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MORNING PAPERS : FRIDAY, 22ND AUGUST, 1952.

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BROADCASTING STATIONS : MIDNIGHT THURSDAY, 21ST AUGUST, 1952.

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LIVESTOCK STATISTICS - AUSTRALIA

31st March, 1952

-1 SEP 1952

Preliminary estimates of the numbers of principal livestock in Australia as at 31st March, 1952 are shown below. These estimates are based on preliminary data obtained by the Government Statisticians of each State from the Annual Census of Agricultural, Pastoral and Dairying activities taken in March of this year, and will be revised when the complete results of the Census are available. Final particulars of livestock numbers classified according to age and sex, etc. will be released later in the year.

The main features of the movement in livestock numbers to March, 1952 were as follows:-

Sheep: Continuing an upward trend in sheep numbers after the trough of 95.7 million recorded at 31st March, 1947, Australian sheep at 31st March, 1952, are estimated at 117.5 million, which represents an increase of 1.9 million or 1.7 per cent on the number at March, 1951. The estimated number of sheep at March, 1952 was 7.6 million (6.1 per cent) less than the peak of 125.2 million at March, 1942. Losses of sheep and marked lambs on farms during 1951-52 were at about the same level as in the previous year (i.e. slightly in excess of 10 million). Mortality of sheep and marked lambs on farms in normal years ranges from 5 to 7 million.

Dairy Cattle: The estimated number of dairy cattle in March 1952, viz. 4,571,000, was 231,000 or 4.8 per cent less than in March 1951 and is the lowest figure since 1943 when total dairy cattle numbers were first recorded separately. The preliminary results indicate that dairy cow numbers in March 1952 probably fell below 3 million for the first time since 1932.

Beef Cattle: The upward trend in beef cattle numbers from 8,835,000 in March 1947 to 10,426,000 in March 1951 was followed by a small decrease to 10,263,000 at 31st March, 1952.

Pigs: Pig numbers in March, 1952 are estimated at 1,023,000, a decline of 111,000 (9.8 per cent.) from March 1951. The estimated number of pigs in March 1952 was the lowest since 1929.

Totals of each class of livestock are shown in the table below.

NUMBERS OF PRINCIPAL LIVESTOCK : AUSTRALIA.

(Thousands.)

| Classification         | Beginning<br>of<br>1939 | at 31st March - |         |         |         |         | Percentage in-<br>crease(+) or de-<br>crease(-) 1952 on- |
|------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|----------------------------------------------------------|
|                        |                         | 1948            | 1949    | 1950    | 1951    | 1952(a) |                                                          |
| Sheep                  | 111,058                 | 102,559         | 108,735 | 112,891 | 115,596 | 117,542 | (+) 5.8                                                  |
| Cattle - Dairy<br>Beef | 12,862                  | 4,746           | 4,863   | 4,890   | 4,802   | 4,571   | (-) 1.7                                                  |
|                        |                         | 9,039           | 9,261   | 9,750   | 10,426  | 10,263  | (+) 15.3                                                 |
| Pigs                   | 1,156                   | 1,255           | 1,196   | 1,123   | 1,134   | 1,023   | (-) 11.5                                                 |

(a) Preliminary estimates.

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COMMONWEALTH BUREAU OF CENSUS AND STATISTICS

CANBERRA. A.C.T.

20TH AUGUST, 1952.