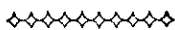


ON THE LAND

MARKET REPORTS.

At Burnside sale last week 232 head of fat cattle were yarded, the quality being fair. As the following week's market at Burnside will not be until Thursday, and as butchers were bare of supplies, a good sale resulted at prices 15s to 20s in advance of those of the previous week. Heavy bullocks made from £11 12s 6d to £12 10s, medium £9 10s to £10 15s, light £7 to £8 12s 6d, prime cows £7 to £8 10s, others £4 to £5 12s 6d. Fat Sheep.—The yarding consisted of 2377 sheep, about one-third being heavy wethers. The market for these was 2s to 2s 6d in advance of the preceding week's, while medium and light sheep improved to the extent of 1s to 1s 6d per head. Prime heavy wethers made 30s to 33s 6d, extra to 37s, prime 25s 9d to 28s, medium 22s to 24s 3d, prime heavy ewes 21s to 23s 3d, extra to 30s, prime 17s 3d to 20s, medium 13s to 16s 6d, light from 10s. Fat Lambs.—726 were yarded, the quality being very much better than it was on the previous week. Freezing buyers were operating very keenly for all lambs suitable for export at prices 1s to 1s 6d in advance of the preceding week. Prime lambs made 27s to 29s 3d, extra to 33s, good 24s to 26s 3d, light from 21s. Pigs.—A large yarding was offered, and all were disposed of under good competition. Fat pigs realised prices fully 5s in advance of late rates, while stores also sold at higher values.

At Addington market last week yardings generally were lighter, particularly those of store sheep. All principal sections of stock met with a free sale. Fat Lambs.—6180 were penned, compared with 7166 on the previous week. A spirited sale, with a slight advance in prices, which ranged about 8½d per lb. Extra prime lambs 27s 6d to 32s 6d, prime 24s 6d to 27s 3d, medium 22s to 24s 3d, and light and unfinished 17s 6d to 21s 3d. Fat Sheep.—Big mutton, particularly ewes, showed a slight improvement, and freezers' sorts were practically unaltered. Extra prime wethers 27s 6d to 33s, prime 23s to 26s 6d, medium 20s to 22s 9d, light 17s to 19s 6d, extra prime ewes to 22s 6d, prime 19s to 21s 6d, medium 15s to 18s 6d, light 11s to 14s 6d. Fat Cattle.—290 head compared with 368 on the preceding week. The market recovered for better beef, which was in short supply. Primest up to 30s; average about 25s per 100lb. Extra prime steers £14 to £16 2s 6d, prime £9 15s to £13, medium £7 10s to £9 12s 6d, inferior £5 to £7 5s, extra prime heifers £11 5s, prime £6 to £8 5s, ordinary £3 12s 6d to £5 15s, prime cows £5 15s to £8 10s 6d, ordinary cows £2 10s to £5 10s. Fat Pigs.—A good demand. Late rates were fully maintained. Choppers £3 10s to £5, light baconers £3 15s to £4 10s, heavy £4 12s 6d to £5 (average price per lb 6d to 6½d); light porkers 50s to 55s, heavy 57s 6d to 70s (average price per lb 9d to 9½d).

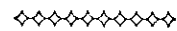


POTASH AND THE QUALITY OF POTATOES.

In a lecture given by Mr. John Gibb to the Glasgow and West of Scotland Horticultural Society, reference was made to the superior value of sulphate of potash, as compared with other potash fertilisers, for potatoes. This was confirmed by the results of tests with different potash fertilisers carried out last season by Mr. Wheldon, of the Armstrong College.

These tests, which confirm in a striking way an elaborate series of similar tests by the Glasgow Agricultural College some 20 years ago, as well as tests elsewhere, have demonstrated the clear superiority of sulphate of potash over chloride dressings like muriate of potash, potash manure salts, and kainit, so far as the cooking quality of the potato is concerned. While the tubers grown with kainit, potash manure salts, and muriate of potash cooked badly—the flesh of the tubers was waxy, and turned black a few minutes after cooking—the sulphate of potash tubers cooked firm and floury, with good flavor, and did not turn black after cooking. It is also significant that the sulphate of potash tubers took five minutes longer to cook than the others, which is an admittedly good point in their favor, according to expert opinion. It is also interesting that the tubers grown without potash, although of good flavor, also turned black after cooking.

The above evidence appears to throw important light upon one of the causes of the deterioration of the quality of potatoes. The variety experimented upon was Lochar, a potato of indifferent quality to start with, and which is apparently very susceptible to chlorides. The American evidence indicates that some varieties are definitely more susceptible to chlorides than others, and it may be that some varieties are practically unaffected by this factor. Soil and season have also presumably an influence, but until there is more exact scientific evidence available, however, to guide one in the matter, it would appear that there is nothing to lose, and probably in most cases much to gain, by the use of potash in the form of sulphate for potatoes. Taking the average of the trials in Scotland over different seasons, the sulphate of potash has certainly held its own, if not more so, in its quantitative effect on the crop yield. In Scotland, the most popular potash dressing is potash manure salts (30 per cent.), but potato-growers would be well advised this season to try as a substitute, on half of the field, an equivalent dressing of potash as sulphate of potash, with a view to testing the relative effect of these dressings on the quality of the potatoes. The farmer can no longer afford to neglect the quality factor, as this is going to determine to a greater extent in the future the selling price of his produce.



HOW BEESWAX IS MADE.

A leaflet recently issued by the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries in Great Britain, which deals with the production and collection of beeswax, is evidently intended to direct attention to an amount of waste that occurs in apiaries. During spring operations, when the hives are being cleaned out, and later when the honey flow has set in, there is always a quantity of wax to be collected that is well worth saving. The beekeeper in a large way of business fully realises the value of this refuse, and all uncappings and old comb that accumulate from one cause or another are carefully saved until finally there is sufficient to pass through the wax extractor. But, while the process of accumulation is slower with the smaller apiarist, it is nevertheless well worth while. Wax is not gathered by the worker bee, but is organically produced in her body from honey and pollen, by secretion. It is formed voluntarily by the bees filling their stomachs with honey, hanging in the hive in chain-like clusters, and remaining perfectly quiet for 24 hours. A good deal of pollen is consumed to make up for the wear and tear of tissue during wax secretion. During this period the wax glands convert the honey taken into their bodies into liquid wax, which exudes through tiny perforations in eight small pockets or moulds situated on the under-side of the last four abdominal segments, where it hardens into small white scales. It is then plucked out, made plastic by the admixture of saliva, and utilised for the building of the comb, the hermetic sealing of honey cells, and, with the addition of pollen, for the porous sealing of brood cells. It is computed that from 10lb to 20lb of honey is required to make 1lb of wax. The work of secretion tells severely upon the vital powers of the bees, and, as wax is a valuable and costly production, none of it should be wasted.



Word-Building Competition

Particulars of a sparkling skill contest are given in the advertising columns of this issue. This will provide a fascinating and educative occupation during the long evenings. School children especially will find intense interest in this word hunt, and splendid prizes are in prospect for the lucky winners. Those who set out to find the most words in the phrase "St. Anthony's Prize Contest" will have the further satisfaction to be derived from helping to find a church for St. Anthony in Gonville (Wanganui).

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