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GENERAL NOTES AND NEWS.

Adverse weather over a long period is expected to result in a below-average maize yield in this State. Substantial areas which were originally intended for grain were cut for stock feed and on present indications production is not expected to exceed 2,755,000 bushels compared with a ten-year average total yield of well over 3 million bushels.

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Test weighings of apples, which have been conducted with a view to establishing the average net contents of cases, have revealed that all sizes of Tasmanian Jonathan apples from 2½" to 3" weighed were less than the accepted average of 40 lb. (net.) to the case. Three-inch Jonathans showed the lightest weight per case, viz., 35.47 lb.

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Rains were received over a large section of the State early in April and further light falls occurred early in May. This moisture will enable wheat seeding to proceed in the districts which were favoured and will also assist the growth of winter pastures. Unfortunately, the areas mostly affected by drought did not benefit to any marked extent and these are experiencing one of the worst seasons for many years.

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The Minister for Agriculture has decided to take steps to introduce a docket system in the agents' section of the Sydney Municipal Fruit and Vegetable Markets, and it is proposed that this shall be implemented by gazettal of the necessary Regulation under the Farm Produce Agents' Act.

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The City Council, as a result of representations which were made for an increased number of street barrow stands in the City of Sydney has decided to re-establish several temporary stands, the licenses for which had previously been cancelled. The question of allotting further sites is under consideration. The Local Government Association has been contacted on the question of fruit and vegetable stands in suburban areas being licensed by local Municipal Councils.

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The Egg Marketing Board advises that it proposes establishing consignment accounts with the Commonwealth Bank in Newcastle, Junee and Young, and it is expected that the majority of producers consigning to those country towns in the near future will then be enabled to have their cheques paid free of exchange.

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The main (or inland) potato crop in New South Wales this season has been officially forecast at 75,000 tons but according to estimates which have been made approximately only 34,000 tons will comprise No.1 Grade tubers.

Harvesting is expected to commence on the Government's rice project at Wakool about the middle of May. The grain this year has matured unevenly and is not expected to yield any more than 6,000 tons from the 4,800 acres planted. For the 1945-46 crop the original 4,100-acre plot will again be planted.

Revised figures of meat production for 1944, just issued by the Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics, give the following totals for New South Wales. The figures in brackets are the production targets which had been set:-

Beef and Veal	..	139,687 tons	(170,000 tons)
Mutton and Lamb	..	150,182 "	(160,000 "
Pigmeats	..	30,284 "	( 31,000 " )

Wheat sowings show prospects of a good increase on last year's figures. At the present time it is thought that total sowings may be from 25 to 30 per cent. above the 1944-45 figure of about 3 million acres. Up to the end of April, 1945, the Wheat Stabilisation Committee had issued licences for 4,732 m. acres in this State, compared with a figure of 4,050 m. acres at the same date last year.

A production target of 2,400 acres of broom millet has been set for this State for 1945-46.

Egg production is being well maintained. Receipts by the N.S.W. Egg Board for the 42 weeks ended 21st April, 1945, totalled 41,759 m. dozen, as compared with 36,743 m. dozen for the corresponding period of 1943-44. There is a good prospect of the production target of 48 m. dozen for the current year being achieved.

The 1945 dried vine fruit pack from this State has been very disappointing. Drought, wind and dust during the growing period caused heavy damage, which the vines did not fully make good. The total yield is thought to have been about 6,000 tons, which is less than two-thirds of the average pack for the three preceding years. The yield of dried tree fruits this year has also been extremely disappointing.