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NEW SOUTH WALES
STATE MARKETING BUREAU
DIVISION OF MARKETING
AND AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

MONTHLY
MARKETING
REVIEW



MARCH, 1944.

Vol. 11

No. 3.

ISSUED BY AUTHORITY OF THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE
PREPARED UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE
ACTING CHIEF OF THE DIVISION OF MARKETING
AND AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS
SYDNEY

MONTHLY MARKETING REVIEW

A MISCELLANY OF MATTERS RELATING TO THE MARKETING
OF PRIMARY PRODUCTS, AT HOME AND ABROAD.

ISSUED BY AUTHORITY OF THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE
AND PREPARED UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE ACTING CHIEF
OF THE DIVISION OF MARKETING AND AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS,
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, NEW SOUTH WALES, AUSTRALIA.

MARCH, 1944.

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HIGHLIGHTS.

Maximum prices to apply to the Spring crop of early potatoes harvested after 1st October have been announced by the Prices Commissioner. The ceiling price in New South Wales and Queensland will be £18 and in South Australia, Victoria and Tasmania £20 per ton. The price for Western Australia will be announced later.

The Chairman of the Dried Fruits Board states that limited quantities of dried vine fruits are to be made available to civilians this season. 15% each of the currant and sultana crops and 20% of the lexia and chanez crops will be released for home consumption, but these proportions will be subject to review as the season advances.

The broom millet fibre crop in New South Wales for the current season has been unofficially estimated at approximately 8,000 cwts.

The protracted spell of dry weather, which is practically State-wide in its incidence, is expected to result in a shortage of vegetables in New South Wales during the next few months.

The United States Department of Agriculture reports that farmers sowing intentions as at 1st March, 1944, were for an area of 19,805,000 acres of Spring wheat, including 2,256,000 acres of Durum.

The Milk Board, as from Monday, 20th March, introduced rationing of supplies of bottled milk to warehouses, offices and certain factories by 50% of deliveries made in week ended 13th January. Supplies of milk to military and defence services (excluding hospitals) were to be reduced by 25% of total deliveries in period 25th February to 2nd March.

The Minister for Commerce and Agriculture has announced that more than £1,000,000 has been paid in subsidies by the Australian Potato Committee in eight months to the end of February. Subsidies paid in New South Wales (approximately £450,000) covered both service and civilian requirements.

MARKETING THE HEAVY BACONER.

Brief Review of Trend during the War.

(By J.R. Williams, Division of Marketing
and Agricultural Economics).

Under normal marketing conditions existing prior to the War the carcase weight of pigs slaughtered for bacon ranged chiefly between 100 and 160 lb., animals weighing up to 130 lb. being preferred for the local trade. Actually, very few pigs weighing between 150 and 200 lb. were noticed at the Saleyards, with the exception of inferior grade sows, and in reporting the Homebush market the State Marketing Bureau covered baconers in four weight ranges, viz., 100-110, 110-120, 120-130 and 130-150. With the advent of the War, however, the weight range of baconers began to increase. The development of the heavy and extra heavy baconer has more than once created a difficult problem during the past few years, which, of course, could not be unexpected in a country which is best served with the lighter type.

During the early part of the War, Australian pig farmers were asked to produce heavier pigs for export to Britain. The move was successful, but about April, 1941, the importation of heavy baconers into Great Britain was prohibited, creating such chaos in the industry in Australia that complete recovery could not be said to have yet taken place, although demand for the heavy baconer was again created with the advent of canning operations. The industry received a further setback in December, 1941, when Japan entered the War. December, 1942, proved more troublesome, particularly for producers in the Sydney Metropolitan Area. Industrial trouble at the Abattoirs caused a sudden drop in values. An outbreak of Swine Fever had disastrous results and, after twelve months, quarantine restrictions are still hampering production in the County of Cumberland. The announcement that the Australian Meat Industry Commission intended to regulate prices of pig meats early in 1943 at rates considerably below current market levels caused consternation amongst producers. The final general setback to date occurred in January, 1943, when values of all classes of pigs fell to low levels following the publicity given to the Swine Fever outbreak.

If the outlook at the beginning of 1943 was poor, it has to be said that forebodings failed to materialise and after January the remainder of the year proved successful from the bacon producer's viewpoint. He was urged and encouraged to increase production and when the industry was brought under control in June, 1943, no action was taken to materially prejudice the satisfactory returns which he had been receiving for his bacon pigs. In September, 1943, the guaranteed price for baconers was varied to 9d per lb. for first quality and the range of weights extended from 100 to 200 lb.

/With...

With altered wartime demands, the heavy and extra-heavy baconer pig had in the meantime become an established feature of the Saleyards. To meet the changed situation the Bureau's market report was amended in that the range for heavy baconers was extended to 160 lb. and two extra heavy grades added, viz., 160-180 and 180-230 lb.

Baconers reached their peak values in August, 1943, when prices were the highest for many years. Action, however, subsequently taken to bring the prices obtained at auction to a level more in keeping with guaranteed prices. Prior to the extension of the weight range to 200 lb., the trade had been buying extra heavy pigs suitable for bacon up to this weight even up to 240 lb. When the range was extended action was taken to treat baconers exceeding 200 lb. as backfatters, the price of which has been fixed at a much lower level than those of bacon and the Bureau amended its final bacon grade to read 180-200. Following representations, however, that the sudden drop in values operated adversely in the case of producers whose pigs might just exceed 200 lb., bacon curers were asked unofficially to pay maximum prices for all bacon pigs, irrespective of weight providing, of course, they were of suitable quality. This had the effect of again improving values for extra heavy baconers and the Bureau added an additional range, 200-240, the market position being a little different from that when the range was 180-230.

Despite the guaranteed price of 9d, the extra heavy baconer has more often than not failed to give that return to the producer. In fact, the pig exceeding 200 lb. generally brings much less. In the circumstances producers have been advised to market their pigs before they reach 180 lb., about 160 to 170 for preference. Despite the fact that numbers of extra heavy baconers arriving at Homebush have been declining of late, demand is becoming more and more restricted. Operators are now buying for export and it is understood that pigs exceeding 200 lb. are being rejected. The result is that buyers are wary of extra heavy baconers lest they purchase animals exceeding 200 lb. and prices have fallen considerably of late. With pig production increasing and the prospects bright for the release of bacon and ham for civilian consumption, the heavy to extra-heavy baconer, suitable, in the main, for canning only in this country, is again becoming a problem. In addition, it is understood that it is not at all popular in the bacon industry where the lighter pig, which is more easily handled, is preferred.

The bacon pig in question is finding its own price level on the market and as this level is frequently below the guaranteed minimum the time appears opportune to amend the schedule, even though prices have been guaranteed until June, 1945. Experience during the past few years has shown that the industry is frequently subject to changing circumstances and the position at present seems to indicate that we should concentrate more on the /production...

production of a relatively lighter animal rather than the heaviest baconer possible which, in many instances, results in unsuitable and over-fat pigs being placed on the market. As a profitable and desirable outlet still remains for extra heavy baconers, no restriction should be placed on their marketing, especially when it is borne in mind that a producer aiming to market heavy baconers will inadvertently find some extra heavy descriptions on his hands. However, their production should be controlled. It is thought that any prices schedule which creates a wide divergence in rates as between varying grades, as is the case at present officially with baconers reaching to 200 lb. and those exceeding 200, is inequitable, and that steps should be taken to modify this position. Nothing is more upsetting to orderly marketing and equitable returns than this fact.

The suggestion has been made that the present guaranteed price operate only in respect of pigs weighing 100-180 lb. and that pigs weighing 181-200 be valued at 8d and those of 201-240 weight of suitable baconer type, 7d. With a view to stepping-up production still further in order to meet the increased civilian demand following the rationing of meat, and at the same time make some showing in ameliorating the lot of the producer, the Government should consider the question of offering a small premium over and above the present level on first quality pigs weighing 100-180. This need only be ½d, for instance, and could be removed if and when production increases materially. Any adjustments to the present schedule of values may, of course, require small alterations in the bacon prices, but action along these lines should not present insuperable difficulties.

-----oooOooo-----

The Annual Report of the Egg Marketing Board for the State of New South Wales for the Pool Year 1942/43 has just been published and shows the following interesting figures relating to the numbers of eggs controlled by the Board since its inception:-

	Dozen		Dozen
1930-31 ...	14,477,559	1936-37 ...	21,041,033
1931-32 ...	15,686,522	1937-38 ...	20,341,747
1932-33 ...	16,346,545	1938-39 ...	20,426,526
1933-34 ... (Broken Period)		1939-40 ...	23,456,693
1934-35 ...	20,054,997	1940-41 ...	29,059,797
1935-36 ...	20,755,935	1941-42 ...	38,535,037
1942-43 ...	42,646,672 Dozen.		

It should be explained that up till 3rd November, 1941, the Board controlled only those eggs produced within the Counties of Cumberland and Northumberland and the Shires of Nattai and Wollondilly, but as from the date mentioned its activities were extended to cover the whole of the State of New South Wales.

-----oooOooo-----

SALES OF LIVESTOCK AT HOMERUSH, SYDNEY.

Heavier yardings of sheep and lambs.

There were eight sales held in February compared with only 7 in January, and the aggregate penningings were thus substantially higher. A total of 389,530 head was available, representing an increase of 67,000 on the previous month's total.

Medium quality sheep numerous.

Although supplies of wethers and ewes totalled 208,644 head, the proportion of good to prime grades offering was by no means large. Plain to medium trade descriptions continued to constitute a fairly large percentage of the yardings. In a number of instances, however, attractive drafts of prime heavy sheep were included with a moderate supply of good light trade mutton at all times available.

Good request for quality sheep.

The preponderance of plain to medium sheep stimulated demand for good to prime grades, although fluctuations occurred at times. Generally, however, values showed little change from the previous month's average.

Plain and medium sheep continued to sell at relative lower levels and for the most part were dull of sale. Values, however, made a slight recovery at the end of the period.

Some actual sales, representative of price movements are as follow:-

First Week

Good heavy	48 lb. wethers	(skin 4/6)	made	23/1	each	or	4 ¹ / ₂ d	per
" "	56 lb. ewes	(" 2/6)	"	16/10	" "	"	3d	"

Second Week

Good trade	46 lb. wethers	(skin 3/6)	made	20/9	each	or	4 ¹ / ₂ d	per
" "	46 lb. ewes	(" 7/-)	"	20/4	" "	"	3 ¹ / ₂ d	"

Third Week

Good trade	46 lb. wethers	(skin 3/6)	made	19/4	each	or	4 ¹ / ₂ d	per
" "	44 lb. ewes	(" 3/6)	"	15/11	" "	"	3 ¹ / ₂ d	"

Fourth Week

Good heavy	50 lb. wethers	(skin 4/6)	made	22/8	each	or	4 ¹ / ₂ d	per
" trade	36 lb. ewes	(" 1/3)	"	11/11	" "	"	3 ¹ / ₂ d	"

/Price ...

Price per lb. virtually unchanged.

The average cost of wether mutton per pound did not differ materially from the previous month's levels. For the most part, good light trade wethers were worth from 4d to 4½d, although occasionally 4½d per lb. was paid. Heavy wethers cost from 4d to 4½d per lb. with odd lines making 4½d. Good quality light ewes generally realised from 2½d to 3½d, while heavy descriptions sold at 2½d to 3d per lb. Although the average cost of light ewes showed little change, heavy grades were obtained at slightly lower rates than during January.

Supplies of lambs increase.

The number of lambs available was larger, a total of 180,886 head being offered or about 16,000 more than the January total. Good to prime lambs were fairly well represented but very few suckers were included. Light lambs were well in evidence but prime heavy grades were in rather short supply, nevertheless several nice quality lots were yarded. Medium to plain lambs continued in fairly heavy supply, many inferior lots being offered.

Strong demand for quality lambs.

There was keen inquiry at all times for good quality lambs, the preponderance of plain and medium lambs tending to stimulate values for the better grades. At opening sales rates advanced by 1/- per head, and the market remained consistently firm until about mid-February when a decline of from 1/- to 1/6 per head occurred. Prices, however, subsequently recovered and at closing sales were about equal to the average of those ruling early in the period. An indication of prices throughout is given in the following record of actual sales:-

First Week

Good trade 32 lb. suckers (skin 4/6) made 25/1 each or 7½d per lb.
" heavy 38 lb. lambs (" 3/6) " 25/2 " " 6½d " "

Second Week

Good trade 35 lb. lambs (skin 5/6) made 26/10 each or 7½d per lb.
" " 34 lb. suckers (" 4/-) " 26/1 " " 7½d " "

Third Week

Good trade 33 lb. suckers (skin 4/6) made 25/- each or 7½d per lb.
" " 36 lb. lambs (" 4/-) " 25/4 " " 7d " "

Fourth Week

Good trade 32 lb. suckers (skin 4/-) made 24/8 each or 7½d per lb.
" heavy 46 lb. lambs (" 3/-) " 26/10 " " 6½d " "

/Price...

Price of lamb advances.

Compared with the average price of lamb in January, ruling rates in February were somewhat higher. At times prime suckers made 8d per lb., although generally they were purchased at from 7d to 7½d, according to weight. Good light lambs realised to 7½d but the bulk was disposed of at from 6½d to 7½d. Heavy lambs, although at times reaching 6½d generally were worth from 6d to 6½d per lb.

Hoggets were by no means numerous but when offering were obtainable at from 4½d to 5½d per lb., according to weight with odd lines making to 5½d.

Increased cattle supplies

Cattle truckings during February, 1944, were somewhat irregular, nevertheless heavy yardings were noticed more frequently than for some time past. The monthly aggregate showed a considerable increase, 18,049 head being penned, including 2,129 auctioned in the store section. Quality for the most part was only fair, a substantial proportion comprising plain stock while a feature was the large number of rather poorly bred cattle offered. Lightweight quality predominated and on some occasions grown cattle were in very limited supply. The pastoral position showed further deterioration and at the close of February rain was urgently required in most inland areas. In the more wester districts the effects of the prolonged drought were most apparent.

Fluctuating market for bullocks.

Consignments of bullocks varied considerably but generally this class of cattle was in light supply. Pennings comprised mostly light and medium weights of fair to good trade standard. On some occasions, however, prime descriptions made fair showing, while odd heavy drafts were noticed. The market exhibited a weaker tendency during the first half of the period and by the middle of the month the best quotations for either medium or light weight bullocks was 49/- per 100 lb. Subsequent values showed a progressive improvement and at the close rates were equal to the best ruling during the previous month. General quotations were: Heavy 44/- to 48/-, medium weight 47/- to 51/- light 48/- to 53/- per 100 lb.

Inferior quality steers well supplied.

Steers were plentiful throughout the period but quality generally was disappointing. Prime sorts were relatively scarce medium to fair trade lightweights greatly predominating. Many dairy bred or dairy cross lines were noticed.

The market continued very firm throughout the greater part of February, prime lightweights selling to 55/- per 100 lb. /at ...

at the close and during the first three sale days. Rates were a little lower about the middle of the month.

Weaker market for cows.

Cows were generally well-supplied but the consignments consisted chiefly of medium trade descriptions although good trade drafts were occasionally fairly well in evidence. Heavy cows were somewhat scarce and were noticed chiefly in odd lots only. Demand for cows was generally weaker, particularly during the middle of the month when quotations for good to prime heavy cows ranged from 35/- to 40/- and light from 35/- to 42/- per 100 lb. Values showed some improvement later, particularly for good trade lines, and prices on one occasion ranged to 45/- per 100 lb. An interesting feature now noticeable is buyers' reluctance to pay as much per 100 lb. for extra prime cows as they give for good trade descriptions. Under price control and rationing, of course, relatively lean meat is all important.

Steady market for heifers.

Heifers made a very fair showing, particularly during the first half of the period. Prime sorts were somewhat scarce but good trade light and medium weights were well represented. Values were a little lower than those of the previous period, although the market was fairly steady. Quotations ranged to 50/- per 100 lb. during the latter half of February.

Prime vealers scarce.

Moderate numbers of vealers were forward and the pennings comprised all grades of weight and quality. Prime sorts, however, were frequently difficult to secure while a noticeable proportion of the truckings included plain and medium descriptions. A firm market ruled at opening when prime lines were quoted to 65/- per 100 lb. Steady but lower rates ruled subsequently and at closing prices ranged from 52/- to 60/- per 100 lb.

Cattle values satisfactory.

Values of cattle generally were a little lower during February than those ruling in January, but considering the increased supplies the market must be considered satisfactory from the producers' viewpoint, especially as meat rationing is in operation.

Pig supplies increase considerably.

From the point of view of numbers sold, the market at Homebush staged a remarkable comeback during February, 1944, a total of 10,511 head being submitted. This constituted the largest monthly aggregate for some considerable time. Of the total, 7,372 pigs were received by rail while an additional 660 head were sold.

/by ...

by private treaty. Consignments increased progressively from 1,428 head on the first sale day to 2,728 during the third week.

Store buying restrictions lifted.

The larger consignments of pigs arriving during the latter half of February were due partly to the lifting (on 14th February) of the quarantine restrictions which have operated at the saleyards for the past fourteen months. During this period pigs could only be taken from the Homebush Abattoir Saleyards for the purpose of slaughter, thus making store buying impossible. Avenues for the disposal of pigs weighing less than 100 lb. are now considerably wider and that portion of the industry utilising the marketing facilities at Homebush should benefit accordingly.

Fluctuating market for baconers.

Baconers continued to comprise the bulk of the pennings, while all weights were represented, including extra heavy descriptions. Quality ranged chiefly from fair to good trade, although a noticeable percentage of the consignments was of prime grade. The opening market was very firm and quotations for all weights from 100 to 160 lb. ranged to 10d per lb., while pigs dressing to 200 lb. were valued at 9d.

Competition between bacon curers and expert operators was mainly responsible for the enhanced values and official action was taken to bring them more in line with guaranteed prices. Rates at subsequent sales were lower, particularly for fair to good trade descriptions, and quotations generally ranged from 8³/₄d to 9³/₄d per lb. Extra heavy pigs were quoted at from 7³/₄d to 8³/₄d for the 180-200 lb. range and 7d to 8¹/₄d for pigs weighing between 200-240 lb. During the final week, however, the market showed an improvement, especially for heavy to extra-heavy sorts. On a per head basis prices of heavy baconers ranged to £7.5.6.

Keen demand for backfatters.

Backfatters were comparatively lightly supplied and quality showed some variation. Good trade medium weights predominated, nevertheless prime heavy descriptions were fairly well represented at times. A strong market ruled, except about the second week when values were a little easier. Demand was particularly keen at the close when lightweights were quoted to 6³/₄d per lb. and heavy weights to 6¹/₂d. One extra heavy pig realised £16.9.6. A feature of the backfatter market recently has been the enhanced values of boar pigs. Under normal conditions heavy boars fetch only 30/- per head at times but lately they have been bringing to £10.0.0.

Increased supplies of porkers.

Porkers were forward in increased numbers, particularly /during.

during the latter half of the month. Many of the consignments were of a good trade description but quality generally, especially that of the lighter porkers, was only fair. Prices realised were irregular in the extreme. Prior to the lifting of the quarantine restrictions quotations ranged from 5²d per lb. for inferior lightweights to 9²d for prime heavy sorts. Later, values advanced generally, although the market continued to be very irregular. Rates for best store pigs ranged to about 11d per lb.

G.C. & J.W.

-----oooOooo-----

ALEXANDRIA RAILWAY GOODS YARD
AND SUSSEX STREET SALES.

Larger consignments of Tasmanian potatoes.

Receivals of local potatoes at Alexandria Goods Yard continued to show a falling-off, only 8,500 bags being received compared with 13,283 bags in January. The bulk of the consignments, which mainly comprised new Factors, was received from the Guyra, Armidale, Dorrigo, Taralga, Burrawang, Moss Vale and Mittagong districts. At times it was necessary to regrade portion of the arrivals owing to wet rot, second growth and mechanical injuries. The bulk of these supplies was made available for general trading purposes at £6.12.6 for New Grade and £5.5.0 for Chats. Included in the total were 1,077 bags of Seed from the Dorrigo district which were disposed of at £12.0.0 to £12.10.0 per ton. Victorian consignments were also smaller and totalled 6,034 bags. Stocks comprised New Carmans, Early Manistee and Snowflakes and were released for civilian consumption at £6.12.6 per ton.

From Tasmania fairly heavy consignments were received in Sussex Street. These mainly consisted of New Bismarcks with a few Brownells, Arran Chiefs and Up-to-Dates. Shipments totalled 111,271 bags as compared with 42,546 bags in the previous month. A fairly large percentage was taken over by the Federal Authorities and also for essential services. The remainder sold at £6.12.6 per ton for New Grade. Also received in Sussex Street from Western Australia were 4,695 bags of Delawares but owing to delays in transit, portion did not open up in a very satisfactory condition. However, a substantial proportion cleared at the fixed rate of £6.12.6 per ton.

Only 88 bags of New Factors arrived from the North Coast and these brought £6.12.6 per ton. Arrivals at Darling Harbour comprised 5 trucks of Victorian Carmans which were also disposed of at the fixed rate of £6.12.6 per ton.

Swedes in very short supply.

Receivals of swedes were again limited and amounted to only 166 bags; these arrived at Alexandria from local centres and sold readily at £10.0.0 per ton. Tasmanian swedes in Sussex Street comprised 1,039 bags, portion of which was released for general trading at £10.0.0 per ton.

/Carrots...

Carrots and parsnips scarce.

There were no fresh supplies of carrots or parsnips received at Alexandria or Sussex Street during the period.

Supplies of local pumpkins increase.

Receivals of local pumpkins at Alexandria were heavier, 55 trucks coming to hand. These were in request and in the first half of the period rates ranged from £9.0.0 to £14.0.0 with a few at £15.0.0. Values firmed later and from £15.0.0 to £16.0.0 per ton was realised. Arrivals from Queensland were less by 34 trucks and totalled 36 trucks. A few early sales were made at £9.0.0 but the bulk of clearances were effected at £14.0.0 to £15.0.0 with few at £16.0.0 per ton. Arrivals in Sussex Street from the North Coast amounted to 464 bags, which realised from £12.0.0 to £15.0.0 per ton. Consignments to Darling Harbour included 3 trucks from Queensland and 1 truck from local centres but no rates were disclosed.

Onions continue to be lightly supplied.

Supplies of Victorian brown table onions at Alexandria were again limited (4,591 bags), portion being taken over by the Federal authorities. Clearances were readily effected at approximately £18.0.0 to £18.10.0 per ton. No supplies of local came to hand. Five trucks of Victorian onions were on offer and these also brought £18.0.0 to £18.10.0 per ton. Two trucks of Victorian brown picklers realised £15.0.0 per ton.

Oaten chaff in heavy supply - rates unchanged.

Receivals of oaten chaff showed a considerable increase, 197 trucks coming to hand compared with 105 trucks in January. No difficulty was experienced in clearing most lines at firm rates sales being recorded as follows:- Good sound £6.10.0 to £7.10.0, prime £7.10.0 to £8.0.0, choice £8.0.0 to £8.5.0 with a few at £8.10.0 per ton. Six trucks were submitted at auction which included damaged lots at £5.10.0 and good sound at £6.10.0 to £7.0.0 per ton.

Good demand for wheaten chaff.

Supplies of wheaten chaff comprised 19½ trucks. Choice lines continued to be in request, clearances being effected at the following rates:- Good sound £6.15.0 to £7.15.0, prime £8.0.0 to £8.15.0, choice £9.0.0 per ton.

Lucerne chaff firm.

Arrivals of lucerne chaff comprised 67 trucks. There was a satisfactory inquiry for choice lines and these sold readily. Disposals were made at the following rates:- Medium and heated lots £8.0.0, good sound £8.0.0 to £9.15.0, prime £9.10.0 to £10.10.0, choice £10.15.0 to £11.10.0, extra choice £11.10.0 with few at £12.0.0 per ton. Sales by auction comprised 2 trucks of good sound which brought £9.0.0 to £10.6.8 per ton.

/Lucerne ...

Lucerne dust and poultry meal.

Supplies of dust were limited to about 19 bags which realised the equivalent of £12.10.0 to £14.0.0 per ton. One truck of Lucerne poultry meal sold to £14.0.0 per ton.

Lucerne hay continues to be well supplied.

Arrivals of lucerne hay from the Maitland district totalled 52 trucks of new soft green hay. No difficulty was experienced in disposing of those supplies, the bulk of which realised £4.0.0 to £5.10.0 with few at £5.15.0 to £6.10.0 per ton. Supplies from other centres were lighter and comprised 73 trucks. There was a good demand for choice lots and clearances were effected as follows: Medium £7.0.0 to £8.5.0, good sound £8.10.0 to £9.17.6, prime £9.0.0 to £10.10.0, choice £10.0.0 to £11.10.0 per ton. Included in the total were 20 trucks of derrick-pressed which realised the following prices:- Inferior £3.5.0, medium £5.0.0, heated £5.10.0, good sound £6.0.0 to £6.10.0, prime £7.0.0 to £7.10.0 per ton.

Oaten hay in light supply.

Receivals of oaten hay were again lighter and consisted of 25½ trucks. Request was mostly for prime and choice lots, other lines being difficult to dispose of except at low rates. Prices were as follows:- Good sound, oaten rack £4.0.0 to £5.0.0, prime £7.0.0 to £9.0.0, a few choice £10.0.0 per ton. Two trucks sold at auction brought £4.8.4 and £4.17.6 per ton.

Straw supplies maintained: Prices slightly lower.

Consignment of oaten straw aggregated 35 trucks. In the first week of the month rates continued firm, good sound selling at £6.0.0 to £6.10.0, prime at £6.10.0 to £6.15.0 and choice at £7.0.0 to £7.10.0 per ton. Later, owing to fairly heavy supplies coming to hand rates were reduced, particularly for other than choice lots. There were also 6 trucks of wheaten straw received. Damaged lots sold at £4.0.0, good sound at £4.10.0 with prime lines early in the period at £6.10.0 per ton.

Wheat supplies show a decline.

Wheat consignments to Alexandria totalled 32 trucks. F.A.Q. lines were in request and sold at 3/8 per bushel. Sixteen trucks, mainly comprising under quality lines, were submitted at auction, 1/8 to 3/5 per bushel being obtained.

Limited supplies of maize available.

A scarcity of maize was again noted at Alexandria. Consignments from local centres comprised 1,690 bags of yellow and there were limited sales made at 8/6 per bushel.

FRUIT AND VEGETABLE SALES
AT CITY MUNICIPAL MARKETS, SYDNEY.

Good inquiry for fruit

The demand for most fruits was satisfactory and prices for choice quality lines were remunerative to growers.

Williams pears in request.

Large consignments of Williams pears were received from Victoria to augment supplies from local sources. The fixed maximum price was raised to 18/- per bushel but the greater proportion of supplies was sold below the ceiling. The market towards the close of the period was firm and values showed an upward trend. Apart from a few consignments of Packham's Triumph which came to hand late in the month (primarily for cool store), the Williams variety constituted almost the whole supply.

Coloured dessert apples sell well.

Gravenstein and McIntosh Red comprised the principal eating varieties available early in February from local growers, but subsequently Jonathans commenced to come forward. In addition consignments were received from Queensland, Victoria and Tasmania. Rates were firm and the maximum of 18/- per bushel was secured for best packs. Included in the Queensland consignments were small quantities of Delicious which met a ready sale but few lots of this variety were received from local orchards. The Worcester Pearmain which comprised the bulk of Tasmanian shipments sold at 14/- to 15/- per case.

Supplies of Granny Smiths were plentiful but as most of the fruit was only suitable for culinary purposes demand was somewhat restricted, especially for small sizes and rates eased with a resultant fairly wide range in realisations during the period.

A good market for Muscatel grapes.

Exceptionally high prices were obtained for the first few consignments of Muscats, up to 40/- per half-case and occasionally more being paid. With the arrival of larger quantities rates had to be lowered to effect clearances. Nevertheless, best quality packs continued to sell well at around the 20/- per half case mark. Relatively few lines of other black varieties were on offer but the marketing of Cornichons was expected to commence early in March.

Demand for White varieties was only moderate. On a number of occasions the quality of many lines was indifferent owing to breakdown.

/Dessert....

Dessert peaches sell at firm rates.

Supplies of peaches came to hand from inland districts of the State, including the Murrumbidgee Irrigation Area. Some very attractive packs of the J.H. Hale variety were forward from orchards around Bathurst and Orange and these met a brisk request at very firm rates. Consignments from the Murrumbidgee Irrigation Area comprised canning varieties which sold at up to 10/- per half-case.

Choice nectarines and plums clear satisfactorily.

There was a good inquiry for choice nectarines and plums, the former selling to 18/- with a few specials higher early in the month but values receded later. Plums were mainly disposed of at prices ranging to 14/- per half-case.

Citrus fruit in short supply.

Consignments of Valencia oranges were very light and agents who received supplies were compelled to ration their customers. Some retailers were unable to secure even portion of their requirements. Prices were very firm and practically all counts sold at maximum levels. Lemons were also very scarce and insufficient for trade needs.

Larger supplies of pineapples - rates ease.

There was a marked increase in consignments of pineapples but owing to the presence of "blister" and a limited inquiry, the market weakened. Values showed a sharp downward movement and at the close of the month the price range was 10/- to 20/- compared with 20/- to 28/- per case at the commencement.

Choice large bananas sell well.

The market for bananas, apart from a short period when there was a surplus of ripe fruit, was firm. Values for choice lines, especially the larger sizes, reached high levels at times.

Dessert melons plentiful.

Large quantities of water melons were received from the Windsor district and other localities along the Hawkesbury River. Demand was very good early but there was a slackening late in the month. The maximum of 11/8 per cwt. was paid for choice large melons but other grades were cheaper. Consignments of cantaloupes and honey-dew melons from the Murrumbidgee Irrigation Area were fairly heavy. There was a good inquiry for sound, coloured cantaloupes and realisations were above average. There was a steady clearance of honey-dews.

/Vegetable...

Vegetable growing areas need rain.

Dry hot conditions prevailed throughout the month in practically all vegetable growing areas of the State and the quality of a number of green lines was adversely affected. Substantial rains are needed to enable growers to plant for winter requirements.

Choice beans realise ceiling rate.

Supplies of beans from local sources declined appreciably and prices firmed quickly, choice lots realising the ceiling of 20/- per bushel. Consignments from the Far South Coast commenced to arrive on the market on 7th February. The quality of supplies from this area varied considerably but any good quality lots found ready sale at remunerative levels. Towards the close of the month supplies arrived from Orbost (Victoria), these beans being transported by road to Bombala and thence by rail. With increased quantities offering towards the close of the month the market was easier, although a few "specials" were still realising the maximum of 20/- per bushel.

Good peas sell well.

Generally there was a good inquiry for peas and best quality green lines sold at the "ceiling" rate of 21/- per bushel throughout the month. The hot, dry weather caused a good deal of bleaching in some areas. Values were adversely affected, nevertheless little difficulty was experienced in effecting disposals at fairly satisfactory prices, only a small percentage of supplies having to be cleared at low rates.

Good demand for choice tomatoes.

Demand for tomatoes was only moderate early in the month but subsequently with a substantial reduction in supplies from local sources, request brightened and the ceiling rate of 12/- per half-case was more freely obtained for choice, coloured descriptions. The receipt of increased quantities from inland districts and some small consignments from Queensland prior to the close of February had a steadying effect on the market, but choice lines were still able to command the ceiling price. General quality of the Queensland supplies was only moderate to poor. Some fairly large orders were placed with local growers during the period for green packs for Army requirements.

Cabbages scarce.

Choice large cabbages were lightly supplied and higher rates ruled. The bulk of supplies comprised medium-sized heads and moth infestation was noticeable in many lots but little difficulty was experienced in effecting disposals.

/Cauliflowers....

Cauliflowers reach the market.

A few small consignments of cauliflowers were received from the Bathurst district and very satisfactory prices were obtained.

Lettuce scarcer and dearer.

There was a considerable decline in supplies of lettuce and with a good inquiry ruling values improved appreciably.

Other vegetables.

Loose carrots were in improved supply but a good deal of breakdown was apparent in a number of lines. The maximum of 25/- per cwt. was paid for best lots but lower grades were sold at varying prices. Bunched lines were more plentiful and sold well. Parsnips, both loose and bunched, were in short supply.

R.M.

PRODUCTION OF BARLEY.

A target of 250,000 bushels of barley was set for this State for the harvest just concluded. Until official statistics of the crop are collected the actual result cannot be recorded definitely, but it is known that close to 200,000 bushels of malting quality were purchased. To achieve the total target it would only be necessary for 50,000 bushels of feed barley to have been harvested. As it would be more reasonable, on the basis of malting barley production, to assume a crop of 100,000 to 150,000 bushels of feed barley, it may be taken that the target was exceeded by a comfortable margin.

Although the target for the coming season, 500,000 bushels, represents a considerable increase in sowings for grain, prospects of its achievement are not discouraging. The season will be the second full year since 1938/39 in which New South Wales growers have been outside the control of the Barley Board, and there are already signs that the prospect of good prices is inducing farmers to plant increased acreages.

WHOLESALE PRICES OF VARIOUS COMMODITIES
IN SYDNEY (N.S.W.) DURING FEBRUARY, 1944,
AND CORRESPONDING FIGURES AT 31st AUGUST, 1939.

The following table gives particulars of the range of prices in Sydney, as collected and recorded by the Division of Marketing and Agricultural Economics in respect of various commodities for the period indicated:-

<u>Commodity</u>	<u>February, 1944.</u>		<u>31st August, 1939.</u>	
	From	To	From	To
Wheat: Home Consumption -				
Bulk - per bushel	3/11½d (unchanged)		2/4d	
Flour - per ton	£10.4.2 (plus £2.8.10 tax)	"	£6.12.3 (plus £6.2.9 tax)	
Bran " "	£6.0.0 (unchanged)		£4.5.0	
Pollard " "	£6.0.0	"	£4.5.0	
Eggs - per dozen	2/-	"	1/-	
Butter (choice) per cwt.	169/4	"	161/2	
Cheese:				
Loaf - per lb.	1/0½	"	11d	
Large " "	1/-		10½d	
Special brands per lb.	1/1	1/3½	1/2	

	<u>February, 1944.</u>		<u>29th August, 1939.</u>	
	From	To	From	To
Pigs (Abattoir Sales):				
Good to prime per head:				
Porkers:				
Extra light	16/-	25/-	31/6	40/6
Light	25/-	53/6	39/6	44/6
Medium weight	30/-	73/6	43/6	57/6
Heavy	52/6	74/6	50/6	54/6
Baconers	£3.14.6	£7.5.6	60/6	75/6
Backfatters	£5.12.6	£16.9.6	£4.5.0	£8.10.0

Note: The pig sales nearest 31st August, 1939, were those held on 29th August, 1939.

RETURN OF FRUIT AND VEGETABLES IMPORTED INTO NEW SOUTH WALES
BY LAND AND SEA - JANUARY, 1944.

F R U I T

STATE	Pineapples tropical cases	Bananas tropical cases	Other Fruit cases	Tomatoes half-bushel cases	Melons crates	TOTALS pkges.
Queensland	17,339	1,898	7,684	894	74	27,889
Victoria	2	5	64,514	844	-	68,965
Tasmania	-	-	137	-	-	137
Sth. Aust.	-	-	3,366	-	-	3,366
West Aust.	-	-	-	-	-	-
TOTALS	17,341	1,903	75,701	1,738	74	100,357

V E G E T A B L E S .

STATE	Potatoes bags	Onions bags	Swedes bags	Pumpkins bags	Cucs. & Chillies cases	Other Vegs. pkges.	TOTALS pkges.
Queensland	83	1,921	-	49,955	239	1,620	53,818
Victoria	26,208	4,586	-	-	-	206	31,000
Tasmania	49,432	-	363	-	-	-	49,795
Sth. Aust.	1,159	1,087	-	-	-	1,820	4,066
West Aust.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
TOTALS	76,882	7,594	363	49,955	239	3,646	138,679

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WHEAT

MOVEMENTS IN WORLD SITUATION

COMBINED STOCKS IN FOUR MAIN WHEAT EXPORTING 1942-43 COUNTRIES

(See Article in Monthly Marketing Review - Feb. 1944)

 CANADA
 U.S.A.
 ARGENTINE
 AUSTRALIA

MILLION BUSHELS

3,000

2,400

1,800

1,200

600

500

400

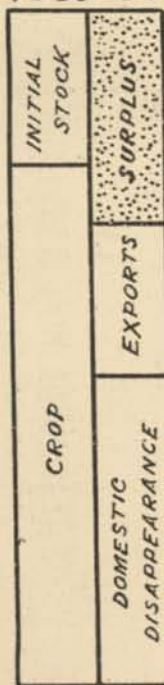
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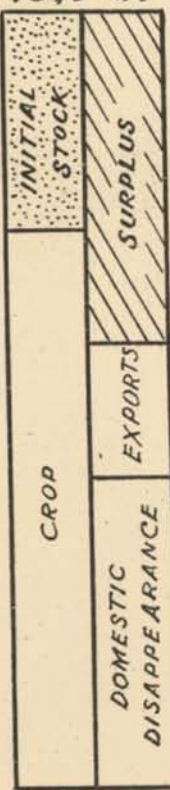
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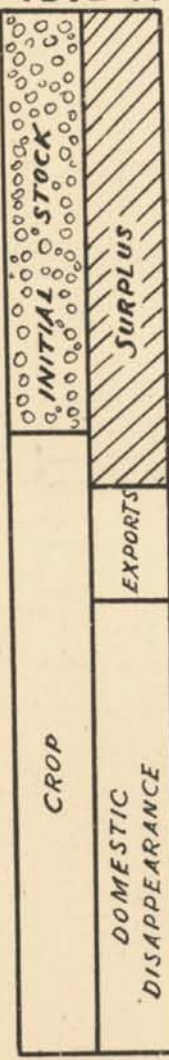
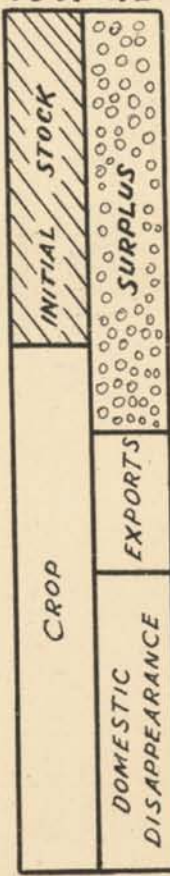
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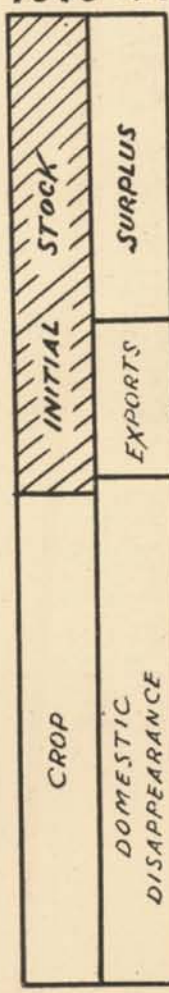
1940-41



1941-42



1943-44 (speculative)



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