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**SALES OF LIVESTOCK AT HOMEBUSH, SYDNEY.****April, 1947.****SHEEP.****Smaller Numbers Yarded**

The supplies of sheep and lambs showed a considerable decline, total yardings for the period amounting to 190,405 head, or approximately 41,000 less than the previous month's aggregate. Pennings for the corresponding month last year were 196,614 head. The falling off in the numbers available could be attributed to graziers holding stock for the coming wool clip, while the relief afforded by recent rains and the resultant benefit to pasture created a much stronger demand for suitable lines for restocking purposes.

**Prime Heavy Sheep Scarce.**

The offering of prime heavy wethers and ewes, for the most part, was relatively light, but on occasions some particularly fine quality drafts were submitted. Trade requirements, however, were well catered for as good useful trade descriptions comprised a substantial proportion of the 99,052 head auctioned. Medium quality sheep were also fairly well in evidence.

**Lower Rates for Mutton.**

Early in the period values were fairly well maintained, but the extreme rates of the previous month were not sustained. About mid-April, however, demand was not so strong and prices declined by 1s. per head. Later, a further fall occurred, and realisations at the closing auctions were from 3s. to 5s. below those prevailing at the opening sales. Although up to 9d. per lb. was paid for heavy wethers and 9¼d. for light during March, rates for the period reviewed only reached 8d. per lb. For the most part operators obtained good quality heavy wethers at from 5¾d. to 7¾d. and light grades at from 6d. to 7¾d. per lb. On occasions good heavy sorts realised 58s. per head, while sales at from 50s. to 55s. per head were also made. Mostly, however, good useful light to heavy trade descriptions were disposed of at from 32s. to 48s. per head. The shortage of good heavy wethers promoted a much better inquiry for the heavy class of ewes, and some drafts offered made 50s. per head, while quite a few lots cleared at from 40s. to 46s. each. Good quality trade ewes, however, mostly were secured at from 29s. to 38s. per head, with other grades at correspondingly lower levels. In common with wether mutton, the price paid for ewes declined appreciably, being from 1½d. to 2d. per lb. below the peak of the previous month, when up to 8¾d. was realised. At times good heavy and light sorts made to 6¾d. per lb., but rates chiefly ranged from 5d. to 6½d. per lb. for both heavy and light grades.

**Fewer Lambs Offered**

Although the number of lambs penned showed a reduction, the decline was not so marked as was the case with grown sheep. Supplies for the period amounted to 91,353 head, and, while good to prime heavy grades made a very satisfactory showing, being more in evidence than in recent months, prime light descriptions were scarce. Medium to good useful light trade lambs, also, were well represented, and comprised a fair proportion of the yardings.

**Lamb Prices Decline.**

The demand for lambs was not quite so strong and the high prices which ruled during March did not obtain. Values were fairly steady early in the period, but later a downward trend occurred, and at the closing auctions they were from 3s. to 5s. per head below those ruling at the opening sales. Although good heavy and light lambs were worth to 12½d. per lb. in the previous month, the best rates obtained during the period reviewed were 11½d. and 12¼d. per lb. for heavy and light grades, respectively. A fairly large proportion of the heavy grades sold made from 8¾d. to 11d. with light descriptions realising from 10d. to 12d. per lb., the cost of lamb at the end of the month being from ½d. to 1½d. per lb. below that ruling at the opening sales. Some of the best heavy lambs available made 59s. per head, with several attractive drafts selling a from 50s. to 57s. each. Generally good quality light to heavy grades were disposed of at prices ranging from 34s. to 48s. per head.

Only relatively light supplies of hoggets were submitted, but those on offer included some very nice quality drafts, and prices up to 55s. and occasionally higher per head, were obtained. Rates did not reach the high levels of the previous month, being from ¼d. to ¾d. per lb. lower. For the most part good hoggets were worth from 8½d. to 9¾d. per lb., but at times were purchased at from 8d. to 8½d. per lb., reaching the lowest levels at the end of the month.

—G. COLEMAN.

**CATTLE.****Reduced Consignments—Grown Stock Scarce.**

Consignments of cattle during April showed some reduction and aggregated 13,010 head for the seven sale days. The number auctioned in the store section, 2,901 head, continued to be relatively large.

Quality was most uneven, while the proportion of grown stock on offer also showed considerable variation. For the most part light weight stock comprised the bulk of the offerings, while quality ranged chiefly from fair to good trade. Inferior grade stock were well in evidence and generally there was a shortage of prime beasts.

Bullocks made a very poor showing on most sale days, although by way of contrast they were well represented at the second last sale day of the period. On this occasion many good quality light and medium weight drafts were available. Heavy bullocks were noticed in odd lots only.

The market during the month was a variable one, due chiefly to fluctuations in supplies, and the fixation of lower wholesale ceiling levels. Values were firm at opening with rates ranging from 63s. to 70s. per 100 lb. By the middle of the month, however, prices had receded considerably, quotations being 51s. to 57s. for medium weights, and 54s. to 62s. for light bullocks. During the third week rates for light weights again ranged to 70s., but later were from 56s. to 63s. Medium weight bullocks, which were scarce and in keen demand for outside orders, brought to £23 16s. 0d. per head at closing, and to 66s. per 100 lb.

#### **Prime Steers Scarce.**

Steers were well represented throughout the month, but light weights greatly predominated and beasts of indifferent breeding comprised a substantial proportion of the pennings. Good trade descriptions made a satisfactory showing at times, but prime sorts were generally fairly scarce.

A very firm market ruled early in the period when quotations ranged from 63s. to 70s. per 100 lb. Values subsequently fluctuated but definitely declined towards the close, rates at the final auction ranging from 52s. to 63s. per 100 lb.

#### **Cows in Light Supply.**

For the most part cows were in light supply, while quality was chiefly only fair. Prime heavy cows were generally noticed in odd lots only. The market was very irregular, being very firm during the first and third week, but cheaper on other occasions, particularly at closing, when quotations ranged from 44s. to 51s. per 100 lb. Highest rates during the period ranged to 58s. per 100 lb. for light weight and to 57s. for heavy cows.

#### **Prime Heifers Scarce.**

Supplies of heifers were only fair, particularly medium and heavy weights. Prime descriptions were scarce, but good trade sorts comprised a substantial proportion of the available offerings. Although the market was very firm at opening, values generally were lower than those of the previous month, and quotations at closing ranged from 48s. to 60s. per 100 lb.

Vealers were in moderate supply on most sale days, but the general standard of quality was only fair. On occasions, however, good trade sorts were well represented, while odd prime drafts were also noticed.

A dearer market ruled during the first week when values advanced to the high level of 70s. to 78s. per 100 lb. However, prices subsequently declined, and at closing quotations ranged from 56s. to 66s. per 100 lb.

J. WILLIAMS.

## PIGS

### **Increased Numbers Yarded.**

The number of pigs offered for sale showed some improvement, the total yardings for the month being 6,608 head, or about 500 head more than the previous month's figure. Arrivals by rail accounted for 3,430 head, the balance being delivered by road transport, mainly from metropolitan and near country piggeries.

### **Most Classes of Baconers Cheaper.**

Baconers comprised a fairly large proportion of the supplies and included all grades of weight and quality, with good trade **heavy to extra heavy** grades making a particularly satisfactory showing. Fair numbers of good quality light to medium weights were also available. Values were somewhat irregular throughout and while the best values of the previous month were at times exceeded, the average cost was lower. During the early part of the month a firm market ruled with some sales of good heavy grades a little dearer. Later in the period, however, demand was not so strong and all classes sold at reduced rates, a decline of from 7s. 6d. to 15s. per head being evident, with some sales showing a further fall. Light baconers sold from £4 12s. 6d. per head and made from 11½d. to 13¼d. at early sales, but were obtained at from 10½d. to 11¾d. per lb. at closing auctions. Medium weight baconers cost from 10¾d. to 13¼d., and heavy grades which were worth up to 12¾d. per lb. at the commencement of the period, sold at from 10¾d. to 11½d. at the concluding sales. Extra heavy pigs cost from 10d. to 12¼d. per lb., while up to £10 6s. 6d. per head was realised for prime extra heavy baconers.

### **Rates for Backfatters Well Maintained.**

Rates for the moderate numbers of backfatters available were well maintained, all good to prime lots offered meeting with a very good demand. Values for the most part showed little material change from the average of those ruling last month, but on occasions a dearer market was evident. Quality was variable throughout, but while fair to good trade light to medium weights were well in evidence, the offering of good to prime heavy grades was only light. Some lots of prime heavy pigs realised to £16 6s. 0d. per head, while this class, estimated to dress over 350 lb., was worth from 6½d. to 8½d. per lb. Lighter weights estimated to dress from 250 lb. to 350 lb. mostly sold at from 7¾d. to 9¼d. per lb.

**Higher Rates for Pork.**

Good quality porkers were in comparatively short supply and a fair proportion of the offering was only suitable for the needs of store buyers. Good trade medium to heavy weights comprised the bulk of the pigs suited for trade requirements, and, due to the light supplies available, they met with a particularly good demand, the average cost of pork being higher than that prevailing during March. Very few extra light sorts were offered, but when submitted were worth from 12d. to 14¾d. per lb. Light pork generally made from 12d. to 15d. per lb., medium weight 12d. to 14d., and heavy weight pork 12d. to 13½d. per lb., while on a "per head" basis up to £4 18s. 6d. was realised.

Moderate numbers of suitable store pigs were on offer and while, for the most part, a good demand prevailed at recent price levels, on occasions lower values ruled.

G. COLEMAN.

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**FRUIT AND VEGETABLE SALES AT CITY MUNICIPAL MARKETS.**

**April, 1947.**

**FRUIT.****Supplies of Dessert Apples Light and Prices High.**

Dessert apples were available in moderate quantities only on most selling days and stock was insufficient to meet retail requirements. Rates remained firm at previous levels and advanced slightly towards the end of the month. Quotations for local packs of popular counts ranged from 24s. to 32s., and occasionally to 36s. for Delicious, and from 20s. to 28s., with few to 30s. for Jonathan. Smaller sizes were cheaper. Interstate apples received included more than 7,500 cases from Tasmania, and moderate consignments from Western Australia, Victoria, Queensland and South Australia. Realisations for fruit from these sources were slightly lower than those for corresponding varieties from local districts. Other varieties represented were less popular than those quoted above and brought lower prices accordingly.

**Small Stocks of Pears Result in Increased Rates.**

Very few Williams pears were offered and, due to a decline in quality, this variety was not popular. Packham's Triumph, however, were available in gradually increasing quantities and sold well at all times. Buyers were unable to obtain sufficient supplies for retail needs. Rates advanced to 20s. very early in the period and had reached 24s., and occasionally 25s., towards closing. On the last few days of the month, however, greatly increased consignments resulted in values showing a tendency to weaken.