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## FRUIT AND VEGETABLE SALES AT CITY MUNICIPAL MARKETS.

November, 1947.

### FRUIT.

#### Prices for Apples Remain High.

Supplies of apples from N.S.W. districts and from interstate sources were very light and rates generally were even firmer than those recorded the previous month. Representative quotations were as follows:—*New South Wales*: Delicious 20s. to 46s.; Democrat 20s. to 30s., few 32s. to 34s.; Yates 20s. to 38s., few 40s.; Rome Beauty 18s. to 34s.; Granny Smith 20s. to 38s., special 40s. to 44s.; *Tasmanian*: Democrat 16s. to 26s.; Granny Smith 30s.; *Western Australian*: Democrat 20s. to 28s.; Granny Smith 32s. to 36s.; *Victorian*: Delicious 24s. to 32s.; Yates 15s. to 32s., special to 36s.; Jonathan, Democrat and Statesman 20s. to 28s.; Munro Favourite 23s. to 26s.; Rokewood 22s. to 26s.; Dunn's Seedling 20s. to 26s.; Granny Smith 30s. to 40s. per bushel case. A considerable percentage of offerings was disposed of at reduced prices as a result of bruised, inferior, and generally unattractive condition on arrival.

#### Gradual Increase in Rates for Pears.

Only small quantities of pears came to hand from N.S.W. growing areas and trading was confined principally to stocks from Victoria. Weekly receipts from that State declined throughout the month and prices rose accordingly, being highest at closing. The quality of offerings showed a general improvement, but many skin-blemished and fully-ripe packs were cleared at prices well below top market values. Representative quotations were as follow:—*New South Wales*: Packham's Triumph 8s. to 18s., selected counts 20s. to 25s., few higher; Winter Cole 8s. to 20s.; *Victorian*: Packham's Triumph and Winter Cole 8s. to 22s., late sales to 25s.; Josephine 8s. to 22s., late sales to 24s.; Winter Nelis 8s. to 18s., late sales to 22s. per bushel case.

#### New Season Peaches Arrive.

Peaches became available in appreciable quantities after the middle of the second week. A wide range of size and quality was evident and rates showed a corresponding variation. A few choice packs brought 30s. to 35s. per half-case early, but values receded

gradually and at closing, choice large fruit was quoted at 16s. to 20s., with special brands to 24s. Medium grades were bringing mainly from 8s. to 15s., but some very small green fruit was practically unsaleable even at lower prices.

#### **Apricots Slightly Cheaper.**

Increased supplies of new season apricots came to hand during November, but many lines were rain damaged and sound large fruit represented only a small proportion of the total offering. Prices covered a wide range according to condition of maturity and size. Half-bushel cases were quoted at from 12s. to 24s. with special to 30s. and occasionally higher. However, at closing few realisations exceeded 20s. Early in the month quarter-bushel cases brought principally from 6s. to 16s., but a few packs of special large fruit realised to 20s. At closing most supplies were being marketed in half-bushels.

#### **First New Season Plums Available.**

The first new season plums reached the market early in the month and by the third week fairly regular supplies were coming forward. Choice large fruit was comparatively scarce and brought from 18s. to 22s. and occasionally higher per half-bushel case. Most sales, however, took place within the range of 6s. to 16s. Small green lots were difficult to clear.

#### **Receivals of Cherries Increase.**

Consignments of cherries from the Lakesland region were larger in the first two weeks of the period and these were supplemented by gradually increasing supplies from the Young and Orange districts from the beginning of the second week. Early quotations ranged mainly from 14s. to 20s. per quarter case, with occasional special Lakesland packs to 24s., but, in the last few days of the month, offerings were heavy and closing values varied principally from 8s. to 14s., with only a few specials higher.

#### **Bananas Considerably Cheaper.**

Increased stocks of bananas were forward from northern districts of N.S.W., in addition to 8,578 cases from Queensland. Prices dropped gradually and by the last week of November had reached the following levels:—*New South Wales*: Cavendish 8"-9" 30s. to 38s., sevens 20s. to 30s., sixes 16s. to 24s., few 26s., small and ripe from 10s.; Lady Finger 20s. to 40s.; *Queensland*: Cavendish eights 32s. to 38s., sevens 26s. to 32s., sixes 18s. to 25s. per banana case.

Officers of the Export and Import Branch of this Department report that despite repeated warnings a considerable number of growers continue to forward fruit to market wrongly described as to grade. Many lines had to be degraded and offenders in this direction are to be prosecuted.

**Quotations for Valencia Oranges Fairly Stable.**

Daily receivals of Valencia oranges, principally from Coastal districts, were fairly regular and prices showed little fluctuation. Most transactions took place within the range of 7s. to 14s. per bushel case, with special packs of large fruit to 16s. and occasionally 18s. However, early in the period, small-sized fruit was over-supplied and many sales were made at from 4s. to 6s. in order to clear.

**Lemons Heavily Supplied.**

Stocks of lemons continued to be well in excess of the limited requirements of retailers and factory buyers operated on a small scale only. Although on some selling days when supplies were temporarily light as much as 10s. per bushel case was obtained, most quotations ranged from 2s. to 5s., with choice single-case lots to 6s. per bushel. Considerable wastage occurred in lines carried over on agents' floors.

**Passionfruit Scarce and Dear.**

Supplies of passionfruit continued to be light and realisations throughout the greater part of the month remained at the high levels recorded at the close of the previous period, best packs bringing 36s. and, occasionally, to 40s. per half-case. A sharp advance occurred, however, towards closing, when quotations ranged according to quality from 25s. to 48s. Small quantities were received from Queensland and these brought from 26s. to 38s. per half-case, but many inferior lines were unsaleable even at considerably lower prices.

**Papaws More Plentiful.**

Increased consignments of papaws, totalling approximately 14,000 tropical cases, came to hand from Queensland. Many lines were affected by skin blemish and internal break-down and a large proportion of sales took place at from 5s. to 10s. per tropical case. Choice packs, however, brought principally from 12s. to 14s., with special to 16s. Around the middle of the month a temporary scarcity occurred and as much as 20s. was obtained in a few instances.

**Pineapples Dearer Towards Closing.**

Total receipts of pineapples from Queensland were heavier, amounting to 31,590 tropical cases. In the first half of the month realisations varied principally from 10s. to 24s. according to size and quality. Subsequently, however, daily offerings were lighter and rates advanced to range mainly from 18s. to 34s., with special to 36s., per tropical case. However, in the last few days few realisations exceeded 30s.

**Wide Range of Quality in Queensland Rock Melons.**

Approximately 5,600 cases of Rock Melons (mainly bushel cases) were received from Queensland. A wide range in size and quality was apparent and quotations varied accordingly, most sales taking place within the range of 8s. to 16s. per bushel case, with special to 20s. and occasionally higher. However, many small green and inferior packs were practically unsaleable even when offered from as low as 2s. A weaker tendency was noticeable at closing when sellers experienced difficulty in obtaining more than 14s. for best lots.

**Other Fruits.**

Representative ranges of prices for other lines of fruit on offer were as follow:—Grapefruit (N.S.W.) 10s. to 18s., special to 22s., inferior lower; (Victorian) 18s. to 20s. per bushel case. Strawberries (Local) 18s. to 30s., special 36s. to 42s., few higher, inferior lower; Mulberries 4s. to 6s., few to 8s., per dozen punnets. Gooseberries (N.S.W.) 8s. to 14s. per quarter case; (South Australian) 20s. to 26s. per half-case. Mangoes (Queensland) common 4s. to 7s., early sales higher, fancy 14s. to 16s., few 18s., early sales higher, per half-case. Water Melons (Queensland) 7s. to 8s., early sales to 15s. per bushel case; 12s. to 16s., early sales to 25s., per crate.

**VEGETABLES.****Peas More Plentiful and Generally Cheaper.**

Offerings of peas during the month were larger, the 53,000 bags from N.S.W. growing areas being augmented by approximately 5,300 from Victoria. Early in the period prices were fairly high and as much as 20s. per bushel was obtained on some selling days. However, towards closing receipts from day to day were well in excess of requirements and rates declined, seldom exceeding 12s. for best lines in the last week of the month. Considerable quantities were purchased by "quick-freeze" processors and a large

proportion of the sales took place within the range of 7s. to 10s. with some rain-damaged lots from 5s. Peas from the Murrumbidgee Irrigation Area were mainly of medium quality only and brought principally from 5s. to 10s., with sales early in the month to 16s. Victorian consignments realised principally from 7s. to 12s., although as much as 16s. was obtained early.

#### **Lighter Supplies of Beans.**

Total receipts of beans were smaller, the 19,000 bags consigned from N.S.W. growing areas being supplemented by only 44 cases and 720 sugar bags from Queensland, although supplies forwarded from near-metropolitan districts were larger than previously. In the first week of the month a temporary scarcity caused prices to advance to as high as 24s. per bushel for best lines, but, subsequently, the plentiful stocks of peas on offer caused a decline in demand for beans and sellers were obliged to reduce prices. Most realisations ranged from 7s. to 16s. for medium to choice lines, although on some selling days few sales exceeded 12s. Many dry, seedy and inferior lots were cheaper.

#### **Prices for Tomatoes Fairly High.**

Supplies of tomatoes were lighter during the month. A gradual falling-off was apparent in consignments from local glasshouse growers and from northern coastal districts, the latter totalling only slightly more than 100,000 half-cases. In addition receipts from Queensland were smaller, amounting to only 23,000 half-cases. Smaller quantities were purchased for transfer to the Melbourne Market but demand for local requirements and from the Country Order Trade was sufficient to enable prices to be fairly well maintained. Opening quotations for glasshouse ranged from 6s. to 18s. according to size and quality and advanced gradually until 21st November, when best packs brought 30s. Subsequently, however, increasing supplies of field tomatoes came forward from near-metropolitan growers and by the end of the month values had receded to approximately 24s. for choice ripe and 20s. for semi-coloured. Realisations for stocks of coloured from northern coastal districts showed corresponding variations. Mature green lots from this area sold well at most times at from 12s. to 16s., with special 18s. to 20s. and occasionally to 22s., per half-case. Some fluctuations occurred from day to day. A percentage of inferior green packs was disposed of at lower prices. The Queensland supplies were of medium to good quality only and brought from 6s. to 12s. with best lots to 16s.

**Values for Cabbages Fluctuate.**

Request for cabbages was good throughout the first half of the month and values mainly ranged up to 12s. per dozen, while on some occasions 14s. was realised for choice large heads. The market, however, was weaker during the latter half; only on a few days did prices approximate those of the early period and the range generally was from 3s. to 8s. per dozen. At closing a brighter tone prevailed and prices were firm at up to 12s.

**Lettuce Plentiful and Cheap.**

Large quantities of lettuce were marketed, the supply on a number of days being more than sufficient to meet trade requirements. Generally, prices were low, ranging from 1s. to 5s. per case, although as much as 10s. was realised on a few days.

**Other Main Vegetable Lines.**

Closing quotations were as follow:—Carrots 5s. to 14s.; parsnips 5s. to 16s., few 18s.; swedes 4s. to 10s., good 12s. to 14s., few special higher; potatoes (No. 1 grade) 10s. (fixed maximum price); onions (Qld.) white 16s. to 20s., brown 16s. to 18s., few 20s., (N.S.W.) white 10s. to 16s.; sweet potatoes 20s. to 36s.; pumpkins (Qld.) 10s. to 18s. per cwt.

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