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STATE MARKETING BUREAU - DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE. N.S.W

MONTHLY MARKETING REVIEW



ISSUED BY AUTHORITY OF THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE AND PREPARED UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE DIRECTOR OF MARKETING, SYDNEY.

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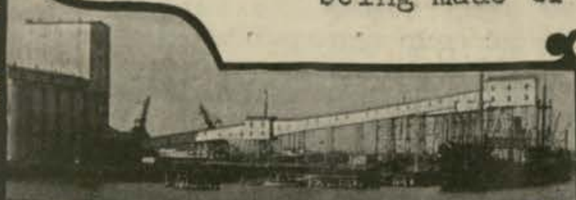


MONTHLY MARKETING REVIEW.

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 Director of Marketing in the State Marketing Bureau, Department of Agriculture, New South Wales, Australia.

HIGHLIGHTS

Examination by Egg Marketing Board in New South Wales of returns supplied by 51 poultry farmers in 29 poultry farming centres within 8 to 134 miles of Sydney shows that the average egg production per hen during twelve months commenced June, 1938, and ended May, 1939, was 12¼ dozens.

At a Conference of co-operative bacon factory and co-operative abattoir representatives held in Sydney, President of Primary Producers' Union advocated State Pig Meat Products Acts, whereby statutory State Boards could be vested with power to determine home consumption and export quotas of pig meats.

Minister for Customs announces that prices for home consumption wine grapes fixed on same scale as for grapes used for export wines.

Inquiries from India, Egypt, Netherlands Indies, Federated Malay States and South Africa indicate possibility of expanding Australia's export trade in various manufactured goods, including confectionery, tinned delicacies, smallgoods and jams.

Chamber of Commerce fixes the f.a.q. (fair average quality) standard of New South Wales 1939/40 wheat at 63¼ lb. to an Imperial bushel.

Under the Apple and Pear Export Charges Act, levy on apples and pears exported from Australia fixed at one half-penny per case.

Regulations gazetted providing for compulsory wrapping in oil paper of Granny Smith apples exported from Australia.

ADVERTISING DOMINION PRIMARY PRODUCTS IN THE UNITED KINGDOM.

During recent years, supplies of many primary products from Empire countries to the United Kingdom have increased; at the same time, competition from foreign-grown produce has been intensified. Consequently, it has been found necessary to publicise the Dominion products. To ascertain the methods adopted for this purpose and the expenditure involved in connection with such publicity, the Director of Marketing recently made inquiries of the New Zealand, Canadian and South African Governments.

As a matter of interest to Australian marketing organisations, the replies received are summarised hereunder:-

NEW ZEALAND.

Meat.

The New Zealand Meat Producers' Board advises that the Board last year spent £42,000 (New Zealand currency) on advertising propaganda work in the United Kingdom. The main feature of the Board's advertising has been:-

To advertise to the public at the point of sale - the butcher shops - and to advertise to the consumers direct.

The Board's 17th Annual Report indicates that among the many thousands of retailers in Great Britain more than half are now actively displaying the Board's advertising material practically throughout the whole year. This means, in the words of the report, "that our message NEW ZEALAND LAMB - THE BEST IN THE WORLD - is being boldly displayed in practically every town and hamlet throughout England and Wales and enables us to boost our product with the public when they are actually making purchases."

A very comprehensive and attractive range of shop display material was prepared for 1939 and distributed to over 20,000 retail shops.

The retail trade was supplied with large New Zealand Lamb streamers mounted on stout board and show cards. These were displayed at 360 wholesalers' depots and market stalls covering the whole of Great Britain.

To reach housewives of Britain, 31 of the principal women's popular magazines were carefully selected and used for publicity purposes. These magazines have a nation-wide circulation and it is stated that advertisements would appear in them during the Spring and Summer months from April to August to the extent of 57,000,000 advertisements for the period (this, no doubt, represents the total circulation for the various weekly and monthly magazines in which advertisements appear).

/In addition....

In addition, the Board decided to use the principal evening newspapers published throughout England and Wales and 179 of these were selected to carry its advertisements.

Other forms of advertising included the following:-

Organisation of intensive New Zealand Lamb drives in specially selected areas.

Use of cinema slides, large posters and competitions to make the public "New Zealand Lamb conscious".

Provision of silver cups, cash prizes and diplomas for retailers making the best displays of New Zealand Lamb.

Children's painting competitions: the children are required to paint miniature reproductions of the Board's large poster appearing on the hoardings and free painting sheets are available at retail butcher shops for children desiring to enter the competition.

Two travelling representatives are constantly engaged in travelling the country and maintaining personal touch with retailers and wholesalers and thus promoting New Zealand sales.

Dairy Produce.

Advice received from the Primary Products Marketing Department stated that the expenditure incurred in advertising New Zealand butter and cheese in the United Kingdom has been as follows:-

Season	1936/37	...	£39,049.
"	1937/38	...	£81,259.
"	1938/39	...	£100,000.(approximately)

Methods adopted include :-

(a) Visits by representatives to retail and wholesale grocers regularly.

(b) Retail Shop demonstrations.

(c) Sales scheme with cash prizes for sales results. (At present this is in an experimental stage and has so far been put into operation by only five retail organisations possessing 74, 65, 8, 81 and 42 Branches, respectively. Awards are fixed upon the largest percentage increase in sales of New Zealand butter or cheese upon their basic sales over a period of one month.)

(d) Window displays.

(e) Window dressing competitions.

(f) ....

(f) Editorial publicity.

(g) Trade advertising.

(h) Advertising in newspapers and women's publications.

(i) The use of special wrappers advertising New Zealand butter and cheese.

SOUTH AFRICA.

The Chief of the Division of Economics and Markets, Pretoria, states in a letter dated 28th September, 1939, that publicity on behalf of the Union Government is effected mainly through the Trade Commissioner in London. Exhibits of products, where the Union production justifies publicity, are staged by the Trade Commissioner at important Expositions and Shows, while special publicity campaigns carried out by British publicity agents are instituted in certain cases under the Trade Commissioner's control. South African eggs are advertised in this manner.

In the case of fruit, permanent South African representatives are maintained in the United Kingdom to watch and further the interests of the South African fruit industry. As regards dairy products, British firms have been nominated to closely watch South African interests and to supervise packing and grading.

It is further stated that it is well-nigh impossible to estimate the expenditure involved as this is dependent on many variable factors and is not controlled by the one Department only.

Press reports indicate that the marketing and advertising of fruits from this Dominion have been controlled by the South African Citrus Fruit Exchange, for oranges and other citrus, and by the South African Deciduous Fruit Exchange, for plums, peaches, pears, grapes, apples and pineapples. The first-named conducted an extensive advertising campaign during 1937 and 1938, and it was anticipated that this would be extended during 1939, when possibly £50,000 would be expended. The latter confined its advertising activities principally to displays, exhibition stands, recipe booklets, etc., involving an annual expenditure of from £6,000 to £7,000.

CANADA.

Mr. C.H. Payne, Secretary, Department of Trade and Commerce, Ottawa, has supplied a very comprehensive statement /regarding....

regarding the action taken by the Canadian Government to promote the sale of primary products in the United Kingdom.

Hereunder is a summary of the report:-

At the beginning of the present fiscal year all Canadian publicity services in the United Kingdom were re-organised and unified, with a view to rendering more efficient the exhibition, advertising, publicity and film activities in promoting Canadian sales.

Outline of new organisation.

1. The Advisory Committee on Publicity in the United Kingdom, established under the chairmanship of the High Commissioner, will continue to carry out the work it has been doing in connection with the vote for Government advertising and publicity in the United Kingdom.

2. The Exhibition Commission and the Publicity Branch in London have been unified under a Director of Exhibitions and Publicity. He will be a member of the Advisory Committee on Exhibitions and Publicity and the liaison officer between the Committee and the Department of Trade and Commerce in Ottawa.

3. In Canada an Advisory Committee on Trade Publicity Overseas has been set up, including representatives of the Department of Trade and Commerce, External Affairs, Agriculture and Fisheries, whose duty it is to assist in securing effective collaboration between the several Departments concerned with special aspects of Government advertising and publicity policy abroad.

4. All financial provision for governmental assistance to the promotion of Canadian trade abroad (including any appropriations for advertising and trade publicity) is to be made in the estimates of the Department of Trade and Commerce and subject to the supervision of the Minister of Trade and Commerce.

Appropriation for 1938-39.

The appropriation for advertising and publicity in the United Kingdom for the fiscal year 1938-39 was $356,580 (equivalent to £100,363 in Australian currency at the present rate of exchange); plus a supplementary sum of $15,000 (£A4,222) in the vote for publicity for the Department of Fisheries which was transferred to the High Commissioner for concentrated advertising of fish products. Of this amount, $240,000 (£A67,550) was to be expended on the continuance of the "Canada Calling" campaign and the balance, $ 116,580 (£A32,813), for general publicity purposes.

/Methods.....

Methods.

For the 1938-39 campaign $150,000 (£A42,219) was appropriated for a concentrated effort in the London area with its 12,000,000 population and the balance of $90,000 (£A25,331) was used for smaller advertising campaigns in centres previously covered. Upon the completion of preliminary arrangements, for the last nine months of the present fiscal year 2,300 "Canada Billboards" advertising Canadian products were carried on buses and vans every day over every residential and business street in the London area. This form of advertising was supplemented by large newspaper displays for 39 consecutive weeks in 72 newspapers, which carried 38,000,000 individual messages. More displays to advertise Canadian products in the United Kingdom will have been used than any other country has yet employed.

Commodities advertised.

It was decided that five major food products would be specially advertised, viz., canned tomatoes, salmon, cheese, bacon and apples in specially selected months. Other products such as eggs, cereals, honey, poultry, tinned fruits and vegetables, etc., are advertised proportionately to the possible volume of the sales involved. Among the forms of advertising are film and press publicity, displays at exhibitions, Canada Shops, etc.

Appropriation for 1939-40.

For the present fiscal year, on the recommendation of the Publicity Committee in London, a total expenditure of $450,000 (£A126,657) was contemplated, of which $120,000 (£A33,775) was to have been used for the continuance of the "Canada Calling" Campaign in the London area; $187,000 (£A52,774) for a new campaign concentrated in the North of England; $40,000 (£A11,258) for smaller campaigns in centres previously covered; and $100,000 (£A28,146) for campaign advertising purposes in the United Kingdom and Europe.

AUSTRALIA.

In order that comparison may be made between the methods of the foregoing Dominions with those of Australia, a summary of particulars released by the Director of Australian Trade Publicity in London in January, 1939, will appear in the next issue. At the present time, owing to the War, it may safely be presumed that much of this publicity work of all Dominions is now in abeyance, but the record of what was being done may be useful for future reference.

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PHYSICAL FEATURES, PRODUCTION AND GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE CENTRAL TABLELAND STATISTICAL DIVISION No.6, NEW SOUTH WALES.

During 1939, articles were published in the "Monthly Marketing Review" dealing with certain Statistical Divisions of New South Wales, as follow:-

Issue 1939.		Statistical Division.
January and February	-	North Coast (No. 1)
February and March	-	Hunter Manning (No. 2)
May, June and July	-	Metropolitan (No. 3)
August and September	-	South Coast (No. 4)
November	-	Northern Tableland (No. 5)

In continuation of this series, it is now proposed to similarly describe the second Tableland Division - the Central Tableland or Statistical Division No. 6.

Historical.

This division is, outside of the metropolitan County of Cumberland, the oldest settled part of New South Wales, being the first part of the hinterland to reward the courage and enterprise of the explorer and the pioneer.

In May, 1813, Wentworth, Blaxland and Lawson discovered a means of crossing the hitherto impenetrable Blue Mountain Range. In November of the same year Mr. Surveyor Evans, being instructed to continue the work of the explorers, journeyed to the Bathurst Plains and some distance beyond. As a result of his favourable accounts of the country, the Governor entrusted Mr. Wm. Cox, then Chief Magistrate at Windsor, with the construction of a road to the interior. This was completed within six months, in spite of great difficulties, and on 7th May, 1815, Governor Macquarie journeyed over the mountains by this road and fixed on a site for a town, which he named Bathurst. Very soon the fertile country around Bathurst became occupied by settlers, chiefly engaged in grazing pursuits.

This portion of the State was to become the scene of early gold mining episodes, making famous names like Ophir, Lewis Ponds, Summer Hill Creek, Sofala and others in the Bathurst, Orange and Wellington districts. Probably no single event in the history of Australia has proved so important and of such lasting benefit as the discovery of gold at Ophir, near Orange, in 1851. This and subsequent strikes of the period 1851 to 1860 attracted thousands of persons of the hardy, adventurous type so needed to carry forward essential pioneering work; whilst these eager fortune

/hunters...

hunters from other parts of the world came to Australia primarily in search of gold, many remained as settlers. The population increased threefold and pastoral and agricultural industries were given new life.

Particulars of Area and Population.

An idea of the extent of the Central Tableland division may be arrived at by pointing out that it extends from (and includes) Kurrajong on the east slope of the Dividing Range, westward to slightly beyond Wellington, Orange and Cowra, and stretches from the Warrumbungle and Liverpool Ranges in the north to the Upper Lachlan and Crookwell Rivers to the south.

A large proportion of the Division may be classed as from undulating to hilly and mountainous. In addition to that portion of the Great Dividing Range including the Blue Mountains and spurs, lying towards the eastern side and stretching northward, we find in the north the Liverpool Range connecting to the Warrumbungles, and in the centre the Sofala, Hillend and Hargreaves spurs, while in the western section are the Canoblas Ranges, and the Harvey and Bumberry Ridges. The highest points are in the south-east, where parts of the Great Dividing Range are over 4,000 feet above sea level, and in the Canoblas areas, where a similar altitude is attained. Bathurst, however, lies in the centre of an undulating plain, and there is a good deal of gently undulating country south from the Canoblas Range to the south-western boundary of the Division.

According to the New South Wales Statistical Register, the Central Tableland embraces nine municipalities and sixteen shires, with a total area of 10,716,214 acres (or approximately 16,744 sq. miles). At 30th June, 1938, there were 7,511 holdings of one acre or upwards with a total area of 7,764,639 acres, of which 6,241,786 acres were alienated or virtually alienated lands, and the remainder unalienated Crown Lands. Of these holdings, 1,893,236 acres were regarded as suitable for cultivation. In the financial year 1937/38 446,515 acres were under crop, while 145,588 acres were under sown grass, and 36,962 acres of new land had been cleared and prepared for ploughing.

Allowing for increases and decreases since the 1933 census, the Government Statistician estimated that at 31st December, 1938, the population of this division was 145,540. Some of the more important towns in order of population are Lithgow (13,510), Bathurst (11,050), Orange (10,310), Katoomba (6,990), Cowra (5,450), Wellington (4,520), and Mudgee (4,160).

Climate and Rainfall.

The climate of the Central Tableland Division is, as might be expected from its altitude, characterised by temperate summers and cool to cold winters. The temperature is generally /cool......

cool and invigorating, causing this area to be most popular, and indeed, in many parts pre-eminent, with tourists in search of a healthful holiday. Katoomba, the largest town on the Blue Mountains, has an altitude of 3,349 ft., while Bathurst and Orange are both situated at altitudes of more than 2,000 ft.; on the other hand, Cowra is only 978 ft. above sea level. The average normal rainfall ranges from 22.38 inches at Canowindra on the western boundary to 55.09 inches at Katoomba.

Sheep-raising the principal rural activity.

As mentioned in the article on the "Northern Tableland", the Tableland Divisions are particularly suited to the production of fine wools and give us many of the fine and super-fine merino wools raised in New South Wales. Graziers in these districts formerly concentrated on wool-growing and, in many cases, depastured wethers only. Of recent years, however, pasture improvement and top-dressing of pastures have ensured successful lamb production, more particularly in the central and southern sections, which have more assured winter rainfalls.

Sheep-raising constitutes the principal primary activity of the Central Tableland, and at 31st March, 1938, the number of sheep totalled 5,507,414 head, of which 987,871 were lambs under one year old. The total was exceeded only by that of two other Divisions of New South Wales, namely, the North-Western Slope and the South-Western Slope.

A privately-operated abattoir at Orange is an important factor in the marketing of sheep and lambs, including lambs for export, from the surrounding districts.

Cattle, dairying and pigs.

Cattle-raising is of minor importance when compared with the sheep industry, but nevertheless adds considerably to the rural income. The number of cattle depastured at 31st March, 1938, totalled 156,089 head, inclusive of 19,087 cows in registered dairies. The dairying mostly was conducted on farms in close proximity to the larger towns, having as the primary object the supply of fresh milk to the urban populations. At the same time, however, particularly in the Mudgee and Bathurst districts, a certain amount of dairying was carried on for the supply of cream to butter factories, and in 1937/38 such factories manufactured 1,608,966 lb. of butter.

The number of pigs in the Division at 31st March, 1938, was 10,448 head, and bacon factories cured 92,421 lb. of bacon and ham during the year ended 30th June, 1938.

Wheat the chief cereal.

The Central Tableland is of greater importance in the wheat-growing industry of New South Wales than any of the divisions

/so far.........

so far dealt with, but may be regarded as only on the fringe of the main wheat producing belt of the State. Nevertheless, very suitable areas for the cultivation of this cereal are to be found around Bathurst and generally in the western portion of the subject division. Reference to the wheat production figures for 1937/38 published in the New South Wales Statistical Register shows that 222,949 acres were sown for grain, from which 3,873,210 bushels were harvested, at an average yield of 17.4 bushels per acre; 22,612 acres were grown for hay, yielding 33,294 tons, while 3,049 acres were cultivated for green fodder purposes. Cowra and Wellington were the chief wheat-growing districts.

Only limited areas of other cereals are cultivated, the 1937/38 figures being:-

Maize, for grain	- 3,946 acres, yielding 89,001 bushels.	
" " green fodder	- 2,087 acres.	
Barley, (all purposes)	- 1,571 acres.	
Oats, for grain	- 13,800 acres, yielding 230,433 bushels.	
" " hay	- 42,672 " "	56,526 tons.
" " green fodder	- 19,164 acres.	
Rye, (all purposes)	- 994 acres.	

The bulk of the maize (65,559 bushels) was grown in the Colo Shire, in the far eastern section of the division.

Lucerne an important crop.

Approximately one-fifth of the area of lucerne under cultivation in New South Wales is within the Central Tableland. This crop does well on the flats along the Lachlan (in the south-west) notably in the vicinity of Canowindra and along the Macquarie and its tributaries, where the outstanding centres are Mudgee, Wellington, Coolah and Merriwa. According to the Government Statistician, in 1937/38, 20,100 acres of lucerne were grown for hay, yielding 26,229 tons, and 58,400 acres were utilised for green fodder, particularly in connection with fat lamb raising.

Some 1,383 acres were devoted to other green fodder crops (rape, sorghum, etc.) during 1937/38.

(To be continued).

AUSTRALIAN FROZEN RABBITS -

EXPORTS TO THE UNITED KINGDOM MARKET.

Realising that the Australian exporters of frozen rabbits are likely to be confronted with difficulties in maintaining their trade, the New South Wales Agent-General in London recently made enquiries concerning the United Kingdom market and other relevant matters. Reports submitted on 11th and 16th January, 1940, contain much valuable information, and are summarised hereunder:-

Refrigerator space an important factor.

The Agent-General approached the Ministry of Food to ascertain the possibility of supplementing meat supplies during the war by increasing the import of Australian frozen rabbits. The Ministry intimated that provision of refrigerator space is one of the principal factors in the situation, and, as the whole of such space for some time to come will be required for other meat and dairy produce, it is not likely that any will be available for rabbits. The Ministry will keep in mind the desirability of using rabbits as an alternative supply for the armed forces, as well as a means of augmenting domestic food reserves, and will again communicate with the Agent-General should occasion arise.

Whilst refrigerated space may necessarily be restricted, the Agent-General suggests that interested firms watch closely the shipping position to ensure maximum utilisation of any opportunities.

Stocks and consumption in the United Kingdom.

The reports state that enquiries disclose very limited stocks of Australian frozen rabbits in the United Kingdom, and that a shortage may arise in the near future. This is due to an increased demand because of reduced supplies of other classes of lower priced meats, combined with the difficulty of replenishing stocks. Moreover, the strict rationing of scheduled meats under the projected rationing scheme is expected to promote a greater request for rabbits generally.

Normally from October to March is the most favourable period for marketing Australian rabbits in the United Kingdom, as during the English summer the demand is restricted and local supplies are not only preferred but suffice to meet market needs. Changed conditions, however, now prevail.

Prices and preferences.

Rabbit prices normally fluctuate according to supply and demand, but are also affected by skin values. Generally the furred rabbit is preferred by the better class trade. Boned rabbit ordinarily meets with little request in England, the bulk of the Australian exports of this class being marketed in France.

/A recent.....

A recent agreement by a Committee of Importers and Wholesalers under the Ministry for Food fixed, for the present, uniform selling prices covering both furred and skinned rabbits. Prices may, however, be changed at any time, either generally or for particular types. Current prices (as at 11th January, 1940) governing sales between importers and merchants are:-

Blue, large and skinned	- 25/-	per case (2 doz.)	ex store.
" young	- 22/-	do.	do.
" small	- 17/-	do.	do.
Red, large	- 22/-	do.	do.

Wholesalers' prices to retailers are 2/6d higher than above-quoted rates. While not prescribed, retail prices, it is understood, must not be disproportionate in comparison with the fixed wholesale rates.

Importers' actual realisations would be appreciably less than the abovementioned wholesale prices. Landing, cartage and storage charges approximating 1/9d per case would be incurred with consignments placed in store on arrival at London, while with consignments intended for London but discharged at Liverpool owing to war exigencies an additional "on carriage" charge of 1/6d per case would be incurred.

Continental and other markets.

Prior to the war, shipments of Australian rabbits to the Netherlands were mainly re-exports from the United Kingdom and amounted to about £10,000 annually, while the direct trade with Belgium and France was worth about £1,000 per year in each case. Under existing conditions, it is likely that the trade with the Netherlands will fall below normal proportions, and there is little prospect of expanding the volume of exports to Belgium or France.

While conditions throughout Australia favour the packing of fairly heavy supplies of rabbits this season, exports of the frozen product to the United Kingdom are likely to be reduced, and the Agent-General suggests the exploration of other methods of utilisation. Unless it be possible to find new or to extend other existing export outlets, increased canning for export may be advisable, as the canned product would be shipped in unrefrigerated space. The Agent-General intends to ascertain the prospects for marketing the canned product in England.

Skinned versus unskinned rabbits.

Mention is made that the method of grading New South Wales skinned rabbits had been criticised and that the desirability of more careful attention to the dressing and general packing thereof had been expressed. In view of this and the possibility of better prices being obtained for unskinned than for skinned, it is suggested that New South Wales exporters might think it desirable to ship mainly unskinned rabbits to the English market, while shipping space is curtailed.

/New Enquiries.....

New Enquiries.

The Agent-General recently received an enquiry regarding supplies of New South Wales rabbits from a firm of provision merchants, which had not previously handled this product; importing firms with whom they were placed in touch were not in a position to offer supplies. It is considered likely that rationing of various meats will lead to further similar enquiries in the near future.

Australian Exports.

The extent of Australia's trade in this commodity is shown by the export figures for the past two years, given by the Commonwealth Overseas Trade Bulletin for 1938/39:-

EXPORTS OF RABBITS AND HARES (FROZEN).

Country to which Exported.	YEAR 1937/38.		YEAR 1938/39.	
	Quantity	Value	Quantity	Value
	Pair.	£A	Pair.	£A
United Kingdom	2,706,553	153,653	3,673,777	211,815
Canada	24,706	1,536	19,351	1,172
Ceylon	7,508	575	7,180	484
Hong Kong	25,196	2,059	21,085	1,489
Malaya (British)	10,792	854	19,563	1,412
Malta	15,898	1,019	18,730	806
Other British Countries	4,765	389	7,343	505
Belgium	20,900	1,617	60,736	4,220
Egypt	7,693	684	13,528	841
France	20,858	1,383	27,113	1,776
Panama	16,200	948	13,000	900
United States of America	109,450	7,141	109,760	6,283
Other Foreign Countries	3,274	367	3,503	331
States of Final Shipment.				
New South Wales	224,027	19,362	324,362	27,531
Victoria	1,976,473	118,295	2,062,183	127,591
Queensland	53,821	2,592	207,717	8,250
South Australia	621,192	27,061	1,080,462	52,632
Western Australia.. ..	98,280	4,915	319,945	16,030
TOTAL	2,973,793	172,225	3,994,669	232,034

SHEEP AND CATTLE SALES AT HOMEBUSH, SYDNEY.

Reduced numbers of sheep and lambs available.

There was a definite falling off in the number of sheep and lambs marketed at the Homebush Saleyards during January, 1940, when an aggregate of 229,032 head was offered, a decline of 63,251 on the previous month's total. Probably the main reason for the lighter yardings was that the sucker lamb season had practically finished, only odd lines of this class being marketed, and the greater proportion of the pennings consisting of old or summer lambs.

Medium grade light weight sheep numerous.

Although on a few occasions light weight wethers of attractive appearance and good condition were on offer, on the whole it could be said that the shortage of good quality light weight sheep of from 36 lb. to 40 lb., particularly wethers, continued. On the other hand, also in common with the December pennings, a representative supply of medium trade mutton was available, both wethers and ewes of this grade being rather numerous.

Heavy weight sheep were again yarded in fairly substantial numbers, wethers from 50 lb. weight upwards comprising quite a fair proportion of the offerings. There was an excellent showing of good to prime heavy wethers, some splendid weighty sorts carrying a two-third woolled skin being submitted. The finish and general condition of many of these weighty sheep left little room for any complaint by operators. In direct contrast, however, were some drafts of exceptionally plain sheep, evidently from those less favoured areas of the State where feed is scarce.

Ewes only moderately supplied.

The supply of ewes could only be regarded as comparatively moderate and on occasion was insufficient for buyers'requirements. Most of the ewes offered were on the heavy side, and good quality light weight descriptions were rather scarce. A feature of this section of the market was the active interest displayed at times by several buyers who were purchasing for restocking purposes. This additional competition had a stimulating effect on values, one line of good woolled 4 and 6 tooth ewes realising the very satisfactory price of 22/- per head.

Irregular values for sheep.

Values for grown sheep, more particularly the heavy class of wether, fluctuated during January. Perhaps the direct cause of this irregularity was the variable numbers coming forward

/from......

from saleday to saleday, as the rates rose or fell in accordance with available supplies. Judging the market as a whole, it could be described as opening 1/- cheaper; then it advanced by 1/- to 1/6d per head, only to lose this gain on the next saleday. These conditions whereby the advance of one saleday was lost at the following auctions prevailed throughout the period. Thus, at the end of January, values for heavy wethers were about the same as those ruling at the opening sale of the month.

The somewhat short supply of ewes tended to promote more stable rates for good quality light weight descriptions, although a downward trend was apparent towards the close. Prices of heavy weight ewes fluctuated considerably, also, the variations being very similar to those noticed with heavy wethers. Values for good light trade wethers were fairly steady, but rates for medium quality light trade sheep, showed a decline.

Some sales indicative of the abovementioned irregularities are quoted below:-

Good quality heavy wethers sold early in January at 16/10d each; weighing approximately 54 lb. they cost $2\frac{3}{4}$d per lb.

A week later nice quality wethers, estimated to weigh 56 lb., brought 16/6d per head or $2\frac{7}{8}$d per lb. During mid-January a line of heavy wethers, dressing about 52 lb. of mutton, realised 16/- each or $3\frac{1}{8}$d per lb.

Towards the end of the period, 56 lb. wethers made 20/- each or $2\frac{5}{8}$d per lb.

Realisations generally equal to those of the previous month.

For the most part, prices of grown sheep did not differ appreciably from those ruling during December, but at times the realisations for good quality lines were a little higher. Some of the best rates obtained included up to 25/- per head for woolly wethers and to 22/- for ewes. Mostly, however, wethers sold at from 12/- to 20/- per head, according to weight, quality and skin values. Ewes were disposed of chiefly at prices ranging from 9/- to 16/- each, although odd lots of outstanding quality made slightly more.

Heavy wethers realised to $3\frac{1}{4}$d per lb., while on several occasions operators paid 3d per lb., but generally carcase equivalents ranged from $2\frac{1}{4}$d to $2\frac{3}{4}$d per lb. according to weight. Nice quality light weight wethers cost from $3\frac{1}{4}$d to $3\frac{1}{2}$d, while medium to good trade light descriptions brought from 3d to $3\frac{1}{4}$d per lb. The ranges of prices of quality ewe mutton were from $2\frac{1}{4}$d to $2\frac{3}{4}$d for heavy and from $2\frac{3}{4}$d to $3\frac{1}{4}$d per lb. for light. Medium to plain grades of ewes sold at relatively lower rates.

Scarcity of prime lambs.

The particularly dry season now being experienced over parts

/of ......

of New South Wales and the damage to feed supplies caused by grasshoppers in some districts adversely affected the numbers of lambs marketed. Supplies during January were fairly light, while the percentage of good quality lambs and suckers was only small. A notable consignment was that of very nice quality Southdown cross suckers, from within the County of Cumberland, which showed up to advantage in a yarding rather bare of good suckers. Several lines of Southdown cross lambs were received from other parts of the State and these chiefly were in excellent condition.

Medium grade lambs predominate.

During the month, buyers found it difficult to secure sufficient good lambs for their needs, and had to turn their attention to the medium to plain grades, which were fairly well supplied. Lambs and suckers are rapidly "drying off" and losing condition and, in a number of cases, are "killing out" rather badly.

The offering of heavy lambs was not as large as in December, and here, too, the effect of the dry conditions was apparent. On a number of occasions, however, drafts of good to prime heavy lambs were submitted.

Quality lambs sell readily.

Although at the opening sale held in January lambs were from 1/- to 2/- per head cheaper, this decline was practically recovered on the following market. From then on, values mostly were steady, until the closing sale, when limited supplies caused a particularly strong demand and prices rose from 2/- to 3/- per head. Medium quality lambs at times were forward in comparatively large numbers and, in consequence, rates fell, generally being lower.

During the final saleday for January, the market was the strongest experienced for some considerable time, and all grades of lambs met with a very brisk demand. Some indication of the resultant improvement in values is given by the following realisations:-

At the opening sales in January good trade Southdown cross suckers weighing approximately 33 lb. brought 18/9d each or 6½d per lb. At the close of the period similar lambs, estimated to weigh 32 lb., were disposed of at 21/2d per head or 6¾d per lb. It was noticed that, at times, heavy lambs suitable for export made more per lb. than quite a few of the light weight descriptions which were chiefly of medium quality only.

For the most part, quality lambs and suckers realised from 18/- to 25/- per head, but a few special lots brought up to 27/- each. Generally, suckers cost from 5½d to 6½d per lb. according to quality, but closing sales were so good that 6½d to 7d was paid, while, in some instances, demand was so strong that

/operators....

operators gave as much as 7½d per lb. Heavy lamb prices ranged down to 5d per lb., but probably the larger proportion cleared at from 5½d to 6d per lb. On an average, realisations were higher than during December and with continued dry weather accentuating the scarcity of quality lambs there is a possibility of higher prices ruling in the near future.

Supplies of cattle maintained.

Cattle truckings during January were fairly well maintained at the level of the previous month and for the seven saledays the numbers yarded totalled 19,733 head, of which 2,088 were auctioned in the store section. When compared with the corresponding period of 1939, however, the pennings show a substantial decline as consignments during January of that year aggregated 28,297 head. Quality generally was variable and on most occasions all grades were represented. The proportion of the offerings which could be described as prime was small; nevertheless, it was satisfactory to note that the bulk of the cattle sold was of a standard not below that of good trade.

Pastoral conditions during January were more unfavourable than for some time past. Very dry weather was experienced throughout New South Wales and feed was becoming scarce in many parts of the northern half. Elsewhere, feed is still ample, but is of a dry nature, and stock generally are not killing out so well as a month or two ago. The position should be relieved in portion of the far northern districts, where beneficial rain was reported early in February.

Limited consignments of bullocks.

On most saledays the supply of bullocks was somewhat limited, whilst heavy sorts were particularly scarce. Prime descriptions were usually difficult to secure, but good trade types were well represented. Competition for prime animals was very keen and rates continued to improve, especially those for heavy bullocks which sold to 37/6d per 100 lb. dressed weight. Medium and light descriptions both brought to 39/-. A feature of the market was that mostly values of all classes of weight showed little material difference. One of the best sales during the period was that of a pen of prime Hereford bullocks, weighing approximately 750 lb., which realised £14.12.0 per head, equivalent to 39/- per 100 lb. dressed weight.

Good trade steers plentiful.

Consignments of steers were consistently heavy throughout the month and on occasions the bulk of the yarding was comprised of this class. Prime grade was well in evidence, although good trade sorts predominated and a fair proportion of "off quality" animals was to be seen on each saleday. Compared with December, prices generally were 2/- per 100 lb. higher, prime light steers frequently bringing up to 40/- per 100 lb.

/Cows.....

Cows mostly medium grade.

Generally, there was a good supply of cows, but comparatively few were of prime quality, and, for the most part, fair trade sorts predominated. The bulk of those penned consisted of heavy cows, although lighter animals were more in evidence towards the end of the month. Prices fluctuated somewhat and on one occasion were slightly below those ruling during December. On the whole, however, rates increased and both heavy and light cows realised to 34/- per 100 lb.

Prime heifers in demand.

Heifers were fairly well represented with quality descriptions making the best showing early in the period, although some of the heavier animals carried too much condition for trade requirements. Demand throughout was keen and was specially so on the final saleday, when prime light heifers brought up to 39/- per 100 lb. Generally, sales were effected at rates ranging from 32/- to 38/-, an improvement on the previous month's realisations.

Variable offerings of vealers.

The offerings of vealers were very variable, both as to quality and numbers, although supplies increased towards the close of the period. Small sorts were more in evidence than of late. Quality vealers met a steady demand and, in common withother classes of beef, prices, except for one occasion, were above the December levels. Rates mostly ranged from 40/- to 46/-, whilst 47/- per 100 lb. was obtained at the final sale of the month.

Cattle values higher.

The market during January continued to be very satisfactory from the viewpoint of the producer. Values of all classes of cattle showed an increase over those of the previous month and, at present, there are no indications of any material decline in values taking place in the near future. Even higher prices have been obtained for lightweight cattle at the sales held during the early part of February.

G.C. & J.W.

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"SUPER" LAMBS.

With a view to regularizing the use of the word "super" as relating to Australian export lambs the Australian Meat Board has recommended that, where an exporter elects to grade out the tops of his first quality lambs and ship them as super grade, the word "super" should be superimposed on the tag in the same manner and in the same sized lettering as is done in the case of the "Down" grade.

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HOMEBUSH ABATTOIR SALEYARDS, SYDNEY -

PIG SALES.

The following review of the Homebush pig market is the first of its kind insofar as this publication is concerned, although a resume of marketing operations has appeared each week in the Weekly Marketing Notes issued by the State Marketing Bureau. Pigs forwarded to Homebush from country centres are mostly carried by rail, but small shipments from coastal districts arrive at Darling Harbour by boat and are transported to the Saleyards. The usual mode of transport for animals from piggeries in the County of Cumberland and adjacent areas is by motor truck. Sales by public auction are conducted each Tuesday at the Homebush Abattoir Saleyards, which are comparatively close to the State Abattoirs but are about two miles distant from the cattle and sheep selling sections.

Country supplies in the minority.

During January, 1940, the number of pigs sold by auction totalled 4,213. This aggregate was smaller than the previous month's figure of 5,090 head but exceeded the total for the corresponding period of 1939, when 3,638 pigs were penned.

Piggeries situated within the County of Cumberland and areas adjacent thereto (commonly referred to as "local piggeries") are the principal source of supply to the Homebush market and during January only 1,580 head arrived by rail. Most country-raised animals are either slaughtered at local killing centres or consigned direct to the Abattoirs.

Porkers plentiful.

The bulk of the pennings at Homebush usually consist of porkers and this feature was particularly noticeable during January, owing to the small number of baconers offering. Prime quality lots were in the minority, supplies mainly consisting of porkers of fair to good trade standard. Many of the pigs in the porker class were in store condition only; nevertheless, these generally were in keen demand and sold at rates very little below those ruling for prime grade. On the first saleday of the New Year supplies were much heavier than usual and prices declined substantially, light porkers selling to 39/6 each for 60 lb. animals and heavy to 54/6 for 90 lb. pigs. Values mostly were equal to those ruling on the first saleday of 1939. Subsequent arrivals were much lighter and, although the market was irregular at times, rates generally improved a little.

Baconers sold "over the scale."

During December, 1939, an important change in the system of marketing bacon pigs in the Sydney Metropolitan Area,

/which......

which had been initiated some months previously, became manifest in the rapidly declining offerings at the auction sales. It is not proposed to discuss the merits or defects, if any, of the new system nor to give particulars of its operation, but merely to state that it is similar to the scheme in vogue in North Coast centres of New South Wales, whereby producers are paid a fixed rate per lb. on the dressed weight of the carcase. It is understood that Sydney operators have recently been paying 6½d per lb. for dressed weights up to 170 lb. This rate to the producer is apparently based on the price of 7½d per lb., f.o.b. Australian ports, offered by the British Government for all first grade carcases up to 170 lb.

As a result of this change in the method of marketing, supplies of baconers reaching the saleyards during January were very limited. Prime descriptions were difficult to secure, as fair trade sorts constituted the bulk of the baconers available. Despite the light offerings, competition was rather restricted and the high values prevalent from the outbreak of war until December were not maintained. For the most part, prices for good to prime baconers, estimated to dress from 100 lb. to 150 lb., ranged from 60/6 to 84/6 per head. At times, however, the top of the range was no higher than 80/- (approximately 6½d per lb.) Notwithstanding the decline, quotations were still above those of January, 1939, when the 150 lb. baconer realised from 72/6 to 76/6 per head.

Backfatter market steady.

There was a fairly good representation of backfatters on most saledays, and whilst quality sorts were well in evidence, plain and medium descriptions predominated. Most of the pigs forward were of medium weight and heavy animals, that is, those dressing over 350 lb., were lightly supplied. The demand for this class has been steady for some considerable time and returns to the producer have been mostly very satisfactory. At the beginning of the month good to prime backfatters dressing 200 to 350 lb. were quoted at 4¾d to 5¼d per lb. Prices rose progressively and by the close of the period similar pigs were worth 5d to 5¾d per lb. Twelve months ago values were a little higher.

J.W.

----oooOooo----

PIGS IN LOST CITY.

An Indian city deep in the forests of South America and unheard of for hundreds of years is now over-run with pigs and wild turkeys, according to Professor Gregory Mason, noted archaeologist, who visited New York recently. The lost city which had been occupied by Spanish conquerors in the early sixteenth century is now in ruins and inhabited only by the thousands of pigs and turkeys who feast on the oranges which grow there in abundance.

(Meat Trades Journal of Australia.
February 1, 1940.)

ALEXANDRIA RAILWAY GOODS YARD

AND

SUSSEX STREET SALES.

Increased arrivals of Tasmanian potatoes:-

January marked the commencement of the Tasmanian potato season, 48,026 bags arriving during the month compared with only 382 in December. Early shipments were mainly of the Bismarck variety, very few Brownells being included, but as the month progressed more of the latter came to hand until finally Brownells comprised the major portion of the offerings. During the first week the market for Bismarcks was very steady at £13.10.0 but the rate for the next week was £5.10.0 lower at £8.0.0 per ton. This sudden fall was due to the hot weather experienced throughout New South Wales, as well as to the heavier stocks in position, and vendors found it fairly difficult to clear stocks even at the reduced price. In the following trading period, the rate for Tasmanian Brownells was fixed for the first time this season at £9.10.0 per ton, while Bismarcks were quoted at 10/- under this price. An increase of 30/- per ton took place the next week, but in the final trading period of the month market rates fell sharply by 50/- and were:- Brownells £8.10.0 and Bismarcks £8.0.0 per ton.

Western Australian growers forwarded 5,040 bags of the Delaware variety by sea to Sussex Street and early sales were very firm at £11.0.0 per ton. Later, however, the receipt of some lower quality lines, in addition to the quiet demand that ruled generally, was responsible for a dull request and the price dropped to £7.0.0 per ton.

Smaller shipments of potatoes from New South Wales districts:-

Although receivals of local potatoes by rail at Alexandria, totalling 34,670 bags, were about the same as those during December, only 4,999 bags from New South Wales districts came to hand in Sussex Street as against 20,390 the previous month, thus giving a smaller aggregate for the Sydney markets. On the whole, fairly steady trading took place throughout, a noticeable feature being the good demand for Seed and No. 2 grade lines, which at times realised higher rates than the New Grade tubers.

At Alexandria, the bulk of the offerings came from the Dorrigo district; early in the month the quality was very good, but later a portion of the stocks was withheld for reconditioning. Sales at auction were effected and the following rates were realised:- New Grade £4.1.8 to £16.11.8, No.2 Grade £2.5.0 to £13.0.0, Seed Grade £6.5.0 to £11.0.0, Stock Food £3.0.0 to £11.10.0 per ton; No.2 Grade 2/- to 9/6, Chat Grade 3/3 to 9/1, Stock Food 1/- to 10/9 per bag. Supplies available on the Sussex Street wharf were mainly sold subject to reconditioning, the range of prices being:- New Grade £5.0.0 to £11.0.0, No.2 Grade £2.0.0 to £6.5.0,

/Stock Food.....

Stock Food £6.0.0 to £6.15.0 per ton; No.2 Grade 2/- to 4/-, Chat Grade 2/-, Second Growth Grade 4/- to 5/-, Stock Food 1/9 to 9/3 per bag.

Heavier consignments of Victorian onions:-

Consignments of Victorian Onions on the Sydney market during January comprised 13,811 bags to Sussex Street and 204 bags to Alexandria. During the greater portion of the month, considerable difficulty was experienced in clearing stocks at Sussex Street owing to the heavy arrivals and the size of the tubers. Earlier sales of Brown table lots were effected at £7.0.0 but later disposals took place at from £4.0.0 to £4.10.0, while picklers were quoted at £14.0.0 per ton. At Alexandria a poor demand prevailed at prices ranging from £2.10.0 to £7.0.0 per ton. The 1,700 bags of white onions received in Sussex Street from South Australia were of prime quality and deliveries were readily taken at from £8.0.0 to £9.0.0 per ton.

Arrivals of local lines at Alexandria totalled 2,016 bags, mainly of the white variety. While the general quality of the offerings was good, the presence of a large proportion of big onions retarded clearances. For the most part, demand was only fair and auction realisations were as follow:- White - Table £1.15.0 to £13.10.0, Pickling £7.0.0 to £14.0.0 per ton, Pickling 14/6 per bag, all sales being made according to quality.

Pumpkins cheaper:-

The pumpkin market at both selling centres was quiet, rates being lower than those ruling in December. The stock of Queensland pumpkins, comprising 11,326 bags forwarded to Sussex Street and 33 trucks to Alexandria, represented an increased supply, which, together with the hot weather, had the effect of weakening the market. In Sussex Street, sales were made at from £7.0.0 to £10.0.0, whilst at Alexandria realisations ranged from £6.0.0 to £10.0.0 per ton. The 869 bags of pumpkins from New South Wales districts on offer in Sussex Street were in quiet demand at from £7.0.0 to £10.0.0 per ton and the 9 trucks of local origin consigned to Alexandria met a similar market, bringing from £6.3.4 to £9.10.0 per ton.

Tasmanian Swedes in heavier supply:-

The 3,229 bags of Tasmanian swedes which came to hand in Sussex Street exceeded the previous month's consignments and sales were recorded at from £5.0.0 to £10.0.0 per ton. The 51 bags of Tasmanian carrots received in the final week of January marked the commencement of the season for that produce, but owing to the small offering no market rate was fixed, the supply being disposed of privately at undisclosed rates.

Fresh stocks of Tasmanian dry peas have not arrived as yet; quotations for the grey variety are unaltered at 11/- to 11/6 per bushel ex stores.

Quiet demand for white chaff:-

Consignments of white chaff to Alexandria during January comprised 194 trucks of oaten and 28 trucks of wheaten. The inquiry centred principally around prime and good lots, but these lines consisted of only a comparatively small portion of the yardings, and the market as a whole was dull, substantial carry-overs being evident. Disposals were made by private treaty at the following prices:- Oaten - Medium £3.15.0 to £4.5.0, Good £4.10.0 to £5.0.0, Prime £5.5.0; Wheaten - Medium £3.15.0 to £4.5.0, Good £4.10.0 with occasional lots to £5.0.0 and Prime £5.0.0 to £5.5.0 per ton.

Increased lucerne prices:-

Although heavier stocks of lucerne chaff were on offer at Alexandria, 105 trucks being received, ruling rates were higher and steady clearances were reported at from £4.10.0 for medium to £6.15.0 for prime, with some sales to £7.0.0 per ton. Arrivals of lucerne hay at Alexandria totalled 83 trucks from Maitland and 138 trucks from other centres. The Maitland consignments included both New Green and Dry lots and good sales were made at the following prices:- New Green £5.0.0 to £5.15.0, Dry £4.10.0 to £6.10.0 per ton. Disposals of hay from other centres were mainly satisfactory, although some under-quality lines were in only fair request, and deliveries were taken at from £4.10.0 to £7.5.0, with derrick-pressed lots selling at from £3.10.0 to £4.15.0 per ton. The 466 bales of Hunter River lucerne hay shipped to Sussex Street met a satisfactory inquiry at from £4.0.0 to £5.10.0 for New Green and from £4.10.0 to £6.10.0 per ton for Dry lots.

The 130 bales of Victorian special oaten hay shipped to Sussex Street were cleared at £8.0.0 per ton. As has been the case for some time past, only a portion of the 54 trucks of oaten hay railed to Alexandria was available for sale at the following rates:- Derrick-pressed £2.10.0 to £3.15.0, other £4.0.0 to £4.15.0 per ton. The bulk of the 95 trucks of local straw at rail at Alexandria was mainly of medium quality and was disposed of slowly at from £2.10.0 to £3.0.0 per ton; good to prime lots, however, sold readily at up to £4.10.0 per ton. The 330 bales of prime Tasmanian straw on offer met a fairly steady market at from £5.0.0 to £5.10.0 per ton.

Steady inquiry for grain:-

Consignments of grain to Alexandria during January were:- Wheat 96 trucks; Maize - Queensland 1,180 bags, Local 2,523 bags; Oats 86 trucks. A fairly steady inquiry prevailed for the wheat, and realisations ranged from 2/7½d for inferior to 3/11½d for good lots by auction, and from 4/- to 4/2d per bushel for f.a.q. lots by private treaty. The stock of maize consisted of yellow grain varieties of mixed quality, and accordingly prices varied from 4/9d to 5/9d for Queensland and from 4/6d to 5/9d per bushel for local. Only a portion of the supply of oats was submitted to buyers; deliveries were taken at 2/6d per bushel for prime lots by private treaty, and from 1/8d to 2/- at auction. The 1,190 bags of Illawarra and 677 bags of Northern Rivers yellow maize railed to Alexandria cleared steadily at the following rates:- Northern Rivers 5/- to 5/6d, Illawarra 5/- to 5/9d per bushel.

E.A.G.

FRUIT AND VEGETABLES.

SALES AT CITY MUNICIPAL MARKETS, SYDNEY.

The hot, dry weather which continued throughout January was favourable to the sale of fruit, but had a detrimental effect on the quality and quantity coming forward. While there was a very satisfactory demand for quality lines, inferior descriptions sold somewhat slowly and, at times, were very difficult to clear.

Coloured dessert apples in demand.

During the early part of January, the only coloured dessert apples available, apart from Carringtons, were limited quantities of old season Democrats, Yates and Croftons, for which relatively high prices were obtained. Later, new season Gravensteins and Williams Favourites from the earlier districts appeared on the market and, with Carringtons, met a ready inquiry at very satisfactory rates. Still later in the month some McIntosh Reds were on offer also, and the best of these realised to 20/- per case.

New Season cooking apples, principally Granny Smiths and Twenty Ounce from centres close to the Sydney metropolitan area, sold well at prices ranging to 15/- per case early in the period, but subsequently steadily increasing supplies resulted in a weaker demand and a gradual downward movement in values was apparent.

Pears moderately stocked.

Quite early in January pears of the Clapp's Favourite and Williams varieties were received from Victoria and some of the earlier coastal areas of New South Wales but, owing to the bulk of the fruit being rather immature, sales were quiet. Realisations, however, were very satisfactory. Later, fruit in a more forward condition was available and cleared readily at prices ranging generally to about 10/- per case. Only limited supplies came to hand from local districts, while the quantities received from Victoria were much smaller than usual, owing to the fairly high rates being paid on the orchards by canning interests.

Cherries sell at lower rates.

Quantities of cherries, principally St. Margaret, were still available during the first fortnight but the market was somewhat dull for this class of fruit at the time, with the result that vendors were obliged to accept lower rates.

Quality peaches in demand.

Throughout the greater part of the month peaches were only moderately supplied and quality descriptions sold readily at up to 10/- per half-case, with some special lines at higher levels. Towards the end of January considerable quantities of Elbertas

/from....

from early centres came to hand and, as these were below the usual standard, realisations were not high. Demand, however, was still maintained for the better quality white-fleshed varieties received earlier in the month and still available, but values were a little lower.

Local apricot season closes.

Comparatively small consignments of apricots were received from New South Wales districts and by the end of the period the season had come to a close. Good quality lines were inquired for throughout and satisfactory prices were obtained. Towards the end of the month a shipment was received from Tasmania but, unfortunately, many lines opened in a wasty condition. Choice lots, however, sold readily at rates ranging to 9/- per half-case.

Nectarine prices very firm.

Quality nectarines, which were lightly stocked, were in request, and prices reached high levels, some disposals of extra choice large fruit being recorded to 20/- per half-case.

Plums clear well.

Stocks of plums were not excessive and choice, large descriptions sold steadily at mostly very satisfactory prices. Small fruit was at times somewhat difficult to dispose of but generally clearances were effected with a minimum of wastage.

Realisations for Valencia Oranges reach high levels.

Valencia oranges were available from both coastal and inland districts throughout the month, but only in light to moderate quantities. Furthermore, the bulk of the offerings consisted of plain and standard grade fruit and special lines were scarce. There was a sustained demand, particularly for small fruit, and quotes rose steadily, reaching high levels by the end of the month, when up to 24/- per case was obtained for the best sizes.

Values of Lemons improve towards the close.

Lemons sold quietly throughout the greater part of January and the principal demand was for choice, coloured fruit of selected size, which, however, only constituted a small percentage of the available stocks. Green and inferior lines met with little inquiry. Values of choice lots were fairly evenly maintained until about the end of the third week when a firmer tendency was noticeable. Towards the close of the month, supplies were rather scarce and clearances were effected at advanced rates.

Upward trend in prices of Passion Fruit.

Passion fruit was fairly plentiful during the first fortnight and prices ranged to about 7/- per half-case for the best lines. Subsequent consignments were smaller and an upward

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trend in prices was in evidence.

Heavy supplies of Pineapples on offer.

Although heavy supplies of pineapples were on offer, clearances for the most part were made quite readily, particularly towards the end of the month, when the prevailing hot weather was most favourable to sales. Lower rates were accepted at the beginning of the month but values were fairly steady during the balance of the period.

Values of Bananas fairly evenly maintained.

There was little variation in the quantities of bananas received from Queensland and the North Coast districts of New South Wales during the first three weeks, arrivals totalling between 13,000 and 14,000 cases weekly. Prices of choice lines rose early in the period and were fairly evenly maintained at higher levels until towards the end of the month, when vendors were obliged to accept lower rates owing to a considerable increase in supplies.

Grapes realise satisfactory prices.

The grape season opened early in January with the arrival of consignments of Black Hamburgs from Queensland. These met a ready sale and up to 14/- per half-case was obtained, until supplies of Black Muscatels were received from early districts of this State towards the end of the month, when quotations were reduced. The first of the local Muscats were from the Bulga district and brought very satisfactory prices, some sales of extra choice to 20/- per half-case being recorded.

Salad vegetables sell well.

Although the weather throughout the month was generally hot and dry, clearances of most kinds of vegetables were very satisfactory. Conditions were, of course, most favourable to the sale of salad vegetables and vendors had no difficulty in disposing of stocks.

Peas heavily stocked.

Peas were very heavily stocked throughout the greater part of the month, especially during the first two weeks, and, as canneries were not buying to any appreciable extent, values receded to low levels. Prices then fluctuated slightly until towards the end of the month, when only moderate quantities came to hand and choice lots (which, however, comprised only a small proportion of the stock on offer) cleared readily at higher rates.

Demand for beans confined to choice quality descriptions.

Only a small proportion of the supplies of beans available was of choice quality. Medium and inferior lots were

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neglected by buyers despite the fact that sellers were prepared to accept low prices. Quality lines, however, were sought by buyers and realisations were on a fairly high basis.

Prices of lettuce fluctuate.

Large quantities of lettuce were on offer early in the month and some difficulty was experienced in effecting sales of inferior lots, but choice "heads" cleared well although rates were easier. Later in the period prices firmed, while towards the close much lighter supplies were received and values showed a substantial improvement.

Values of cabbages show upward trend.

The market for cabbages had an easier tendency at the commencement but later demand improved with a corresponding rise in prices. During the first fortnight clearances were facilitated by the purchase of fairly large quantities for military stores. From the middle of the month onwards lighter supplies were on offer and values rose still higher.

Tomato prices fluctuate.

During the first week heavy deliveries of tomatoes were submitted. A large proportion consisted of fully ripe fruit which was offered at low prices in order to dispose of stock as quickly as possible. Clearances of firm coloured and semi-coloured lots were more satisfactory, although lower rates were accepted. The following week much smaller quantities were received and values improved, up to 10/- per half-case being realised for the best quality descriptions. Later, local supplies were augmented by increased quantities from the North Coast, and, in addition, consignments came to hand from Queensland, Victoria and Tasmania, and this resulted in a downward movement in prices. Towards the end of the month, particularly after the Anniversary Day holiday, there was a much better inquiry for choice lots, which were disposed of at higher prices.

E.J.C.

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The Minister for Commerce has announced that representations for alterations in the scheme formulated for assisting apple and pear growers have been considered by the Federal Cabinet but that there would be no change made in the arrangements for the compulsory acquisition and disposal of the 1940 crop. It is stated that the rights of the growers of quality fruits have not been ignored and that apples and pears would be acquired from 1st March.

WHOLESALE PRICES OF VARIOUS COMMODITIES IN SYDNEY (N.S.W.) DURING JANUARY, 1940.

The following table gives particulars of the range of wholesale prices in Sydney as collected and recorded by the State Marketing Bureau in respect of various commodities during the month of January, 1940:-

Commodity	From	To
Wheat		
Bulk 3/9½d per bushel)	no variation.	
Bagged 4/0½d " ")		
Flour	£11.2.9 (plus £1.12.3 tax)	£10.17.9 per ton (plus £1.12.3 tax)
Bran	£3.15.0	£4. 5. 0 per ton
Pollard	£4. 0.0	£4. 5. 0 " "
Eggs (Hen)	1/2d	1/4d per dozen
Butter:		
Choice 161/2d per cwt.)	no variation.	
First Quality 156/6d " ")		
Second Quality 151/10d " ")		
Cheese:		
Loaf 11d per lb.)	no variation.	
Large 10½d " ")		
Special Brands 1/- to 1/1d " ")		
Pigs (Abattoir Sales)		
Prime extra light porkers	26/6d	37/6d per head
" light porkers	34/6d	42/6d " "
" med. wgt. "	38/6d	52/6d " "
" heavy "	48/6d	57/6d " "
" baconers	60/6d	84/6d " "
Backfatters	£4.0.0	£8.5.6 " "

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RETURN OF FRUIT AND VEGETABLES IMPORTED INTO NEW SOUTH WALES BY LAND AND SEA - DECEMBER, 1939.

FRUIT.

STATE	Pineapples tropical cases.	Bananas tropical cases.	Other Fruit cases	Melons crates	Tomatoes half-bushel cases.	TOTALS packages
Queensland	18,126	7,838	24,289 x	2,550	4,741	57,544
Victoria	5	153	12,988	-	4,017	17,163
Tasmania	-	-	36,775	-	-	36,775
Sth. Aust.	-	-	3,932	-	-	3,932
West Aust.	-	-	231	-	-	231
TOTALS	18,131	7,991	78,215	2,550	8,758	115,645

x Also 50 bags fruit.

VEGETABLES.

STATE	Potatoes bags	Onions bags	Swedes bags	Pumpkins bags	Pumpkins tons	Cucs. & Chillies cases	Other Vegs. pkges.	TOTALS pkges.	TOTALS tons
Queensland	516	5,214	-	19,396	16½	2,099	3,835	31,060	16½
Victoria	222	5,596	-	-	-	-	1,099	6,917	-
Tasmania	381	-	1,295	-	-	-	-	1,676	-
Sth. Aust.	509	761	-	-	-	-	4,851	6,121	-
West Aust.	4,874	-	-	-	-	-	-	4,874	-
TOTALS	6,502	11,571	1,295	19,396	16½	2,099	9,785	50,648	16½

Note. Victorian figures not complete. Return from Tocumwal not yet to hand.

STATE MARKETING BUREAU - DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE - N.S.W.

M.-40-1

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MARSUPIAL AND FOX SKINS

CHANNELS OF DISTRIBUTION IN NEW SOUTH WALES

Marsupial skins are principally Kangaroo and Wallaby. Owing to these being protected animals, the supply of skins is now restricted. From time to time in certain localities, Open seasons are declared by the Pastures Protection Board.

Skins taken off animals at time of shooting, dried and baled in the country.

Private sales to Country Skin Buyers

Sydney Skin Stores for grading, classifying and cataloguing

Sold by Auction at the Royal Exchange

Exporters

Furriers

Tanners

Boot and Shoe Manufacturers and Leather Goods Manufacturers.

NOTE: Proclamation prohibiting export of Hides and Skins gazetted 20-9-39. (Furred skins and wooled sheepskins may be exported under permit)

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