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GENERAL NOTES AND NEWS.

Production of wheat in N.S.W. in 1944-45 was 17,100,000 bushels according to a statement issued by the Government Statistician. This includes 12,092,000 bushels delivered, the balance being retained on farms for seed, stock feed, etc. The Division's forecast in November last was for an aggregate yield of 17,978,000 bushels.

In an address given at the annual Agricultural Bureau Conference held at Hawkesbury Agricultural College on 11th July, Mr. Bankes Amery, British Government Food Representative in Australia, stated that despite the fact that the United Kingdom was now producing greater overall supplies of foodstuffs, the British market would still require large quantities of Australian primary products, particularly butter, cheese and meat, in the post-war period.

The Wine Grapes Marketing Board announces that the vintage on the Murrumbidgee Irrigation Area this year was 4,700 tons lighter and the value to growers £34,000 below last season. It is stated that the 1945 crop was the lightest since 1940.

Arising out of the recent apple boycott and consequent upon steps initiated by the State Minister for Agriculture, Mr. Graham, the Prices Commissioner has amended the Prices Regulations to provide that the maximum price at which apples may be sold wholesale (or by the grower) in cases which contain less than one bushel shall be that price which bears the same ratio to the maximum rate fixed for the sale of those apples by the bushel, as the weight of the apples actually bears to 40 lb. The weight of apples contained in the case is deemed to be 40 lb. unless an invoice actually discloses otherwise.

At a recent conference of the N.S.W. Apple and Pear Growers' Association it was decided to ask the Minister for Agriculture to explore the possibilities of arranging an Australian conference of apple and pear growers, together with Departmental experts, and the Department of Commerce and Agriculture, with the object of reviewing the post-war future of the industry.

Moderate to fairly heavy rains in June were followed by relatively mild weather with the result that a growth of pastures occurred in many areas previously in a drought-stricken state. Water supplies, which in many cases were at a dangerously low ebb, were also replenished. This moisture benefited wheat and oat crops, much of which had been sown on a dry seed bed. Subsequent rains have enhanced prospects still further.



Advice has been received from the Federal Minister for Commerce and Agriculture that there will be no restriction on the area to be planted to wheat in 1946. Temporary registrations will be freely given to farmers wishing to grow on land not previously registered. This decision does not apply to marginal wheat areas.

By the beginning of June, more than 5,000 tons of fodder had been brought to the eastern States from Western Australia and the rate was being stepped-up. A subsidy of about £6 per ton on this fodder is being paid by the Commonwealth to bridge the gap between landed cost and the ceiling price.

The Foreign Economic Administration of the U.S.A. has agreed to supply 6 million bushels of grain sorghum or alternate feed grain under Lend-Lease subject to supplies being available. The grain will be imported through the Division of Import Procurement and distributed mainly to the poultry, pig and dairying industries on the advice of the Department of Commerce and Agriculture. A shipload of grain sorghum is expected to leave America before the end of July.

All restrictions on the sale of milk in the Sydney and Newcastle areas were lifted during the first week of July. This was made possible by the very rapid increase in supplies following the rains.

The rice harvest has yielded approximately 30,700 tons of paddy rice: 26,700 tons from 19,793 acres on the M.I.A., and roughly 4,000 tons from 4,803 acres at Wakool. Although a high level of plantings was originally the goal for next season, consideration is now being given to the progressive elimination from rice growing of certain farms at the Yanco end of the M.I.A. where soil conditions have led to excessive water use.

N.S.W. production of factory butter for 1944-45 totalled 32,007 tons. This is a decrease of 18% on production for the previous year and is only 50% of the record high production figure of 63,932 tons reached in 1933-34.

The New Zealand Government has arranged to import 10,000 tons of potatoes from Australia commencing in August and continuing as shipping space becomes available. Production in New Zealand this year has not been equal to requirements, and the shipments will also tend to ease the position in Victoria and Tasmania where crops have been heavy.

ERRATUM: On page 149 of the June issue of this publication after the word "closed" in the first paragraph thereon insert the words "on Saturday mornings".