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SALES OF LIVESTOCK AT HOMEBUSH, SYDNEY.Sheep and lamb supplies show further decline.

The number of sheep and lambs offered showed a further substantial reduction. Yardings for the period totalled 233,916 head, representing a decline of about 72,500 head. The intervention of the King's Birthday Public Holiday reduced the number of sales held to seven, which partially contributed to the falling-off in supplies, but the chief factor was the relief afforded by rain in many parts of the State where drought conditions had prevailed. It is highly probable, too, as the result of the rains, that the number of sheep and lambs marketed will be somewhat curtailed during the next few months.

Grown sheep mostly of very fair quality.

The number of sheep yarded was 123,219 head but the proportion of plain to medium grades was not so large and the yardings as a whole showed some improvement in quality. Fair numbers of good light trade sheep were available but prime heavy wethers continued in short supply. Good to prime weighty ewes were fairly well represented and the shortage of heavy wethers stimulated demand for this class of mutton.

Values improve considerably.

At opening sales, lower values were evident but before the end of the sale prices had fully recovered and were on a par with the previous month's closing rates. On the following sale day the market was for the most part 1/- to 2/- cheaper but this decline was fully recovered at the next succeeding auctions. Realisations remained fairly stable until the second last sale held in the period when the light supplies offering created particularly active competition and values advanced sharply, the general increase in values ranging from 2/- to 5/- per head. During the closing auctions in June, the best rates of the previous sale generally were not sustained and an average fall of about 2/- per head took place.

Values on a dressed weight basis were, however, substantially higher than in the previous month. During June prices ranged to 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ d per lb., but good quality wethers were mostly worth from 5d to 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. At closing, when prices advanced sharply, from 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ d to 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ d per lb. was paid. Good quality ewes mostly were purchased at from 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ d to 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ d per lb., but when demand was strongest at the end of the month, from 5d to 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ d per lb. was realised.

Lambs in short supply.

The supply of lambs again showed a further falling-off, the number yarded totalling 110,697 head, or about 20,000 less than the aggregate for May. Quality for the most part was very fair to

good, although moderate numbers of medium trade lambs were on offer. Very few prime light descriptions were available but good to prime heavy lambs, dressing from 36 lb. upwards were well represented.

Strong demand for lambs.

There was a good inquiry for the greater part of the period and while early in June values were lower subsequent auctions showed a strong upward movement in prices and in common with sheep closing rates were about 3/- to 4/- per head higher than at opening.

Early in the month, good heavy lambs sold at 7½d to 8½d and light at 7½d to 9½d per lb., but by the end of the period heavy grades were worth from 8½d to 9½d per lb., with good light grades realising from 9d to 10½d. Limited numbers of prime hoggets were included in the offerings and were subject to brisk inquiry, particularly prime weighty sorts. Early in the month values ranged to 7½d but at the close up to 8½d per lb. was obtained.

Cattle supplies decline but quality improves.

Cattle truckings in June were most uneven and, while 2,680 head came to hand on one sale day consignments for the most part were light. The aggregate for the seven sale days was 12,292, a sharp decline compared with the previous month's total. Auctions in the store section accounted for 2,338.

The general quality of the yardings was again variable but a distinct improvement was noticeable as compared with the offerings of recent months, more good quality stock being available and fewer inferior descriptions.

Splendid rain was received during June over a large section of the State, including the dry south-west areas, while conditions generally were abnormally mild. The pastoral outlook has thus been materially changed for the better.

Local bullock supplies limited.

Consignments of bullocks continued to fluctuate considerably, although there was an improved showing when supplies came to hand from Queensland. Lightweights greatly predominated and quality ranged chiefly from fair to good trade.

The market fluctuated considerably although the variation in values was not marked. For the most part quotations ranged to 57/- per 100 lb., the extreme being 61/- when supplies were very limited. Average values were about equal to those of the previous month.

Quality of steers improves.

Steers were well supplied and although fair to good trade lightweights comprised the bulk of the offerings, many good trade to prime medium weight lines were submitted. The market followed the supply and quality trend, poorer grade sorts becoming progressively dearer as numbers decreased with prime descriptions showing a slightly weaker trend as the proportion of good quality lots became larger. On the average rates ranged to 58/- per 100 lb., the extreme being 61/-.

Strong demand for cows.

Cows were moderately supplied early in the period but subsequently consignments were light. Good quality descriptions were generally limited while there was a scarcity of heavy boasts.

Good quality sorts met a strong demand throughout the period and generally were quoted to 48/- or 49/- per 100 lb. Good trade lines were quoted from 40/- at opening but values of the lower grades improved and at closing values ranged from 46/- to 49/-.

Dearer market for heifers.

Heifers made a very satisfactory showing during the first half of the period when many good trade drafts were noticed. Subsequent supplies, however, were restricted.

The market opened firm, rates ranging from 46/- to 53/- per 100 lb. for good to prime quality. Values subsequently increased progressively and at closing ranged from 50/- to 57/-.

High prices for vealers.

Vealers were fairly plentiful early in the month but consignments subsequently diminished although some improvement was noticed towards the close. A feature of the closing sale was the very satisfactory showing of good quality heavy weight lines.

Prices ranged from 48/- to 58/- at opening but the market improved and during the second half of the period rates were maintained at a high level, up to 70/- per 100 lb. being realised.

Feed shortage affects pig production.

Pigs yarded during the month showed a sharp decline, supplies aggregating 5,385 head including 3,277 received by rail. An additional 631 head were disposed of by private treaty. The effect on the industry of the recent drought and the resultant feed shortage is now readily apparent and in all probability there will be no material increase in the number of pigs available for marketing for some time. As mentioned in last month's review,

action has been taken to encourage producers to remain in production by lowering temporarily the minimum weight for porkers acceptable for export and raising their basic value from 8d to 9d per lb.

Baconers dearer.

Baconers were in moderate supply but all grades of weights up to and exceeding 200 lb. were available. Quality ranged chiefly from fair to good trade, prime sorts being relatively scarce. A fair proportion of the lightweights was sold as stores for producing heavier descriptions.

The market was somewhat irregular but values generally were higher than those of May while at closing baconers were the dearest for some time. Extra heavy descriptions sold to £7.11.6 per head, while equivalent prices per lb. in many instances ranged to 9 $\frac{3}{4}$ d. Enhanced values also ruled for baconers dressing in excess of 200 lb.

Backfatters in strong request.

Consignments of backfatters generally were limited and of fair quality only. However, heavy to extra heavy descriptions made a comparatively good showing.

A strong demand was maintained but average values were not quite as high as the closing rates of the previous period when quotations ranged to 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ d per lb. This level, however, was again reached at the closing sale in June. Boars continued to sell at rates which were almost equal to sow values and one boar sold during the month realised £17.1.0, the highest price noted in recent years. The estimated weight was 775 lb.

Stores again in demand.

Supplies of porkers fluctuated fairly considerably, offerings being limited at times and moderate on other occasions. All grades of weight and quality were represented with good trade medium to heavy weights predominating.

Demand continued fair until the latter half of the period when values of all weight grades showed a sharp rise, suitable light stores realising to 13 $\frac{1}{2}$ d per lb.

(G. Coleman and
J.R. Williams).