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SALES OF LIVESTOCK AT HOMEBUSH, SYDNEY**August, 1946.****SHEEP.****Supplies Lighter.**

The overall supplies of sheep and lambs were smaller than in July, totalling 295,518 head, which represented a decline of about 22,000 head on the previous month's yarding. Although considerably fewer sheep were available, the penning of lambs were much larger, suckers comprising a good proportion of the increased offerings.

Prime Heavy Grades Scarce.

The number of grown sheep submitted showed a decline of 42,000 head on last month's total supplies, amounting to 141,423 head. For the most part, fair to medium trade descriptions were numerous, many lines offered showing the effects of the dry conditions being experienced over a large proportion of the State. Moderate supplies of good light trade sheep were available, but although prime heavy grades were relatively scarce, on occasions some particularly good quality drafts were submitted. Increased supplies of shorn sheep were included.

Strong Demand Evident.

Although values of wethers and ewes showed some variation, average realisations for good to prime descriptions were higher, but due to the large numbers of plain to medium grades available, a downward trend in prices for this class of mutton was evident. The market for good to prime sheep remained fairly steady during the first half of the month, but later prices advanced, and at closing were about 1s. to 3s. higher than at opening sales. The high rates ruling for skins in July were not maintained and values showed a downward trend.

Good quality heavy wether mutton made to 6¾d. per lb, but chiefly realised 5¼d. to 6½d. Light wethers on occasions sold at 7d. per lb. but, for the most part, were worth from 5½d. to 6¾d. The cost of ewe mutton mostly ranged from 4d. to 5d. for heavy, some lines at 5¼d. per lb., with light selling to 5½d., but mostly being obtained at 4½d. to 5¼d. per lb.

Some exceptionally good quality crossbred wethers sold at 55s. per head, and prime full woolled merino ewes 45s. Many lines of good-quality wethers changed hands at prices exceeding 40s., with good trade and weighty ewes in many places making from 35s. to 40s. each.

More Suckers Available.

Suckers were more in evidence than in the previous month, but supplies of summer lambs were lighter. The offering of 154,095 head for the period was about 20,000 more than were penned in July, but the aggregate weight of lambs was by no means heavy, due to the prevalence of plain to medium light-weight descriptions throughout the yardings. Some exceptionally good quality heavy lambs were available from centres where pastoral conditions were favourable, while some very nice quality drafts of light and heavy suckers were also offered.

Prime Grades in Keen Demand.

Good quality lambs and suckers met with a very keen demand and for the greater part of the month a firm to very firm market ruled, although at times a slight variation in realisations was evident. Average prices at closing, however, were higher than at the earlier sales, particularly for good heavy grades. Plain to medium descriptions were a little easier owing to large numbers of this class being on offer.

The cost of good heavy descriptions was about $\frac{1}{4}$ d. to $\frac{3}{4}$ d. per lb. higher than in July, mostly being from $8\frac{1}{2}$ d. to $10\frac{1}{4}$ d. per lb., but at times reaching from $10\frac{1}{2}$ d. to $10\frac{3}{4}$ d. Good light lambs and suckers were worth from $9\frac{1}{2}$ d. to $10\frac{1}{2}$ d. per lb., with prime lots selling at $10\frac{3}{4}$ d. to $11\frac{1}{4}$ d. per lb.

Good heavy grades sold to 52s. per head, while many lines submitted realised from 45s. to 50s. each. Good light trade lambs and suckers made from 25s. to 36s. per head with other descriptions at relatively lower levels.

CATTLE.**Substantial Supplies Available.**

Large numbers of cattle continued to be received during most of August, 21,318 head being penned, of which 3,694 were auctioned in the store section. However, the offering of 1,483 head on 5th August was the smallest normal yarding since last December.

Quality showed considerable variation. Generally, the standard was fair to good trade, although most of the lightweight animals showed the effects of the dry conditions being experienced. Grown stock made a slightly better showing than during the previous month. Prime cattle of all classes was rather scarce.

Good Demand for Bullocks.

Bullocks were moderately supplied and comprised chiefly light and medium weight lines of fair to good trade standard, with a sprinkling of prime animals.

Rates for heavy bullocks were maintained for the greater part of the month, with plainer descriptions showing an improvement to 50s. during the first half. However, values of plainer types declined early in the last half of August, followed by a reduction in the price of good quality stock, and rates at the close of the month were 48s. to 53s. per 100 lb.

Values of light and medium weight bullocks were slightly higher at 50s. to 56s. at the beginning of August. Good quality lightweights sold at from 52s. to 57s. during the second week, but all grades subsequently weakened, rates at the close of the month being 48s. to 53s. per 100 lb.

Steers Well Supplied.

Supplies of steers were well maintained, all grades of weight and quality being included. Light and medium weight drafts of only fair trade standard provided a substantial proportion of the yarding, with prime and weighty stock fairly scarce.

Rates for good quality steers showed a small increase to 60s. at the beginning of the month. Plainer types showed some improvement to 52s. during the second week, but then weakened to 50s. until the last week, when all grades showed a decline in values, rates being 48s. to 57s. per 100 lb.

Moderate Supplies of Cows.

Cows were only moderately supplied, and consisted mainly of light and medium weight descriptions of fair to good trade standard. There was a small showing of heavy and prime animals at times.

Values of good quality heavy cows showed an increase to 48s. at the beginning of the month, but weakened to 46s. during the second week and again to 43s. in the last week. Plainer descriptions were firm at 40s. for the greater part of the month, but declined to 38s. at the close.

Rates for light cows showed a considerable variation, firming from 40s. to 46s. at the beginning of the month to 45s. to 53s. in the middle of August. However, values subsequently declined and prices at closing were 38s. to 45s. per 100 lb.

Heifers in Light Supply.

Heifers were in fairly light supply, and comprised chiefly light and medium weight descriptions of fair to good trade standard, with a scarcity of prime lots.

Values of good quality stock were dearer at 57s. at the beginning of the month, firming to 58s. during the second week, but declining to 55s. at the end of August. Plainer lines were dearer at 50s. in the second week, but weakened to 49s. and subsequently to 47s. at the close of the month.

Good Vealers in Demand.

Vealers were fairly well represented, most grades of weight and quality being available. The standard generally was fair to good trade, with light and medium weight lots predominating.

Good quality animals were in very strong demand, rates being firm at 70s. for the greater part of the month, although declining to 67s. during the last week.

Rates for plainer descriptions were variable, rising to 60s. during the second week, but subsequently weakening to 55s., then to 52s. at the end of the August.

PIGS.**Smaller Numbers Yarded.**

The number of pigs available declined substantially when compared with the previous month's offering, but there was a marked improvement in supplies at the closing auctions. Over the period a total of 7,062 head was penned, of which 3,974 head were received by rail. This represented a decline of 1,792 on last month's total.

Light Bacon Dearer.

A strong demand generally was evident for all grades of bacon pigs and rates for most classes advanced, the greatest improvement being shown in values of light to medium weight descriptions. On occasions, however, request for the overfat heavy to extra heavy sorts was not so good and realisations were lower. Baconers for the most part were well supplied and comprised a good proportion of the yardings. The quality of the pigs submitted ranged from very fair to good, many good trade lots being included with the heavy to extra heavy types being particularly well represented. Early in the period light weight baconers were worth $9\frac{3}{4}$ d. per lb, but the improved demand which prevailed resulted in the cost advancing to $10\frac{1}{2}$ d. per lb. at the final sales. Medium to heavy grades made to $10\frac{1}{4}$ d. and $9\frac{3}{4}$ d. per lb. respectively, while extra heavy sold to $9\frac{1}{2}$ d. per lb. Prices in excess of £7 per head were frequently obtained, with some lots reaching £7 18s. 6d. per head.

Improved Demand for Backfatters.

Although backfatters made an improved showing early, supplies subsequently were only moderate, and a much stronger demand prevailed. Light to medium weights were well in evidence, but with the exception of the first sale held, when good heavy descriptions were numerous, the heavy class of backfatter was fairly scarce. A firm market ruled during the first half of the month, but later sales were marked by a much keener request and prices advanced, the market closing strong. Good quality lightweights made to $7\frac{1}{2}$ d. per lb. and heavy $7\frac{1}{2}$ d., representing an increase of from $\frac{1}{2}$ d. to $\frac{3}{4}$ d. per lb. on the best rates obtaining during July. The highest price paid for prime heavy pigs was £15 3s. 6d., with other grades relatively lower.

Keen Inquiry for Stores.

A keen inquiry was evident on most occasions for suitable store pigs, but at times plain light sorts met with a restricted demand and were dull of sale. Good supplies of porkers and suitable store pigs generally were submitted but some lots were offered which were not suited for either the porker trade or store buyers. The announcement that the restriction on the slaughter and sale of pork for civilian requirements was to be lifted at an early date greatly stimulated the demand for all store pigs and prices advanced substantially. Pork was made available in retail butchers' shops as from Monday, 1st September, 1946, and maximum prices for the various retail cuts have been fixed at 1s. $3\frac{1}{2}$ d.

per lb. for legs, best loin 1s. 4½d., foreloins 1s. 1d., belly 11d., and other cuts 10d. The wholesale price, including the cost of delivery to retailer was also fixed at 9⅞d. per lb. for dressed carcasses.

At the opening sales, rates for porkers and stores advanced, but the following auctions values eased. Later, however, prices improved and the closing market was particularly strong, reaching to 14d. per lb. as compared with 13¼d. in July, while up to £4 17s. 6d. per head was paid for pigs dressing approximately 90 lb., which, it is understood, is the maximum weight of pigs that will be permitted to enter the retail trade for sale as pork. It is anticipated that with the lifting of restrictions on the sale of pork, fewer store pigs will be available to meet producers' requirements.

G. COLEMAN & D. MCGREGOR.

FRUIT AND VEGETABLE SALES AT CITY MUNICIPAL MARKETS.

FRUIT.

Apples Sell Well.

Demand for choice quality apples continued good throughout August. New South Wales Delicious were in lighter supply and towards the end of the month prices improved, up to 33s., and occasionally more being obtained for selected sizes and packs. Values of New South Wales Granny Smith's remained steady at 10s. to 20s. until the last week, when 21s. per bushel was realised for best sizes. Consignments of Delicious, Jonathan, Rome Beauty and Granny Smith's received from Victoria showed waste when held for a few days and low rates were accepted in some instances in order to effect quick clearances.

Shipments from Tasmania included Democrat, Sturmer, Crofton, Granny Smith and Cleopatra.

Granny Smiths received from Western Australia realised 9s. to 18s., occasionally 20s. per bushel. Small quantities of Jonathan and Rome Beauty from South Australia were on offer.

Demand for Pears Limited to Choice Quality.

There was a ready sale for choice quality New South Wales Packham's Triumph pears throughout August, 18s. to 22s. per bushel being maintained for best packs. Other grades sold from 12s. Packman's Triumphs and Josephines were received from Victoria weekly. The condition of the consignments varied considerably. Much of the fruit was of good quality, particularly that from the Harcourt district, but the keeping quality of some lines was poor, much waste occurring if held for a few days. Values ranged from 10s. to 18s., faulty lines being cheaper. A large percentage of the Tasmanian Winter Coles on offer opened up in an unsatisfactory condition and had to be disposed of at low rates.