

weight the maximum of the baconer range. In considering the position which had arisen in connection with the marketing of the heavy baconer, similar recommendations were made to the Meat Advisory Committee by the Division of Marketing and Agricultural Economics early in 1945.

The Conference also supported the efforts of the Meat Industry Advisory Committee to bring about a more rigid grading system for pigmeats, and considered it most important to the industry's future that a uniform standard pig of good quality be developed for export. This aspect was fully dealt with in an article prepared by the Division and published in the September, 1945, issue of the "Agricultural Gazette of New South Wales" under the heading of "Market Requirements for Bacon Pigs, Local and Overseas."

J. R. WILLIAMS.

GENERAL NOTES AND NEWS.

The Australian wheat harvest in the current season (1945-46) is expected to be in the vicinity of 135 million bushels. Official forecasts are as follow:—New South Wales, 53,600,000; Victoria, 25,000,000 (to be delivered); South Australia, 20,700,000; Western Australia, 20,500,00; Queensland, 7,000,000. The Victorian figure presumably does not include wheat which will be retained for seed, stock feed, etc., which, according to private estimates, should account for an additional 7 to 8 million bushels.

It is proposed to conduct a poll of growers of navy beans on the 22nd March, 1946, on the question whether or not a Marketing Board shall be constituted in the State of New South Wales under the provisions of the Marketing of Primary Products Act. If an affirmative vote is recorded an election of producer-representatives on the Board will be held later.

With a view to lessening congestion in the Sydney Municipal Markets and environs, the City Council, acting upon representations made by the Markets Advisory Committee, has issued instructions that fruit and vegetables arriving at the markets by road transport will not be received after 6.15 a.m. each sale day until such time as produce carried by rail to Darling Harbour has been unloaded in the markets.

Ginger has ceased to be a crop of any importance in this State, and the question of terminating the activities of the Board, whose term of office expires on 25th February, 1946, is now under consideration.

The Premier has approved of financial assistance being given to aid in the establishment of a Farm Mechanisation Machinery Pool in relation to vegetable culture at Menindee, on the Darling River, New South Wales. In this connection, the Premier desires that marketing arrangements at Broken Hill, which constitutes the nearest consuming centre of any size, be investigated in order to determine its capacity for absorbing the additional production which is expected to be forthcoming.

The Kiama District War Agricultural Committee is being assisted by the Division in formulating plans for a potentiality survey of the Illawarra district. A report is being prepared for submission to the Committee.

A new departure in the marketing of foodstuffs in Australia occurred recently, when strawberries and raspberries grown in Tasmania were conveyed by air to the various State capitals on the mainland and sold within five to twelve hours of picking. These consignments were designed to test the practicability of such a mode of transport, and a new era in the marketing of perishable fruits and vegetables is thus opened.

A course of instruction is being held at the Hawkesbury Agricultural College between the 14th and 25th January, 1946, for the purpose of training officers from Departments of Agriculture in each State whose services will be utilised in Rural Training Schools for ex-servicemen which are to be established at an early date.

Reports by the various committees which were established following the Melbourne Conference on post-war production and marketing of eggs, vegetables and potatoes, will be submitted to the Australian Agricultural Council for consideration at its next meeting, which will be held in Sydney on 4th to 8th February, 1946.

The Australian Barley Board has announced a selling price of 3s. 3d. a bushel for feed oats for minimum truck lots at buyers' sidings. Any excess over 4d. per bushel railage is paid by the buyer.

Sales of sheep and lambs at Homebush saleyards during 1945 reached a total of 3,380,000 compared with 4,147,000 during 1944, and 4,121,000 during 1943. Sales of cattle during 1945 totalled 189,000, compared with 179,000 during 1944, and 175,000 during 1943.

The Division has recently initiated a survey of the Canning Pean industry in Australia, with particular reference to the New England district and its future possibilities.

At an international conference in Sydney recently it was decided that U.N.R.R.A.'s South-west Pacific Area Office should establish an International Veterinary and Livestock Secretariat, with headquarters in Sydney.

As from January 1st, 1946, the Commonwealth Government will pass on to producers the increases in the price of certain classes of meat being paid by the British Ministry of Food. The average increases, in Australian currency, are ½d. per pound for veal and meat offals, and 5/8d. per pound for bull beef and beef shins.

The Commonwealth Government has announced a wheat stabilisation scheme guaranteeing 5s. 2d. a bushel f.o.b. for all wheat marketed in Australia and all f.a.q. wheat exported in the five seasons 1945-46 to 1949-50. When export prices are in excess of the guaranteed price, 60 per cent. of the excess will be paid into a stabilisation fund to assist meeting the guarantee when export prices are below it. A marketing organisation and a system of regulating production are also part of the scheme, and the co-operation of the States will now be sought to implement it.

The United States Government is preparing to cut back its \$1.8 billion a year wartime food subsidy programme. All payments are to cease in June, 1946. Retail prices are expected to rise in consequence; milk will rise by 1.3 cents per quart; bread 1 cent a loaf; cheese 4.8 cents a pound; pork 4.4 cents a pound; prunes 4.2 cents a pound; and flour 8.8 cents for 10 pounds.

SALES OF LIVESTOCK AT HOMEBUSH, SYDNEY

December, 1945.

Sharp Decline in Sheep Numbers.

The number of sheep and lambs yarded showed a marked falling-off, supplies comprising 188,544 head, or approximately 105,000 less than the previous month. The Christmas holiday period reduced the number of selling days to seven, and this factor, in conjunction with the uncertain position in regard to electricity supplies and probable effect on slaughterings, tended materially to reduce consignments from country centres.

General Quality Satisfactory.

The general quality of the sheep offered was for the most part suitable for trade needs, medium to good light weight wethers and ewes being well represented. Good heavy ewes made a satisfactory showing, but on a number of occasions prime heavy wethers were relatively scarce. The offering of grown sheep totalled 108,346 head, or 48,000 less than the total forward last month.