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FRUIT AND VEGETABLE SALES AT CITY MUNICIPAL MARKETS.

September, 1946.

FRUIT.

Granny Smith Apples Plentiful.

Red dessert apples were in comparatively short supply during September, particularly at the close of the month when an appreciable decline in Victorian consignments occurred. Choice quality fruit was in keen demand, especially N.S.W. Delicious, up to 34s. per bushel being paid. Fairly substantial quantities of the Victorian varieties forward, mainly Jonathan, Rome Beauty and Delicious, were of indifferent quality and showed "break-down" if held on selling floors for a few days. Granny Smiths were plentiful throughout the period; in addition to N.S.W. fruit supplies were received from Victoria, Tasmania and Western Australia. Inquiry for choice N.S.W.'s packs was satisfactory and prices for best lines remained firm, 20s. to 21s. being realised. However, a large proportion of the interstate consignments was of poor quality and had to be disposed of at low rates to effect clearances.

Choice Large Pears Scarce.

Packham's Triumph was the chief variety of N.S.W.'s pears marketed, only small quantities of other varieties being on offer. Large fruit was in the minority, the bulk of supplies consisting of medium and small sizes. For Packhams up to 22s. per bushel was obtained. Victorian consignments comprised mostly Packham's Triumph and Josephine; some Winter Nelis were also received. Generally, the keeping quality of much of this Victorian fruit was poor. Tasmanian Winter Cole and Winter Nelis available at times during the month were slow of sale owing to the poor condition of the fruit.

Main Crop Valencias on Offer.

Marketing of main crop Valencia oranges from coastal groves commenced about mid-September. By the close of the month substantial quantities were being received. Small-sized fruit was plentiful and somewhat slow to clear. However, inquiry for counts up to 180 was good, selected packs bringing up to 18s. per bushel. Supplies of Navel oranges showed a progressive decline; very few remained to be marketed by the end of September. Rates for choice lines were as high as 25s. per bushel.

Mandarins in Light Supply.

Supplies of mandarins were light. Choice large fruit, which was particularly scarce, sold readily at high prices, up to 23s. and occasionally more being paid. Difficulty was experienced in clearing the very small "puffy" and inferior quality lots consigned.

Lemons Plentiful.

Plentiful supplies of lemons were on offer. On many occasions demand was insufficient to effect clearances and values declined, special packs selling at 8s. to 10s. per bushel over the last week.

Increased Maximum Wholesale Rate for Pineapples.

Bi-weekly consignments of pineapples from Queensland showed a gradual decrease in September. Inquiry was keen and over the last few weeks quick clearances were made, all choice packs realising the increased maximum wholesale rate of 23s. 9d. per tropical case.

Heavier Supplies of Papaws.

Queensland papaws were more numerous. However, warmer weather resulted in an improved demand. Values ranged to 25s. per tropical case.

Queensland Strawberries on Offer.

Strawberries were received from Queensland regularly. Inquiry was good on Fridays but only moderate on other days of the week. Many of the consignments towards the close of the month opened up in unsatisfactory condition.

Passionfruit in Heavy Supply.

Passionfruit was plentiful throughout September and though many purchases were made for resale on the Melbourne market, a carry-over of stocks occurred on a number of days. For choice fruit 18s. to 22s. per half-case ruled during the greater part of the month.

VEGETABLES.**Peas in Comparatively Light Supply.**

Daily supplies of peas on offer on agents' floors were comparatively light throughout the month. Quantities available in the Growers' Section also were not substantial, but they showed an increase compared with August. Although some improvement in quality was apparent towards the end of the month, a large percentage of all supplies continued to show adverse effects of the unfavourable weather conditions experienced. For the first two weeks of the month daily values were mostly 20s. to 30s. per bushel. Increased consignments during the third week resulted in best lots selling at 22s. to 24s. per bushel. However, this decline was only temporary as prices subsequently rose sharply, being 30s. to 36s. with a few special lots 38s. per bushel on Monday, 30th September. In all instances, inferior quality peas were sold at rates lower than those quoted. Although demand generally was only moderate, owing to the high prices ruling, clearances were mostly satisfactory.

Decreased Quantities of Beans.

The bi-weekly consignments of beans from the North Coast of N.S.W. and Queensland which had comprised practically all the beans available on the Sydney market during the winter months showed a progressive decline over the first three weeks of September. However, during the last week of the month, quantities of beans from Southern Queensland were consigned by passenger train almost daily. In addition, the marketing of

supplies from the Gosford-Tuggerah districts commenced. Gosford-Tuggerah beans and those from Southern Queensland were mostly choice, but supplies from other areas varied considerably, a large proportion being medium to poor only. Values for best lines were maintained at a high level, being 36s. to 40s. per bushel. Medium grades were sold from 25s., with inferior lots cheaper.

Prices for Cabbages Steady.

Cabbages were always well supplied. Demand for choice large heads was satisfactory and prices for best lots remained fairly constant at 12s. to 14s. per dozen. Medium and small heads were slow of sale on occasions, particularly the latter for which, in some instances, 2s. per dozen was accepted to effect clearances.

Choice Large Cauliflowers Scarce.

Supplies of cauliflowers, which were moderate to light, were received principally from Metropolitan market gardens; small quantities were marketed from the Burragorang and Bathurst districts. A large percentage of offerings was medium to small. Choice quality large heads were in the minority and often realised 36s. to 40s. per dozen.

Glass House Tomatoes More Plentiful.

There was a marked increase in the quantity of N.S.W. glass-house tomatoes on offer during the first three weeks of September. Values were steady, first grade packs being 22s. to 24s. and occasionally 26s. per half-case. Cooler conditions prevailed for the last week or so, resulting in a falling off in supplies and values advanced, 36s. per half-case being obtained on Monday, 30th. Marketing of crops from the North Coast of N.S.W. commenced about the third week of September. The first consignments were small but some 13,100 half-cases came forward during the last complete week and a further 6,790 arrived on Monday, 30th. The bulk of these supplies comprised "Green" packs and the majority opened up in an unsatisfactory condition; many failed to pass inspection and were withheld from sale owing to their immature condition. Poor grading and packing was also noticeable in some instances. Rates covered a very wide range. The approaching close of the main tomato growing season in Bowen, Queensland, was evident by the decrease in consignments from that State. Quality of many lines showed a deterioration, much of the fruit being forward ripe and grub infested.

Seasonal Increase in Supplies of Lettuce.

A gradual and continual seasonal increase in supplies of lettuce occurred. Demand and prices were steady for most of the period, although a few days of unseasonably warm weather about the second week of the month resulted in a sharp but temporary rise in values when as much as 20s. per case was obtained.

Consignments of South Australian Celery Smaller.

Weekly consignments of celery from South Australia were lighter and showed a progressive decline from 2,900 crates for the first week to 2,300 crates for the last week of the month. Quality mostly was satisfactory but a proportion consisted of very small sizes which were slow of sale.

Root Crops Dear.

Most root crops were in light supply, parsnips and sweet potatoes being particularly scarce during the second half of the month. Rates reached high levels, parsnips realising to 72s.; sweet potatoes to 52s.; carrots to 36s. and Swedes to 24s. per cwt. In each case broken-bagged lots were dearer.

H. G. MOON.

**SALES OF FARM PRODUCE AT ALEXANDRIA AND
SUSSEX STREET, SYDNEY.**

September, 1946.

Tasmanian Potato Consignments Increase.

Arrivals from Tasmania showed an increase, 141,162 bags coming to hand compared with 114,673 in August. The consignments consisted mainly of Brownells, with a few Snowflakes, Up-to-Dates and Arranchiefs. Receipts at Alexandria from Victoria were considerably reduced, only 4,787 bags being available compared with the previous month's total of 24,474. These tubers consisted of No. 1 grade Carmans and Snowflakes. Supplies from local centres, mainly the Crookwell district, increased to 5,133 bags. These included mostly No. 1 grade Factors, with a few No. 3 grade and 487 bags of seed. A large percentage of the supplies was available for civilian use, the remainder being required for essential services.

Prices fixed for the month ended 30th September, Sydney basis, were—Wholesalers' Prices to Retailers:—Local and Interstate No. 1 grade £7 17s. 6d, undergrades £6 7s. 6d. per ton. Rates for N.S.W. grown potatoes for delivery to country areas are as quoted, plus freight from loading station; prices for interstate potatoes to N.S.W. country areas are as quoted, plus freight from Sydney or loading station, whichever is the lower. Primary merchants' prices to wholesalers are £1 5s. per ton less than the figures quoted.

Increased Supplies of Swedes by Sea.

Receipts at Alexandria were again light, only 1,071 bags arriving, including 150 from local centres, 806 from Victoria and 125 from Tasmania. The only sales recorded were of Victorian consignments which realised £8 to £9 per ton. Tasmanian receipts at Sussex Street showed a considerable increase and aggregated 10,474 bags, this being the largest total for some months. Despite heavier supplies, a good demand prevailed and rates were higher. A few sales were made at £10, but the bulk sold at £11 to £12 and later to £14 per ton.

Other Root Vegetables Again Very Scarce.

Receipts of carrots from local centres aggregated only one truck which realised £8 per ton. Victorian consignments at Alexandria, 167 bags, sold at £11 per ton, while at Darling Harbour, two trucks brought £13. A consignment of sweet potatoes from Queensland realised from £21 to £22 per ton.