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SALES OF LIVESTOCK AT HOMEBUSH, SYDNEY.Sheep yardings show further decline.

Supplies of sheep and lambs showed a further decline, total yardings for the period amounting to 269,267 head, or approximately 10,000 less than in August. Yardings for the corresponding period of last year when drought conditions prevailed were 466,799. During the early part of the month industrial trouble involving mutton slaughtermen resulted in a curtailment in truckings but later, following on a return to normal killing operations at the Abattoirs, the numbers offering showed a considerable increase.

Good quality sheep numerous.

Wethers and ewes offered totalled 152,350 head. Shorn descriptions were well represented, the number of woolly sheep being relatively light. Good to prime heavy sheep were well supplied while there was also a good representation of suitable trade lines. Owing to the all-round improvement in quality, the actual weight of mutton available was not so adversely affected by the reduced numbers offering.

Values decline sharply.

Rates at early sales were for the most part unchanged but subsequently values of all classes of sheep declined considerably. By the end of the month values, in some instances, had fallen by as much as 10/- per head, while generally the decline ranged from 5/- to 9/- per head.

Towards the close of September, a reduction of  $\frac{1}{2}$ d per lb. was announced in the wholesale price of mutton, such reduction to operate from 1st October, with a corresponding reduction of from  $\frac{1}{2}$ d to 1d per lb. on the various retail cuts.

During August, wether and ewe mutton was worth to  $7\frac{1}{2}$ d and 6d per lb., respectively, but the highest price reached in September was  $7\frac{1}{2}$ d and  $5\frac{5}{8}$ d. Following the sharp downward movement in prices, heavy wethers were secured at the closing sale for 4d to  $4\frac{1}{2}$ d and light from 4d to 5d per lb. Heavy ewes realised  $3\frac{1}{2}$ d to  $3\frac{5}{8}$ d and light  $3\frac{1}{2}$ d to 4d per lb., the average decline ranging from  $1\frac{1}{2}$ d to  $2\frac{1}{2}$ d per lb. on mutton according to carcass weight.

Fewer lambs offered.

The number of lambs penned was relatively light, a total of 116,917 head being yarded. Quality generally was fairly good, with prime heavy lambs and suckers well represented. Many lines of exceptionally good suckers were penned but prime light old lambs were scarce.

Lambs cheaper.

The high prices of the previous month were not maintained for lambs and suckers, rates for all descriptions being considerably lower. At early sales, values were fairly well maintained but subsequently buyers did not operate so freely and the market showed a marked downward trend, more particularly towards the end of the month. The industrial trouble at the Homobush Abattoirs and the Riverstone Meat Company's works at Riverstone tended to restrict buying with a resultant depressing effect on values. At the end of September a reduction in the wholesale price of lamb from 1st October was announced. Lamb under 36 lb. carcass weight was reduced 1d and over 36 lb.  $\frac{5}{8}$ d per lb. Corresponding reductions in retail prices were also made, the fall being 1d per lb. on all cuts, with the exception of cutlets on which the decline was  $\frac{1}{2}$ d per lb.

The most noticeable drop in realisations occurred at the closing sales when lambs and suckers were 2/- to 3/- cheaper, while values at closing sales were from 5/- to 8/-, and in places more, below these ruling early in the month.

Increased cattle supplies.

Cattle consignments during the early part of September, 1945, were relatively light but numbers coming forward subsequently showed a considerable increase and the aggregate of 14,508 head was an improvement on the previous month's total.

Quality was variable. For the most part, stock were in fairly good condition, although the breeding of many of the consignments left much to be desired. Operators report that cattle are dressing out heavier than for some considerable time. The pastoral position remains fairly satisfactory but weather conditions during September were adverse and prospects may change for the worse if further rains are not received at an early date.

Bullocks cheaper.

Truckings of bullocks were variable; generally supplies were limited, although all grades of weight and quality were submitted.

Values were maintained during the greater part of the period, good quality lines realising to 60/- per 100 lb. During the third week, however, rates declined by from £1 to £2 per head. The market then remained steady until the close when quotations for light bullocks ranged from 52/- to 56/- per 100 lb. The highest price per head noted was £26.4.0.

Rates for steers recede.

Steers were rather lightly supplied early in the period but numbers improved later. Fair to good trade lightweights predominated but many prime drafts were in evidence.

Rates at opening ranged to 62/- per 100 lb. but values gradually receded as supplies increased and quotations at closing ranged from 51/- to 57/- per 100 lb.

Cows well supplied.

Cows made a good showing, pennings including all grades of weight and quality, with fair to good trade medium weights well in evidence.

A very firm market ruled and lightweights again realised to 53/- per 100 lb. Rates eased somewhat towards the close of the month when heavy cows brought to 48/- and light to 50/- per 100 lb.

Light heifers well supplied.

The numbers of heifers forward were variable but this class of beast was generally well supplied, particularly good trade lightweights.

Values were maintained early, prime lines realising to 59/- per 100 lb. The market, however, weakened and during the second half of the month quotations ranged chiefly from 49/- to 56/- per 100 lb., and 48/- to 55/- at closing.

Heavy vealers plentiful.

Vealers were well represented and comprised chiefly medium to heavy descriptions. The general quality was fairly good, although prime lines were in relatively short supply.

Values ranged to 70/- per 100 lb. early in the period but rates receded subsequently, and during the second half of the month 63/- was the highest price per 100 lb. noted.

Improved supplies of pigs.

Supplies of pigs during September, 1945, showed a small increase, pennings aggregating 7,727 head, including 4,858 received by rail. Sales by private treaty accounted for an additional 181 head.

Fairly firm market for baconers.

Baconers, as usual, were well represented and comprised all grades of weight, although heavy to extra heavy descriptions made the best showing. Quality ranged chiefly from fair to good trade.

A generally firm market ruled during the first half of the period but rates subsequently were a little easier in places. Heavy baconers again realised to £7/9/6 per head and lightweights to the equivalent of 10d per lb. A fair proportion of the lighter weights

was purchased as stores and the bulk of the baconers bought for curing ranged in value from 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ d to 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ d per lb. A noticeable feature was the steady improvement in the demand for pigs exceeding 200 lb. dressed weight and which were suitable for bacon purposes.

Backfatters cheaper.

Backfatters continued in relatively light supply while the general quality was only fair, prime heavy sows being somewhat scarce.

The market was very irregular and generally cheaper, particularly at the close of the period when rates ranged from 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ d to 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ d per lb. The highest price per head noted during the month was £14/12/6.

Porkers in keen demand.

Fair supplies of porkers were forward, all grades of weight and quality being included. Generally, however, good trade medium to heavy weight descriptions predominated. A very keen demand ruled and all classes continued to realise relatively high prices, ranging to the equivalent of 13 $\frac{5}{8}$ d per lb. for lightweights and 12d for heavy sorts.

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

FRUIT AND VEGETABLE SALES  
AT CITY MUNICIPAL MARKETS, SYDNEY.

Fruit scarce.

Trading in fruit was of limited extent owing to the generally small consignments received. Demand exceeded supply of such lines as apples and oranges and at times some buyers were unable to make any purchases.

Apples in short supply.

There was a considerable decline in consignments of apples, especially towards the close of the month when Victorian and South Australian receipts were very light. Supplies of Tasmanian fruit were also reduced considerably and on a number of days about 300 cases of Democrats constituted the only apples available. At times, such varieties as Granny Smith (Tasmanian and Western Australian), Crofton, Sturmer, Rokewood, Jonathan, Yates, Rome Beauty, Dunn's Seedling, Statesman and a few others were obtainable, but the quantities were insufficient to cope with trade needs. The ceiling rate of 29/- per bushel ruled for other than some very small or faulty fruit.