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Numbers of porkers available were irregular, although this class was well represented at the opening and final sale. All grades of weight and quality were submitted from very small store pigs to good trade heavy porkers.

Request continued to be very keen and, although values fluctuated, many sales were effected at rates equivalent to 1/3d per lb. The highest equivalent for heavy porkers, however, was 10½d.

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

FRUIT AND VEGETABLE SALES AT CITY MUNICIPAL MARKETS, SYDNEY.

Apples sell freely.

There was a very good demand for apples and values of choice, colored, dessert fruit were maintained at high levels. Supplies from within New South Wales were light, the market being dependent mainly on consignments from Victoria, South Australia and Tasmania. Jonathans found a ready sale, while the relatively small quantities of Delicious available were cleared quickly, both varieties realising up to 27/- per bushel, although the Tasmanian Jonathans were slightly lower, the top rate being 25/-. Granny Smiths were lightly stocked and large fruit realised the ceiling rate.

Towards the close of the month a fairly wide range of Tasmanian varieties was on offer, Jonathan, Cox's Orange and Ribston Pippin, Duke of Clarence, Delicious, Alexander, Alfriston and Worcester Pearmain being on offer. Apart from the Delicious and Jonathans, rates ranged from 11/- to 20/-, according to variety.

During March of last year the maximum rate for Jonathan, Delicious and Granny Smith was fixed at 18/- and other varieties at 15/-, but this season no adjustment of the ceiling rate of 27/- has been made.

Pears well supplied.

Large quantities of Williams pears were received from Victoria but supplies from local sources were only moderate. Demand was good until towards the close of the month when increased consignments of Packham's Triumph were forward, including a shipment from Tasmania. Some packs of Williams reached maturity quickly and these lines, as well as very small fruit, had to be cleared at well below the levels requested for choice green packs of the best sizes. Request for Packham's was satisfactory at rates ranging from 16/- to 20/- per bushel. Small quantities of Beurre Bosc and a few other varieties were obtainable.

Valencia orange harvest practically finished.

The marketing of Valencia oranges was practically completed. The limited supplies available at the close of the month were keenly sought and little difficulty was experienced in disposing of even small fruit. Small consignments of Navel oranges were received from Queensland towards the close of March and the maximum of 23/- per bushel was readily paid.

Lemon supplies increase.

There was a keen inquiry for the light stocks of Coastal lemons during the first three weeks of the month. The receipt of consignments of well-colored and good quality fruit from Queensland subsequently brought about a slackening in request as the bulk of local offerings was green. Colored packs were still selling at ceiling levels but the market for green lines had an easier trend at closing, especially for small fruit.

Good inquiry for bananas.

The market for bananas was firm. Only very light supplies of "eights" and "nines" were available and little difficulty was experienced in disposing of smaller sizes of good quality fruit at the ceiling level of 5³/₄d per lb.

Pineapples sell freely.

Bi-weekly consignments of pineapples ranged from 5,400 to about 8,500 cases. Request generally was active and most sales were made at the ceiling price of 21/3d per case, only faulty and lightweight packs being sold at lower prices.

Stone fruit season practically finished.

Supplies of stone fruits declined appreciably and towards the close of the month only small quantities of plums and peaches were obtainable. The peaches from the Murrumbidgee Irrigation Area were canning varieties and the greater proportion was affected by dust; values were affected accordingly. The fruit also lacked keeping quality and this constituted a further factor affecting prices. The small consignments of dessert peaches received from inland districts early in the month met a ready sale, choice fruit selling at the maximum of 10d per lb. Some Victorian dessert fruit realised to 35/- per bushel. Rates for plums were variable but good quality lines sold at around 12/- per half-case, although higher prices were obtained at times.

Grapes in steady request.

Supplies of Muscatel grapes were mainly from inland

districts. Choice "blacks" sold to 25/- per half-case and an occasional special line was higher but the range of prices for other quality packs covered a wide range.

Consignments from the Murrumbidgee Irrigation Area comprised Cornichons, Doradilla and Waltham Cross. All varieties met a satisfactory inquiry and values generally were fairly steady, Cornichons selling to 12/- and at times to 14/- per half-case.

Demand for water melons restricted.

Large quantities of water melons were forward but demand was slow and well below the ceiling level of 11/8d per cwt. had to be accepted; rates generally ranged to 7/- per cwt.

Cantaloupe market irregular.

The market for cantaloupes fluctuated considerably; on some days 12/- per crate was the top rate while on others as much as 24/- was realised.

Passionfruit scarce.

Only small quantities of passionfruit were forward and high prices were obtained, a few choice packs selling to 60/- per half-case.

Peas plentiful.

Consignments of peas generally were heavy; on most days over 2,000 bags were received and on a few occasions the quantity on offer exceeded 3,000 bags. Demand for trade requirements generally was reasonably satisfactory for good to choice lines but agents found difficulty in disposing of lower grades and the assistance of canners had to be sought to enable clearances to be effected. Purchases of canning lots were made at 5/- to 6/- per bushel. Rates for better quality offerings fluctuated a good deal, top prices ranging from 12/- on some days to 20/- per bushel on others. On Thursday, 29th March, 3,650 bags were forward, but despite this large quantity very few lots were carried over, due in a large measure to increased purchases to cover retailers' requirements during the Easter holiday period of four days, and sales to canners.

Supplies of beans reach glut proportions.

Supplies of beans were more than sufficient to meet trade needs and as many as 2,000 bags were on offer at times. There were occasions, however, when the quantities were relatively light. Request was mainly for choice descriptions, lower grade lines being difficult to sell. During the periods of plentiful supplies large quantities of these lower grade beans could not be sold and the

Department of Food Supply cleared surplus stocks.

Prices for choice offerings showed some considerable variation; during the glut periods it was difficult to obtain above 4/- per bushel, while up to 14/- was paid when supplies were light. The market at closing was very weak owing to the large quantities coming forward.

Tomatoes in heavy supply - rates ease.

Considerable quantities of tomatoes were received from both local and interstate sources. Values were fairly well maintained until about the third week of the month when request showed a falling off; as a result, stocks commenced to accumulate and rates eased appreciably. Agents had to dispose of many lines that reached a ripe stage to factories at 2/- per half-case, while fairly low rates had to be accepted for other lines. Even the best locals had to be sold at around 8/- per half-case prior to the Easter holidays. There was a fairly large carry-over at the close of business on Thursday, 29th March.

Heavier supplies of cauliflowers.

Consignments of cauliflowers from inland growing areas showed a considerable increase towards the close of March and there was a consequent decline in price levels. During the early part of the month up to 40/- per dozen was obtained for selected large "heads" but at the close top rates were 20/- to 24/- per dozen.

Cabbage market weakens.

Supplies of cabbages were relatively light early in the month and satisfactory prices were realised for choice large "heads" but lower grades were often difficult to clear. Receipts were heavier subsequently and, with the plentiful supplies of other green vegetables available, values generally were lower.

(R. D. Meaker).