

# On the Land

## MARKET REPORTS.

At Burnside last week, the yarding of fat cattle consisted of 281 head of good quality, principally bullocks, with a few pens of cows and heifers. Following the previous week's heavy yarding, when the trade bought freely, the penning proved in excess of requirements, and a further drop of from £2 to £2 10s per head occurred. Prime heavy bullocks made £20 to £22 12s 6d, prime £17 to £19 12s 6d, light from £13, prime cows and heifers made £12 to £14 2s 6d, extra to £18 10s, others from £15. Fat Sheep.—The yarding consisted of 2000, all being shorn with the exception of about 300. Owing to the butchers having purchased over-supplies at the record yarding the preceding week, the penning proved in excess of requirements. Consequently prices eased on the previous week's rates by 1s 6d per head. Prime woolly wethers made 49s 6d to 53s 3d, others from 43s, woolly ewes 46s 9d, prime heavy shorn wethers made 40s to 45s 9d, prime 37s to 39s 6d. A large number of light sheep was bought by graziers at from 33s 6d to 35s 3d. Fat Lambs.—The entry consisted of 90 very fine quality lambs, which sold firm at the preceding week's rates. Pigs.—There were 107 fats and 53 stores. The pigs sold at an all-round rise of 7s 6d per head. Heavy baconers made from £5 to £6 7s, medium baconers £3 15s to £4 10s, best porkers £3 15s to £4 8s, light porkers £3 to £3 10s.

At the Addington market last week the yardings were generally smaller than those of the previous week's, and an easing in prices was maintained. Fat Lambs.—The entry totalled 440 head as against 600 on the preceding week. The sale commenced well, but as it progressed values dropped. On average, however, they were about on a par with those of the previous week, prices per lb ranged from 9d to 10d. Values were: Prime lambs 32s 6d to 35s 10d, ordinary lambs 29s to 32s, light lambs 22s 6d to 28s. Fat Sheep.—Eight lightly-filled races were forward in the fat sheep section, including more plainer sheep than usual, although prices at the beginning of the sale were equal with late rates. Half-way through the auction the market slipped back to the extent of 1s a head, particularly in respect of lighter classes. Extra prime wethers brought 37s to 41s, prime 33s to 36s 6d, medium 30s 6d to 32s 6d, light 27s 6d to 29s 9d, prime ewes 27s to 30s 6d, medium 24s to 26s 6d, light 21s to 23s 6d, inferior 17s to 20s. Fat Cattle.—The entry of fat cattle amounted to close on 520 head, including a larger proportion of cows than usual. For all good class beef the market was sound at the preceding week's prices, values being a shade better for best steer beef. Prime medium-weight beef sold at 46s 6d to 49s 6d (100lb extra to 51s), prime heavy 43s to 46s, medium 38s to 41s, light and inferior 34s to 37s 6d, and rough cattle down to 25s. Extra prime heavy-weight steers made to £24.7s 6d, prime heavy £19 to £21 17s 6d, prime medium-weight £18 10s to £20, medium £15 10s to £18, light £11 to £15, extra prime heifers to £17 12s 6d, prime £12 10s to £14, medium

£9 to £12 5s, light £6 15s to £8 15s, extra prime cows to £15 12s 6d, prime £11 7s 6d to £13, ordinary £9 to £11, light £5 to £8 15s.

## CLEAN WATER FOR POULTRY.

There is no detail in the management of poultry which requires more constant and scrupulous attention than the water supply.

It must be derived from a pure source, and of not too hard a nature, since a chalky water is responsible for many losses in chicken-rearing.

Drinking vessels should frequently be scalded out, and they should preferably be of a material which is capable of withstanding boiling water, than which there is no cheaper or more simple germicide.

It is, of course, sometimes difficult to prevent fowls from drinking the manure-polluted puddles in the farmyard, but they are much less likely to do so if fresh, clean water is always within their reach.

## SOIL BACTERIA.

In England and on the Continent scientists are devoting increased study to the action of bacteria in the soil, with the object of discovering the causes of greater or less activity and the most effective ways of encouraging the little creatures in their beneficent work for the benefit of crops.

A soil full of clods possesses less bacterial activity than cultivated soil with a fine tilth.

A well-aerated soil containing organic substances encourages the development of the organisms.

The application of certain fertilisers, including sulphate of ammonia, sulphate of magnesia, bones, superphosphate, and basic slag, have been found to be helpful.

Frost depresses bacterial life, though activity is rapidly regained with milder weather.

The lower layers of soil are not favorable; in this respect deep cultivation, admitting air to penetrate the lower layers, is of advantage.

As is generally known, the presence of lime, rendering the soil alkaline, is beneficial; in fact, essential.

Thus it would appear that the most favorable conditions are those which experience has taught intelligent farmers to obtain—viz., good tilth, deep cultivation, a supply of organic matter (humus), adequate supply of lime, and the use of suitable fertilisers, including farmyard manure and fertilisers.

## WINTER SPINACH.

One of the most useful of vegetables in the winter and early spring is winter spinach, which is not grown by the ordinary gardener nearly as much as its merits deserve. The seed should be sown thinly in March on good ground, and from this sowing gatherings may be obtained in May and onwards towards November. The plants require to be thinned out early to ten or twelve inches apart to ensure sturdy seedlings with thick leathery leaves that will enable them to resist

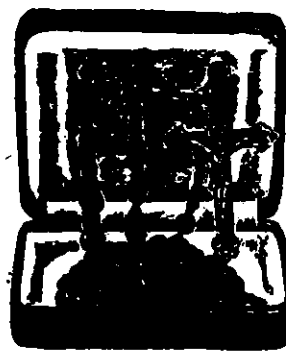
mildew and withstand extremes in temperature.

It is important with winter spinach, to enable it to pass safely through the winter, that a good plant, well established, be aimed at, and one that will give a supply of leaves during open weather through the dullest months of the year. It is not wise, however, to pick it too hard during frost, thus exposing the tender heart of the plants too much. Some few of the leaves are useful for protection.

Ground that has carried a crop of peas or potatoes makes a suitable site for spinach, and needs but little preparation as regards manure. A sprinkling of soot or lime over the surface, and deeply forked in, is all that is necessary. Should the soil be very dry it is well to moisten the drills a few hours before sowing the seed; after-attention consists of thinning and keeping the ground well hoed to destroy weeds and promote a free growth of the plants.

With many persons spinach is an acquired taste, but when appreciated it is not often afterwards rejected. Food experts speak in the highest terms of the plant.

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