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FRUIT AND VEGETABLE SALES AT CITY MUNICIPAL MARKETS.

May, 1946.

FRUIT.

Apples Sell Well.

The market for apples was firmer throughout the month, with some varieties realising higher prices. Supplies generally from New South Wales sources were only moderate. Consignments from Victoria were maintained but owing to shipping delays, Tasmanian fruit was lightly stocked at times; the unloading of one shipment was held up by an industrial dispute for about twelve days, with the result that much wastage occurred.

Demand for Delicious was very satisfactory, New South Wales packs selling to 24s. per bushel and occasionally higher, while up to 18s. was obtained for Victorian and 16s. for Tasmanian. Small consignments of New South Wales Jonathans were available during early May and as much as 20s. per bushel was paid for extra-fancy lots. Victorian supplies were forward during the whole of the period and sales were effected mainly at 10s. to 14s. The quality of Tasmanian packs showed a good deal of variation; many lines were over-mature and disposals had to be made to the best advantage. For good quality fruit, up to 12s. was paid. Request for Granny Smith was somewhat limited at times, nevertheless values were maintained mainly at around 10s. to 16s. per bushel for New South Wales stocks, while up to 14s. was realised for interstate consignments.

Stocks of both local and Victorian Rome Beauty were on offer, up to 16s. being realised for local and to 12s. for Victorian. Tasmanian Croftons brought 10s. to 14s., Cleopatra 8s. to 12s., Scarlet Pearmain and Geeveston Fanny 9s. to 12s.

Pear Market Eases.

Firm rates ruled for pears during the first week of May, when up to 25s. per bushel was obtained for choice Packham's Triumph and Winter Coles. Values, however, were not maintained and only occasional sales were made above 22s. subsequently. Supplies of Packham's were drawn from New South Wales and Victoria, while Winter Coles were forward from the two sources mentioned and also from Tasmania. Other varieties on offer included Victorian and Tasmanian Josephine and Winter Nelis, while early in the month, Tasmanian Doyenne du Comice, Giblin's Seedling, Glou Morceau and Beurre Anjou were obtainable.

Navel Oranges More Plentiful.

Consignments of new-season's navel oranges from Coastal districts increased as the month progressed. Only small quantities came to hand from the Murrumbidgee Irrigation Area while supplies from Queensland declined appreciably towards the close.

There was a steady inquiry but rates generally were lower than those ruling late in May. Prices for New South Wales Coastal packs mostly ranged from 10s. to 14s., with specially selected to 16s., only isolated sales being made at higher rates. Up to 20s. per bushel was paid for some Murrumbidgee Irrigation Area fruit but lower prices were accepted for the bulk of supplies. Up to 30s. per bushel was paid for choice Queensland Navels early in the month but at the close, 20s. was the top price.

Coastal Lemons Meet Competition from Queensland Supplies.

Further consignments of lemons were received from Queensland. Some very good quality fruit was included and as much as 25s. per bushel was realised.

Demand for New South Wales Coastal fruit was quiet apart from sales for factory purposes. Prices ranged from 8s. to 14s. during the greater part of the month, only a small percentage of sales being made at higher levels.

Inquiry for N.S.W. Mandarins Limited.

New season's Emperor mandarins were more plentiful towards the close of May. A large percentage of supplies lacked satisfactory colour and disposals were slow at rates ranging from 8s. to 15s. per bushel. Consignments of Queensland Glen Retreats were available and demand for this variety was good owing to their attractive appearance, sales being made at up to 35s. per bushel.

Grapefruit Slow of Sale.

Demand for grapefruit from Coastal groves of this State was quiet at 6s. to 12s. per bushel. Some Queensland packs were forward early in the month and from 12s. to 25s. per bushel was secured.

Marketing of Grapes Practically Finished.

The season for grapes virtually finished during the month apart from Ohanez and small quantities of Cornichons of relatively poor quality. Best packs of Ohanez sold to 12s., with a few 14s. per half case. One consignment of Victorian Ohanez was cleared at 22s. to 24s. per bushel.

Slower Clearance of Pineapples.

Bi-weekly consignments of pineapples were mostly around 8,000 cases. A considerable percentage of supplies consisted of large fruit for which demand was restricted, with the result that stocks could not be cleared between consignments, the carry-over at times being heavy. Rates varied, choice packs of counts 18 to 24 selling to the maximum of 21/3, while 10s. per case was accepted for very small and some very large fruit.

Custard Apples Realise High Prices.

Relatively light consignments of custard apples were received at bi-weekly intervals. Request was satisfactory and values were maintained at the fairly high levels of 12s. to 20s. per half case, only sales of ripe or poor quality lines being lower.

Firm Market for Bananas.

Only moderate supplies of bananas were forward. The market was firm at rates ranging from 30s. to 46s. per case.

Passionfruit Scarce.

Only small quantities of passionfruit were available and choice packs sold to 50s. per half case.

Papaws Vary in Quality.

There was a satisfactory inquiry for papaws of good quality but small sizes and green fruit were difficult to sell. Prices ranged from 10s. to 20s., with choice coloured to 25s. per tropical case.

VEGETABLES.**Principal Greens Dearer.**

There was a considerable decline in consignments of beans and peas towards the close of the month, with the result that prices for both lines reached much higher levels. Supplies of cabbages and cauliflowers generally were satisfactory.

Rates for Peas Advance as Supplies Decline.

Consignments of peas received during the first week of the month ranged from 1,200 to 1,500 bags daily. Supplies improved during the following week when the daily receipts approximated 2,000 bags. Subsequently, however, there was a sharp falling-off in arrivals to under the 1,000-bag mark, while on some days only about 500 bags were forward.

As the quantities declined prices moved upwards, the increase compared with the rates ruling during the second week of the month being up to 18s. per bushel. Frosts in inland centres were responsible for a good deal of loss both in production and quality. At closing, values were firm for choice offerings, Gems selling to 36s. per bushel.

Beans Sell at Higher Rates.

Supplies of beans were relatively light on most days although up to 1,000 bags were available on a few occasions. Marketing of the winter crop from the North Coast and Queensland commenced late in the month, some exceptionally good quality lots from the Coff's Harbour district being included. A large percentage of the Queensland supplies opened up in a dry condition which offset values appreciably. Marketing of beans from the Gosford district continued, but only very small quantities came from gardens within the County of Cumberland.

Demand generally was very good, especially for choice descriptions. Prices during the last week of the month were very firm, good to choice quality selling at 20s. to 26s., while small quantities of extra-choice realised 28s. and occasionally 30s. per bushel.

Cauliflowers Meet Satisfactory Request.

Larger quantities of cauliflowers were forward from within the County of Cumberland but consignments from the Bathurst district eased off. During the second week of the month, receivals were very heavy and prices were considerably lower than those ruling earlier and subsequently. Top rates in this period of heavy supply ranged from 16s. to 24s. per dozen, but much higher prices ruled later, as much as 36s., and occasionally 40s. per dozen being paid for selected, choice large heads. Purchases for service requirements were a factor affecting values during the month.

Rates for Tomatoes Fluctuate.

Demand for tomatoes was only moderate on most days. Supplies were drawn mainly from metropolitan sources, although small consignments were received from the North Coast, Murrumbidgee Irrigation Area and Queensland. The heavy frosts experienced on the Murrumbidgee Irrigation Area damaged crops and, as a result, supplies eased off quickly.

Rates fluctuated, up to 20s. per half case being paid during the first week of the month, while few sales were made above 14s. in the following week. Over the remainder of the month prices for top-grade lines ranged from 15s. to 20s.

Request for Cabbages Variable.

Cabbages were slow of sale early but there was an improvement later, apparently due to the limited supplies of beans and peas and the high prices ruling for those vegetables stimulating request for cabbages. On a few days, demand was very slow, values were weak and stocks were not cleared. Generally, choice lines sold at around 12s. per dozen, while up to 16s. was obtained occasionally.

Brussels Sprouts Arrive by Air.

Fairly large quantities of Brussels Sprouts from Victoria were available, including deliveries by air transport. The quality of supplies received by air was mostly choice and these lines realised from 16s. to 18s. with a few sales at 20s. per box. Rail supplies showed a great deal of variation in quality; some were cleared at as low as 4s., but prices for the most part ranged from 8s. to 14s.

Swede Supplies Improve.

Swede turnips were lightly supplied early in the month and up to 20s. per cwt. was paid for choice lines. Receivals improved subsequently, but the quality of offerings showed much variation and some lines had to be sold at as low as 6s., while top rates rarely exceeded 14s. per cwt.

Carrots Well Supplied.

Consignments of carrots reached fairly large proportions at times, especially from the Murrumbidgee Irrigation Area. Demand was steady but prices showed fluctuations. Best quality lines sold up to 24s. per cwt. on some occasions, while on a few days the top rate did not exceed 14s. except for small quantities.

R. D. MEAKER.