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Review of Marketing and Agricultural Economics

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DIVISION OF MARKETING
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REVIEW OF MARKETING AND AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS.

Issued by authority of the Minister for Agriculture
(HON. E.H. GRAHAM, M.L.A.)
and prepared under the direction of the Chief of the
Division of Marketing and Agricultural Economics,
Department of Agriculture, New South Wales, Australia.

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POST-WAR POTATO PRODUCTION.

Under the impetus of war needs production of potatoes in Australia has increased from 98,000 acres in 1938-39 to 182,000 acres in 1943-44. The response of growers to the appeal to grow more potatoes has been magnificent, and it has been satisfying to them to know that the price situation has offered a reasonable measure of stability, which was not the case in the pre-war period. A high price in one season followed by a slump in the next does not make for stability, and growers are now exercising their minds as to the best way of ensuring a satisfactory set-up for the industry in the post-war period.

With limited possibilities for export, it is apparent that potato production will have to be reduced when the present stimulus to meet Service and civilian needs recedes. Some form of control or stabilisation will be essential, and in consideration of this it has to be remembered that the price factor is the feature uppermost in the minds of growers. It is important that production shall be in accordance with requirements and that marketing shall be on a properly organised basis. If a plan can be developed to meet both these objectives, there should then be some assurance that the price factor will, in the scheme of things, prove satisfactory to the producer.

Various plans involving Commonwealth control, State control and Producer control have been developed in recent months and discussions may be expected to continue for yet some time ahead. But in the development of any scheme to cover the post-war period, including the period of transition from war to peace, it is important in the first place to hear the voice of the producers on the subject. Much good could result from discussions sponsored by Potato Growers' Associations to ascertain the feeling of producers as to the best means of achieving the desired result - and then to represent those views to the "Powers that be".

H. J. Hynes

Chief of Division.