations mainly ranged from 12/- to 18/- per dozen packets, while trays were sold at from 3/- to 7/- each.

Satisfactory inquiry for custard apples and papaws.

The usual bi-weekly consignments of custard apples and papaws were received from Queensland and generally stocks were cleared readily. For the most part, price levels were unaltered, although some special packs of papaws were up to 3/- per case dearer.

Green vegetables bring high prices.

As only comparatively small supplies were available, high rates ruled for all kinds of green vegetables. Buyers were reluctant to purchase normal quantities, but no carry-over of stocks occurred.

Smaller supplies of peas available.

Receivals of peas, principally from the North Coast of New South Wales and local sources, showed a further decline. Although a slight decrease took place in some instances, in the main the high values which ruled at opening were maintained. Trading was somewhat restricted; nevertheless, agents had little difficulty in disposing of the smaller quantities forward.

Higher rates for beans.

Fairly large consignments of beans from Queensland and the North Coast were received each Monday and Thursday but "local" supplies were particularly small. As was the case during May, many of the beans from the northern centres opened up in an unsatisfactory condition and this affected price levels. For the most part, however, and especially during the final fortnight, values showed a considerable increase, up to 15/- and 16/- per bushel being obtained for special lines on some occasions.

Continued light consignments of cauliflowers.

Consignments of cauliflowers from the Windsor and Bathurst districts continued to be light in comparison with those of previous seasons. Rates varied at times, but mostly the highest prices for selected "heads" were from 15/- to 20/- per dozen.

Cabbages comparatively scarce.

Throughout June, supplies of cabbages were comparatively

/light....

light. Choice, large "heads" were particularly scarce, the bulk of the offerings being of medium size. Vendors were able to maintain rates at high levels, up to 12/- being obtained during the earlier part of the month, whilst best lines realised 14/- per dozen on most days during the latter half of the period.

Good demand for tomatoes.

There was a marked falling-off in supplies of local tomatoes but this was offset to some extent by consignments from Northern and Southern Queensland. Values of choicest "locals" fluctuated, ranging from 10/- to 14/-, occasionally 15/- per half-case. A good demand for Queensland supplies prevailed, particularly towards the close of the month, owing to improved quality and the limited stocks available.

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H.G.M.

ALEXANDRIA RAILWAY GOODS YARD AND SUSSEX STREET SALES.

Larger quantities of potatoes available.

Local potatoes forwarded to Alexandria Railway Goods Yard during June totalled 21,278 bags, compared with 13,277 received the previous month. Arrivals were evenly distributed, over 4,000 bags being offered each week. Good quality was maintained and only a small proportion of lines was withheld, mainly on account of mechanical injury or incorrect grading. Crookwell, Taralga and Batlow districts were particularly well represented, supplying over 16,000 bags.

Sales were generally well attended and demand was satisfactory, although towards the close of the period a carry-over from day to day was unavoidable. Values were slightly easier, some No. 1 grade lines being sold at less than £4 per ton. Realisations at auction were:- No.1 £3.16.8 to £6.0.0, No.2 £3.5.0 to £4.13.4, No.3 £2.0.0 to £4.5.0, Seed £3.0.0 to £6.8.4 per ton, Stock food 1/9 to 5/1 per bag. Very heavy consignments of Victorian "flakes" were forwarded, 10,586 bags coming to hand. Quality of these tubers was good, although some lines were withheld for regrading, owing to mechanical injury or damage suffered during transit. Request, however, was rather poor and the bulk of sales was effected at £4.0.0 to £4.5.0. Prices at auction ranged from £3.11.8 to £4.15.0 per ton.

Stocks of Tasmanian potatoes were maintained, the total, including a shipment which arrived on the last day of the month, aggregating 87,654 bags. Bismarcks were available only during the first fortnight of the period when the season finished. Many lines early in the month were suffering from "glassy ends" but towards the close quality was good. Weather conditions were ideal for business and demand was good, clearances being rapidly effected in

/most .....

most cases. Brownells were in particular request, heavy stocks of "flakes" at Alexandria slowing the market for Snowflakes and Arranchiefs. Fixed rates showed little variation, Brownells advancing 10/- per ton to £6.10.0 during the last two weeks, whilst values of Snowflakes ranged from £4.10.0 to £5.0.0 per ton. Rates for Arranchiefs were unchanged at £4.10.0 and Bismarcks at £5.0.0 per ton.

Rise in onion prices.

Receivals of Victorian onions in Sussex Street showed a further decline this month, only 2,230 bags coming to hand. Only a small proportion of white table lines was included early in the month, but supplies are now exhausted. The bulk of stocks comprised Brown table and pickling lines. Quality varied and repicking at times caused delay in marketing. Prices ranged from £12.10.0 for brown table and £7.0.0 for picklers early in the month, to £13.10.0 and £9.0.0, respectively, towards the close of the period. White table lots cleared at £18.0.0 per ton.

With the curtailment of shipping space, larger consignments are being railed to Alexandria; the total for the month was approximately 7,000 bags. These comprised mainly brown Globes although one or two pickling varieties were included during the last trading week. Values were firmer towards the end of the month, clearances being effected as follow:- Table £12.0.0 to £13.10.0, with odd £14.10.0 and picklers £9.0.0 per ton.

Firmer tendency in pumpkin market.

Slightly larger arrivals of pumpkins were received at Alexandria. The total of 65 trucks included 7 trucks from Queensland. Values during the first fortnight were unaltered at £2.10.0 to £3.10.0 with odd lines to £4.0.0 per ton, but demand then showed a definite improvement and stocks cleared well at £4.0.0 to £5.0.0 with odd as high as £6.0.0 per ton.

Other root vegetables in good demand.

Tasmanian growers consigned 8,757 bags of swedes, 1,331 bags of carrots and 1,161 bags of parsnips to Sussex Street during June. This represented a considerable increase on last month's figures. Inquiry was again brisk and supplies cleared rapidly, the carryover from day to day being very small. Values, which were fixed each week, and varied according to the size of the shipment, were generally firmer. Prices of swedes ranged from £6.0.0 to £8.0.0, Carrots £11.0.0 to £14.0.0, and Parsnips £11.0.0 to £20.0.0 per ton.

Local supplies received amounted to 1,274 bags of swedes and 142 of carrots. Quality of the swedes varied considerably and rates at auction ranged from £3.5.0 to £6.0.0 per ton. Private sales were effected at £5.0.0 to £8.0.0. Carrots cleared at £10.0.0 per ton.

/Choice...

Choice chaff in demand.

Oaten chaff received at Alexandria amounted to 153 trucks. Demand throughout centred chiefly around choice lines, which sold firmly at £8.0.0 to £8.10.0 per ton. Good to medium quality lots, which constituted the bulk of supplies, cleared steadily at £5.10.0 to £7.0.0 per ton, while inferior lines were cheaper. Trucks offered at auction brought £4.11.8 to £7.0.0 per ton.

Request for wheaten chaff was satisfactory, and the market generally was steady. Receivals were lighter than last month, 50 trucks being available. Medium varieties were on offer from £4.15.0 to £5.10.0, whilst choice lines realised £6.10.0 to £6.15.0 per ton. Only one truck was sold by auction, bringing £5.15.0 per ton. Choice shandy chaff sold well at up to £7.15.0 per ton.

Little change was apparent in the market for lucerne chaff. Consignments totalled 78 trucks, compared with 88 trucks available during May. The small proportion of choice quality lines realised £7.10.0, with odd specials to £8.0.0 per ton. Medium lots sold from £4.10.0 to £6.0.0. Auction sales were effected at £4.10.0 to £6.5.0 per ton.

Heavy receivals of lucerne hay.

Only 12 trucks of Maitland hay were received; quality, however, was only moderate and inquiry slow at £4.0.0 to £4.10.0 per ton.

Consignments from other centres were the largest of the year, amounting to 146 trucks. Quality varied considerably and choice varieties were rather scarce. Request for inferior and medium grades at £4.10.0 to £5.10.0 per ton was limited and many lines were carried over from day to day. Good quality hay sold steadily from £6.0.0 to £7.0.0, while choice varieties were in demand at £8.0.0 per ton. Odd derrick pressed lots were quoted at £3.15.0 to £4.5.0. Only one or two trucks were cleared by auction at £5.0.0 to £5.5.0 per ton.

About 180 bales of medium quality Hunter River lucerne hay came to hand in Sussex Street. Sales were slow at £4.0.0 to £4.10.0 per ton.

The bulk of the 62 trucks of oaten hay was consigned direct to private firms, and only a small proportion was offered for sale. Choice lines sold by private treaty at £9.0.0 to £9.5.0 per ton. Inferior quality lines were auctioned at £2.15.0 to £3.0.0 per ton.

Shortage of Tasmanian straw.

Shipping restrictions have reduced supplies of Tasmanian

/straw....

straw and only 500 odd bales were available during June. These cleared, upon arrival, at £6.0.0 per ton.

Stocks available at Alexandria consisted of 25 trucks from local centres and 21 from Victoria. Quality of the New South Wales straw varied and rates ranged from £3.15.0 to £5.10.0 per ton. Victorian offerings were choice and demand firm at £5.10.0 to £6.0.0.

Maize market easier.

Receivals of maize at Alexandria amounted to 9,500 bags, comprising mainly yellow lines. The market was considerably easier, prime yellow selling at 3/7 to 3/10 per bushel. A fair proportion of the consignments was soft and heated, and sold at lower rates. Auction sales were effected at 2/8 to 3/8 per bushel.

Northern Rivers maize shipped to Sussex Street totalled 3,550 bags. The market here was similar, prime yellow clearing at 3/7 per bushel. White varieties, which constituted about half the total stocks, sold at 3/10. Inferior lines of both varieties were quoted at lower prices.

Nearly all of the 20 trucks of wheat received was sold by auction. Demand was steady at 3/10 to 4/2 per bushel, according to quality. Small lines were sold privately at 4/5 to 4/6 per bushel.

Choice oats from the 12 trucks available brought 3/6 per bushel. Auction sales were made at 2/10 to 3/5 per bushel.

C.S.

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AUSTRALIA'S EGG SURPLUS.

According to newspaper reports, the Minister for Commerce has announced that arrangements are now being made to deal with the egg surplus for the forthcoming season. The proposal of the Commonwealth Government is to take such action as would enable producers to obtain the same return as if the eggs were shipped in shell upon the basis of last year's contract with the United Kingdom Government. Eggs from New South Wales and Victoria would be processed into whole egg powder and sold to the British Government, whilst eggs would be shipped in shell from Queensland, Western Australia and South Australia. The Commonwealth Government would actually buy the eggs in shell and arrange for them to be processed. When it was found that insulated space would not be available for shipping eggs in shell, the Commonwealth Government arranged to purchase processing plants belonging to Messrs. Vesteys in China. A private company, with experts brought from China, will instal the plants and do the processing under agreement, but will not trade in the processed product.

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WHOLESALE PRICES OF VARIOUS COMMODITIES IN SYDNEY (N.S.W.) DURING JUNE, 1941, 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 State Marketing Bureau in respect of various commodities for the periods indicated:

Commodity	June, 1941		31st August, 1939.
	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 - per ton	£6.0.0) unchanged		£4.5.0
Pollard " "	£6.0.0)		£4.5.0
Eggs (hen) per dozen	1/6	1/4	1/-
Butter:			
Choice per cwt.	161/2d)		161/2d
First Quality " "	156/6d) unchanged		156/6d
Second " " "	151/10d)		151/10d
Cheese:			
Loaf per lb.	11d) unchanged		11d
Large " "	10½d)		10½d
Special Brands per lb.	11½d	1/2d	1/2d

Pigs (Abattoir Sales)

Good to prime: per head	June, 1941		29th August, 1939	
	From	To	From	To
Porkers - extra light	19/6	34/6	31/6	40/6
" - light	28/6	39/6	39/6	44/6
" - medium weight	32/6	48/6	43/6	57/6
" - heavy	41/6	52/6	50/6	54/6
Baconers	50/6	69/6	60/6	75/6
Backfatters	£3.0.0	£8.2.6	£4.5.0	£8.10.0

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

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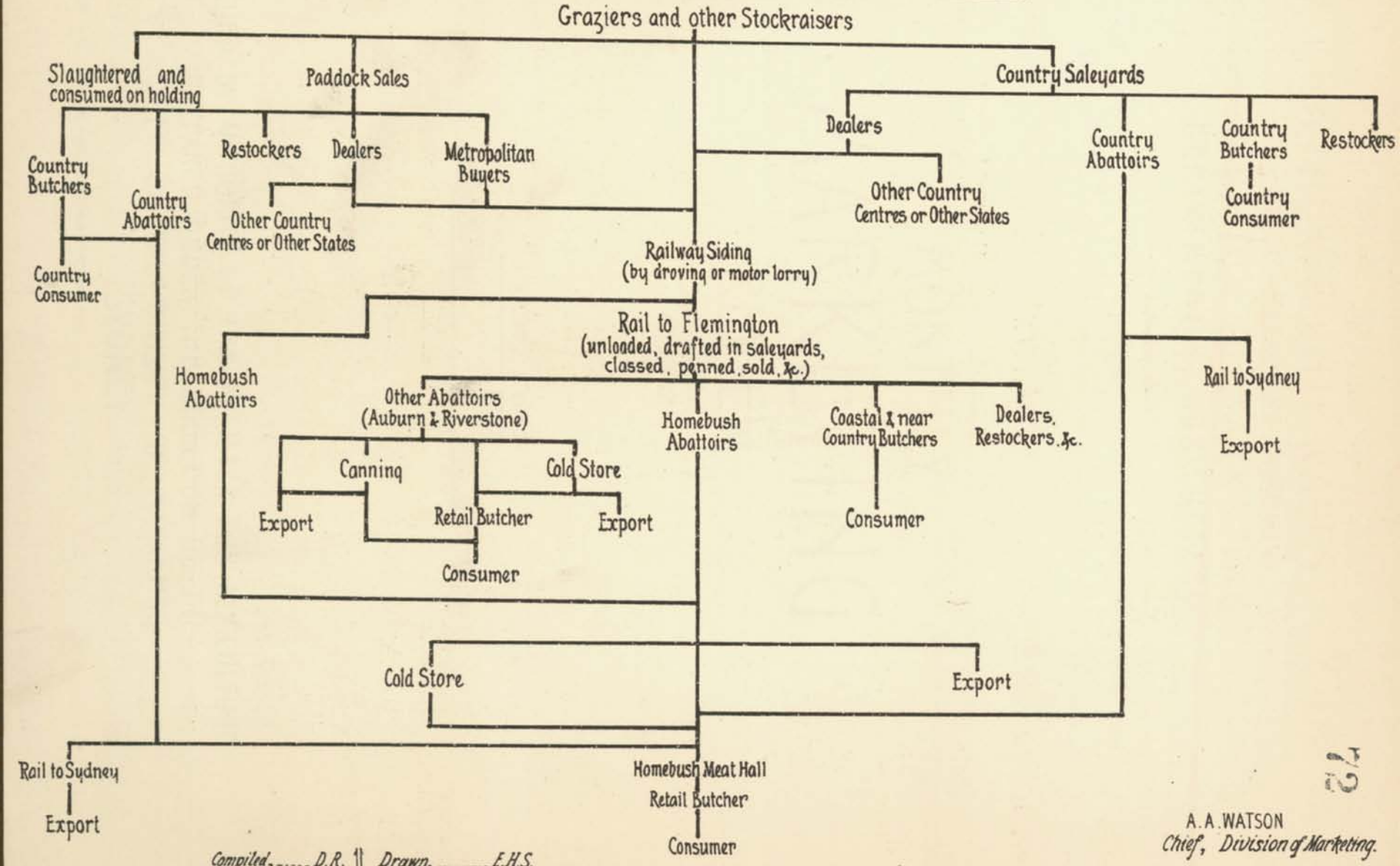
S.41.2

SHEEP, LAMBS & CATTLE

CHANNELS OF DISTRIBUTION



Compiled, ... D.R.
Compln. chkd., A.T.

Drawn, ... E.H.S.
Graph chkd., D.R.

A. A. WATSON
Chief, Division of Marketing.