

Table 49
AUSTRALIAN MEAT EXPORTS, 1950-52

| State | Frozen Meat (tons) | | | Canned Meat (tons) | | |
|-------------------|--------------------|---------|--------|--------------------|--------|--------|
| | 1950 | 1951 | 1952 | 1950 | 1951 | 1952 |
| Queensland | 85,528 | 70,022 | 33,929 | 20,800 | 19,800 | 16,400 |
| Victoria | 63,977 | 19,349 | 15,442 | 12,700 | 15,200 | 21,400 |
| New South Wales | 20,700 | 7,078 | 4,747 | 3,800 | 5,200 | 7,900 |
| South Australia | 11,240 | 5,796 | 1,901 | 700 | 300 | 300 |
| Western Australia | 12,019 | 8,047 | 9,568 | 1,400 | 600 | 1,000 |
| Tasmania | 179 | 186 | 88 | | | |
| Total Australia | 193,643 | 110,478 | 65,675 | 39,400 | 41,100 | 47,000 |

cattle marketed in the area. The Dandenong market is chiefly a dairy cattle market for the Gippsland area, and Brooklyn market is primarily a pig and calf market.

The size and scale of activity of these markets are shown in Table 50 and the location on map 37.

Source of Supply: Most of the cattle and sheep come into Melbourne from the north and north-eastern parts of the State, and most of the pigs from the west. At least two-thirds of this livestock comes in by rail and about one-third by motor transport, although the proportion carried by road has increased in recent years. During the year 1949/50 the railways carried approximately 3,175,000 head of sheep and 178,000 head of cattle into the Newmarket saleyards. Most of the livestock at Dandenong and Brooklyn markets are carried by motor transport.

The general distribution of the flow of this traffic is as follows:

Newmarket

Sheep: 65% from the north and north-east, 30% from the west and south-west, 5% from the east and south-east.

Cattle: 50% from the north-east, 35% from the east, 15% from the west and south-west.

Dandenong

92% of all livestock from the east and south-east (Gippsland); 8% from elsewhere.

Brooklyn

65% from the east and south-east (Gippsland); 35% from north and west.

Most of the livestock yarded at these markets are bought by the various council and private meat killing establishments in the metropolitan area for supplying the local market with fresh meat or for processing for export. Some 10% of the cattle and 15% of the sheep passing through the markets go back to country areas.

Metropolitan Abattoirs: One large and three small council abattoirs and some six large and several smaller private organisations are engaged in killing livestock in the metropolitan area. Most are in the western suburbs of Melbourne. The estimated weekly killing capacity of these establishments under existing conditions is given in Table 51 and their location illustrated in map 38.

Post-war killings have been considerably below these figures because of the decline in the number of sheep and pigs available for slaughter. The figures also vary considerably with the period of the year, and the maximum figures are only approached for about three months during the export season, when killings increase considerably, especially at the large private abattoirs.

It is interesting to compare these figures of killing capacity with the weekly meat requirements of Melbourne.

From these figures it can be seen that the metropolitan capacity for killing considerably exceeds local requirements, the difference being made up by killing for export and meat processing. In this regard, however, it is important to bear in mind that the local demand for meat is growing as the population increases, and consequently a lower proportion of meat is available for export. This has been accentuated by the fall in the number of sheep and pigs available for killing in recent years. This trend, combined with Australia's heavy migration programme and high consumption of meat per head has led some authorities to express the view that Australia may eventually have to import meat unless livestock holdings are increased considerably.

This growing emphasis on the proportion of livestock required for the local market at the expense of exports has meant that many private abattoirs which formerly tended to concentrate on killing for export are now killing a higher proportion of livestock for the local market. However, a decline in the price of wool would change this situation considerably, as a greater volume of sheep would become available for killing, thereby increasing the overall volume of meat both for export and for local consumption. At the time of writing this trend is already apparent. The important thing from the planning point of view is that the present

Table 50
METROPOLITAN STOCK MARKETS — YEARLY YARDINGS, 1950/51

| Market | Area (Acres) | Cattle | Sheep | Pigs |
|-----------|--------------|---------|-----------|--------|
| Newmarket | 46 | 343,091 | 3,371,781 | |
| Dandenong | 2 | 133,514 | 9,420 | 16,156 |
| Brooklyn | 4½ | 6,777 | | 60,000 |

overall capacity of metropolitan abattoirs already exceeds local meat requirements and is capable of taking care of any likely increase in population for many years.

Newmarket Saleyards: The Newmarket saleyards are the hub of the great mass of traffic associated with the marketing and killing of livestock in the metropolitan area. It is estimated that probably 80 per cent. of all livestock purchased by the various metropolitan abattoirs, both council and private, passes through them.

The yarding figures in recent years show that between 4,000,000 and 5,000,000 head of livestock of all types pass through these saleyards every year. Ninety per cent. are sheep and lambs and the rest cattle.

In 1951, 33,380 cattle (10%) and 542,006 sheep and lambs (16%) were store-stock, most of which were shipped back to country districts. The balance were killed in the metropolitan area for local consumption or processed for export. Of this quantity, 64% of the cattle and 48.4% of the sheep were slaughtered at the Melbourne City Abattoirs.

If adequate facilities were available at Newmarket, these yarding figures would probably be even higher. Of the balance of livestock arriving in the metropolitan area, some come from the Dandenong saleyards and some arrive direct from country centres.

The two largest abattoirs in the metropolitan area—the Melbourne City Abattoirs and W. Angliss & Co. (Aust.) Pty. Ltd.—are adjacent to the Newmarket saleyards. These jointly account for about 60% of the cattle and sheep killed in the metropolitan area.

The deficiencies of Newmarket's present facilities to meet the future needs of the meat industry have already been thoroughly investigated and reported on several times in the past 25 years and have caused considerable controversy. The Metropolitan Town Planning Commission's report of 1926 analysed the problem very thoroughly, and strongly recommended the removal of saleyards and abattoirs from Newmarket to a site at Derrimut in the western suburbs.

Counter proposals were made by interested parties from time to time and alternative schemes suggested at Tullamarine and South Kensington, with the result that a further report was made by the Metropolitan Town Planning Commission in 1929. This report again analysed the facts and

Table 51

ESTIMATED WEEKLY KILLING CAPACITY OF
METROPOLITAN AND COUNTRY ABATTOIRS
(Number of Animals)

| <i>Metropolitan Abattoirs</i> | <i>Cattle (Beef & Veal)</i> | <i>Sheep and Lambs</i> | <i>Pigs</i> |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------|
| Council Abattoirs | 10,000 | 41,000 | 500 |
| Private Abattoirs | 16,000 | 135,000 | 14,500 |
| Total Metropolitan | 26,000 | 176,000 | 15,000 |
| Country Abattoirs | 3,000 | 95,000 | 4,000 |

Table 52

ESTIMATED WEEKLY MEAT REQUIREMENTS OF
MELBOURNE (1951)

| <i>Animals</i> | <i>Head</i> | <i>Tons</i> |
|------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Cattle (Beef and Veal) | 8,010 | 1,084 |
| Sheep and Lambs | 56,000 | 883 |
| Pigs | 3,300 | 237 |
| Total | 67,310 | 2,204 |

clearly substantiated the Derrimut scheme as the most practicable and desirable in the overall community interest. Nothing has eventuated, however, and the problem has become more acute with the rise in population.

The present facilities at Newmarket undoubtedly are inadequate, cause considerable congestion and loss of efficiency in the meat industry, and result in a marked deterioration in the quality of meat available to the public. The basic problem is inadequate space for holding stock, but practically all the vital objections outlined in the original Town Planning Commission report of 1926 hold with even stronger force today. Summarising these reasons the report stated:

- "(a) *It is surrounded by a populous neighbourhood.*
- (b) *The enlargement of the markets, abattoirs, resting paddocks, railway sidings, etc., to accommodate the livestock in numbers increasing in proportion to the population without allowing for the growth in the export trade would require the resumption of so much valuable private property as to be impracticable apart from the fact that there is insufficient vacant land in the vicinity of the Newmarket yards to allow for their enlargement and for the accommodation of the various activities necessarily situated in the vicinity.*
- (c) *The trains conveying livestock to Newmarket conflict not only with the frequent suburban electrified services, but also with the ordinary goods traffic, nor does there appear to be any practical solution of this difficulty. The suggestion to construct railway tracks independent of the suburban lines to serve the abattoirs and cattle yards would be extremely costly, and would necessitate such a complete reorganisation of the whole of the abattoirs and saleyards area that the removal to a new site would be probably more economical, apart from the obvious advantages of new location untrammelled by any existing adverse conditions.*
- (d) *The present distant location of the de-trucking yards from the market is uneconomic, the passage of stock travelling between these yards constitutes a nuisance, and the method of driving causes serious deterioration to the livestock. The construction of overhead bridges, etc., to separate the livestock from the other street traffic, or the construction of new de-trucking*