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PRODUCTION TRENDS IN NEW SOUTH WALES.

ITEMS OF INTEREST FOR FEBRUARY, 1947.

The weather during February was the most satisfactory the State has experienced for some time. Soaking rains were widespread, but heaviest in the northern half of the State; some central and southern areas, however, did not receive adequate falls. Nevertheless the drought is over in the main pastoral areas, and most crops have benefited from the rain and the warm humid weather which followed.

Production of butter for February, at 3,294 tons, was the highest recorded so far for any month this season. However, it was still considerably below the figure of 3,635 tons for February, 1946, and the pre-war February average of about 4,700 tons.

Prospects for potatoes and other vegetables generally are now much improved, though most early potato crops and the New England main crop were too far advanced to draw benefit from the rain.

In most wheat-growing districts soil preparation was helped by the rain in February, and a substantial increase in sowings can be expected. Some of the central-western districts however are still in need of rain.

Grain sorghums are at present showing their ability to recover after protracted dry spells. Crops that have been dormant for some time have commenced to grow since the good February falls, and fair to good crops are now reported from most areas.

Though grain reserves are very small in all parts of the State, and only the south has reasonably adequate stocks of hay, the present excellent pasture outlook has relieved any anxiety over the position for the time being.

Favoured by hot weather, rice crops have continued to make excellent growth. All crops are now well headed, and despite heavy weed growth and some damage by the rice beetle, good yields are anticipated.

The outlook for the citrus crop is now greatly improved. Trees are in good condition and fruit is filling out satisfactorily, particularly lemons and navels.

Totals of meat production for 1946 are shown in the following table in comparison with 1945:—

	1945	1946
	Tons.	Tons.
Beef and Veal	121,277	136,203
Mutton and Lamb	129,252	123,996
Pigmeats	25,863	23,563
Total	276,392	283,762