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GENERAL NOTES AND NEWS.

In connection with the scheme under consideration by State Egg Marketing Boards for the setting up of a company (Australian Eggs Ltd.) to co-ordinate the marketing of eggs, the Crown Solicitor of New South Wales has now examined the Memorandum and Articles of Association, together with the draft Agreement. He has stated that he considers the Marketing of Primary Products Act of N.S.W. should be amended to authorise the Board in this State to enter into the type of arrangement contemplated, if that is approved or desired by the Government.

It will therefore not be in order at this stage for the State Board to become a signatory to the Agreement or to join the proposed Company.

The whole position will have to be reviewed in the light of the Crown Solicitor's advising.

Production from the main or inland potato crop in New South Wales in the current season has been forecast by the Division at 90,000 tons. This figure refers to all potatoes, irrespective of quality and regardless of whether the tubers are marketed or otherwise disposed of.

The Chief of the Division presided at a recent conference of representatives of the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research, Railway Department and the Department of Agriculture, to consider questions associated with the handling and transport of primary products, particularly fruit and vegetables. The matter of undertaking further investigations in this connection is to be considered at an early date.

Following upon representations made by the Minister for Agriculture to the Minister for the Army, arrangements have been made for the Army to vacate space occupied in No. 6 (grower-sellers) Market in the Sydney Municipal Markets. This will provide some measure of relief from the ever-increasing congestion in the markets area.

The State's main crop citrus yield in 1946 has been forecast at 3,195,000 loose bushels but this figure is unlikely to be attained as recent floods in some coastal areas have been followed by Brown Rot infestation in many groves in low-lying situations, whilst late reports indicate that a substantial amount of shedding is also occurring in a number of districts.

A conference of the various vegetable-growing organisations was held on 9th May. Among the subjects set down for discussion were:—(a) A proposed constitution for the Vegetable-Growers' Federation of New South Wales; (b) registration of growers; (c), standardisation of packages; and (d) A sub-committee's report on improved transport facilities, distribution generally, storage, grading, processing, overseas export and obtaining increased consumption.

Following the recent affirmative vote by the growers of Navy beans on the question of establishing a marketing board in relation to the product, a poll will be held on 3rd July for the election of five producer-members.

The General Manager, Egg Marketing Board (Mr. W. R. Whiting) who recently returned from overseas, stated that he was impressed with the condition in which Canadian eggs reached the London market and with the very small percentage of break-ages that occurred compared with the Australian product. He was successful in booking orders in America for the supply of packing materials which are in very short supply here and he anticipates that the use of these materials will go a long way towards improving the condition in which Australian eggs reach the United Kingdom.

Farmers may now procure Farm Record Books, designed for the period 1st July, 1946 to 30th June, 1947, from the Division of Information and Extension Services, Department of Agriculture, for the nominal sum of 2s. 6d. Books to suit the following farming types are available:—

- (1) Wheat, mixed wheat-sheep and grazing.
- (2) Dairying.
- (3) Horticulture (fruit and vegetables) and poultry.

These books contain simplified and well-tested records for entering all receipts and expenses and for making an inventory of farm assets. They also contain records for noting crop acreages and production, quantities of feed used, changes in livestock numbers, the allocation of labour time between different farm enterprises and a section describing a method of analysing and interpreting the various records at the end of the year.

During the past three years these records have been tested out by several hundred farmers and found practicable for farm conditions.

A shipment of Australian apples and pears comprising 230,000 lb. of Cleopatra, London Pippin, Granny Smith and Jonathan apples and 418,000 lb. of Packham's Triumph and other varieties of pears arrived in the United States early in April. It was in perfect condition after a 28-day trip. This is the first occasion on which America has imported these fruits from Australia and further shipments are expected.

A scheme to assist the Australian livestock industry by granting subsidies to importers of cattle, draught horses, pigs, sheep and milch goats will operate from the 1st May. The subsidies, to which the Commonwealth and State Governments and the Commonwealth Bank will contribute, will be £100 a head for cattle and draught horses, £50 for pigs and £40 for sheep and goats. In addition, shipping companies have agreed to carry the stock at reduced rates. The scheme will be administered in New South Wales by the Department of Agriculture.

This Division is co-operating with the Illawarra Regional Development Committee in making a survey of the agricultural potentialities of the Region. The results of the survey should be of importance in determining the practicability of irrigation from the waters of the Shoalhaven River.

SALES OF LIVESTOCK AT HOMEBUSH, SYDNEY

April, 1946.

SHEEP.

Supplies Lighter.

Fewer sheep and lambs were available than during the previous month, total supplies amounting to 226,613 head.

Public holidays resulted in a reduction in selling days while industrial trouble towards the end of the month brought about a serious dislocation in the meat trade generally.

Auctions which were to have been held on Wednesday, 24th April, were postponed until the following Monday, while trucks booked for the conveyance of stock for sales on 29th April were cancelled.

Prime Sheep Scarce.

Approximately 130,100 head of grown sheep were offered; prime descriptions were scarce, but useful trade sheep comprised a good proportion of the stock penned. On occasions, plain to medium quality wethers and ewes were numerous while many lines offered were only in forward store condition.