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GENERAL NOTES AND NEWS.

A preliminary estimate by this Division of the total yield of wheat to be harvested in this State for the current season places the figure at 19,750,000 bushels. The estimate was based on conditions and prospects existent at 10th October and a final forecast of the position as at 22nd November will follow. Adverse weather conditions have continued to prevail in most wheat-growing areas since 10th October.

Further action has been taken towards the constitution of a Potato Marketing Board under the Marketing of Primary Products Act and a poll of potato producers is to be conducted on 21st December next on the question whether or not the setting up of such Board is desired.

The triennial poll for the election of producer representatives to the Egg Marketing Board of New South Wales was held on 1st November. Since its constitution in 1928 the Board has consisted of five members, comprising three representatives elected by the producers and two members appointed by the Government. On this occasion, however, five producer representatives were elected, the Minister having agreed some months ago to increase the representation from three to five. A similar poll was held for the election of producer representatives to the Rice Marketing Board on 25th October. This Board has consisted of seven members since its constitution, also in 1928.

A brief examination has been made of proposals to establish woollen mills in country centres and the Minister has suggested a thorough examination of the project by the Secondary Industries Division of the Department of Labour and Industry.

There is a current shortage of fruit wrapping paper, corrugated straw boards and paper bags as the raw materials are drawn from Victoria, and sea and rail transport facilities are at present inadequate. The possibility of road transport is being examined but the increased cost which will be involved is a factor to be considered.

In order to ensure maximum co-operation between the Cumberland County Council and this Department in consideration of matters affecting both interests, a letter has been prepared and despatched to the Local Government Department conveying an assurance of this Department's desire to co-operate with the County Council in its comprehensive task of preparing an overall plan covering future developments in the County of Cumberland.

A move was made by the Division to discuss with an officer of the Cumberland County Council the question of a new site for the central fruit and vegetable markets. It was thought that survey work might be initiated as a necessary preliminary to the solution of alternate sites.

At a meeting of the Markets Advisory Committee a motion was carried that the Premier be asked to convene a conference of those interested to discuss the question of the removal of the fruit and vegetable markets to a more commodious site.

The Markets Advisory Service recently established by this Division involves the daily inspection of fruit and vegetable produce as it arrives at the City Markets, and the despatch of telegrams to growers advising as to condition of the packs and suggesting changes considered necessary to improve realisations. In regard to interstate arrivals, a weekly schedule is forwarded to the Department of Agriculture concerned so that appropriate advice might then be given to the growers involved. Officials of the Queensland Department have recently alluded to the value of this service which enables the Department to contact Queensland growers in regard to the question of improving packs.

In common with other cereals, oat crops this season suffered severely from drought conditions which have prevailed over the greater part of the producing areas of New South Wales, and the yield of grain and hay is expected to be very light and considerably below last year's total of 9,997,000 bushels of grain and 353,000 tons of oaten hay. Based on reports received from agricultural instructors and grower-correspondents as to conditions existent at 25th October, 1946, the Division anticipates the yield of oat grain to approximate 1,900,000 bushels whilst the quantity of oaten hay should not exceed 100,000 tons.

SALES OF LIVESTOCK AT HOMEBUSH, SYDNEY.

October, 1946.

SHEEP.

Supplies Improve.

Some improvement occurred in the numbers of sheep and lambs available when supplies amounted to 292,319 head, representing an increase of about 32,000 head on the previous month's total. On one sale day, the yarding was the heaviest for some time, while the aggregate for the month was approximately 16,000 head higher than for the corresponding period of 1945. Owing to the completion of shearing in many districts, numbers available in the future are expected to improve.