Confidential: To be treated as strictly confidential until released for publication as follows:-

MORNING PAPERS : SATURDAY, 13TH JANUARY, 1951.
EVENING PAPERS : SATURDAY, 13TH JANUARY, 1951.
BROADCASTING STATIONS: MIDNIGHT, FRIDAY, 12TH JANUARY, 1951.

MONTHLY INDEX OF AUSTRALIAN EXPORT PRICES - NOVEMBER, 1950.

1. The monthly export price index-numbers for November, 1950 together with comparative figures for earlier periods, have been issued by the Commonwealth Statistician (Dr. Roland Wilson).

2. Two series of index-numbers are provided - one on fixed weights, the other on changing weights. Each takes account of 20 items, which constitute at present about 80 per cent of the total value of exports of merchandise and silver together with gold production.

3. All export parities are calculated from price quotations from the most reliable and representative sources available. In most cases the prices used are those at which current sales are being effected. For some metals, however, the prices are the average value of current realizations in various markets and hence show some irregularity.

In respect of wheat, during 1948 it became impossible to determine "prices at which current sales are being effected" because a very large proportion of exportable wheat was being sold forward on long-term contracts and at widely differing prices. In August, 1949 export sales of wheat became subject to the International Wheat Agreement, under which maximum and minimum export prices are fixed for a specified quota of wheat. Wheat in excess of the quota is sold on the open market at contract prices. A new series of wheat prices was introduced into the index in June, 1948 to meet the effect of the practice of selling on contract. This is based on average actual realizations for current shipments and, for comparability, the price index of wheat and the aggregate index were revised on this basis as from July, 1945. Immediately prior to devaluation of the £ on 19th September, 1949 the Australian equivalent of the maximum price for International Wheat Agreement wheat was 11s.2d. per bushel. This maximum then rose to 16s. 1d., but this change and the corresponding change in the price of other wheat did not immediately affect realizations for current shipments.

In respect of wool, an average monthly "price at which current sales are being effected" can be determined during the selling season which usually extends from September to June.

I. THE SIMPLE AGGREGATIVE INDEX : FIXED WEIGHTS

4. The "quantity multipliers" used for this series for the period 1928-36 were the average annual exports (or production, in the case of gold) during the five years 1928-29 to 1932-33. Since July, 1936 these multipliers have been recalculated on the basis of average annual exports (production, in the case of gold) during the three years 1933-34 to 1935-36. A summary of the movements in this index is given in the following table, the base of the index-numbers being the average of the three years ended June, 1939 = 100

Indexes are also given for individual commodities and certain groups thereof. The percentage distribution of these groups in the aggregates of the "All Groups" indexes for the base period (1936-37 to 1938-39) is shown at the head of the table and represents the proportional contribution of each to the "All Groups" indexes for all periods from 1936-37. Thus, the equivalence in "points" of any percentage variation in the "group", etc., indexes, when multiplied by the percentage at the head of its column will give the number of "points" by which the "All Groups" index would be varied. Those of line (f) are applicable to the "All Groups (inclusive of Gold)" and of line (g) to the "All Groups (exclusive of Gold)" indexes.

5. Compared with the year 1949-50 the combined index (including gold) for November, 1950 increased by 66 per cent, and is 665 per cent higher than for the year 1938-39.

Individual group indexes for November, 1950 compared with group indexes for the year 1949-50 show percentage changes as follows:- Wool +104; Wheat +7; Butter nil; Metals +67; Meats +2; Sugar +7; Dried Fruits +6; Tallow -11; Hides +46 and Gold +7.

2890.

EXPORT PRICE INDEX

INDIVIDUAL COMMODITIES, GROUPS AND ALL GROUPS COMBINED

(Base of each Section - Average of 3 years ended June, 1939 = 100)

Period	Wool	Wheat (a)	Butter	Metals (b)	Meats (c)	Sugar	Dried Fruits (d)	Tallow	Hides (e)	Gold	All Groups Excl. Gold	All Groups Incl. Gold
(f) =	45.63	17.06	11.36	6.83	6.63	2.40	1.81	.64	.66	6.98	-	100.00
(g) =	49.05	18.34	12.21	7.34	7.13	2.58	1.94	.69	.72	-	100.00	-
1928-29	124	117	126	107	105	126	97	141	136	48	120	117
1936-37	122	123	92	120	98	104	103	122	113	99	116	114
1937-38	99	111	107	96	107	93	103	100	100	98	102	102
1938-39	79	66	101	84	96	104	94	78	87	103	82	83
1939-40	98	82	108	92	102	126	94	76	120	116	96	98
1940-41	101	102	110	95	103	137	95	82	98	121	103	104
1941-42	101	105	110	101	109	137	106	114	133	120	105	106
1942-43	117	106	114	100	112	152	112	119	145	119	114	114
1943-44	117	116	114	113	113	159	121	123	151	119	117	117
1944-45	117	154	147	129	122	172	128	151	147	120	130	130
1945-46	117	213	147	196	123	213	137	161	152	122	148	146
1946-47	173	305	173	308	139	264	152	361	334	122	209	203
1947-48	287	420	193	372	146	320	157	436	364	122	296	283
1948-49	365	413	233	478	171	343	162	499	421	122	348	332
1949-50	473	400	250	421	196	369	176	400	479	164	399	383
1948-49												
Nov.	366	438	233	469	176	340	157	511	419	122	353	337
Dec.	400	418	233	481	176	340	157	511	420	122	367	350
Jan.	400	397	233	551	176	345	157	511	442	122	368	351
Feb.	411	383	233	551	176	345	157	511	471	122	371	353
March	(j)411	379	233	535	176	345	171	511	468	122	370	353
April	332	380	233	458	176	345	171	511	482	122	325	311
May	336	371	233	452	176	345	172	511	481	122	325	311
June	339	365	233	449	176	345	172	511	462	122	326	311
1949-50												
July	(j)339	362	250	330	186	345	172	511	443	122	319	305
Aug.	(j)347	367	250	370	186	345	172	511	446	122	327	313
Sept.	339	377	250	388	186	345	172	511	451	144	326	314
Oct.	392	378	250	454	200	345	172	363	466	176	357	345
Nov.	419	382	250	441	200	345	172	363	482	176	370	357
Dec.	456	394	250	427	200	345	172	363	499	176	390	375
Jan.	562	395	250	432	200	394	172	363	500	176	444	425
Feb.	536	409	250	435	200	394	172	363	499	176	434	416
March	524	420	250	411	200	394	185	363	498	176	429	411
April	(j)554	443	250	417	200	394	185	363	490	176	448	429
May	611	441	250	456	200	394	185	363	490	176	478	457
June	592	435	250	494	200	394	185	363	486	176	471	450
1950-51												
July	(j)592	424	(l)250	496	(l)200	394	187	363	490	176	(k)469	(k)448
Aug.	864	423	(l)250	547	(l)200	394	187	363	582	176	(k)606	(k)576
Sept.	890	419	(l)250	675	(l)200	394	187	363	636	176	(k)628	(k)597
Oct.	890	(h)427	(l)250	681	(l)200	394	187	354	667	176	(h)(k)631	(h)(k)599
Nov.	(k)965	(k)427	(l)250	704	(l)200	394	187	354	701	176	(k)670	(k)635

(a) See para. 3 on previous page.
(b) Silver, Copper, Tin, Zinc, Lead.
(c) Beef, Lamb, Mutton, Pork.
(d) Sultanas, Lexias, Currants.
(e) Cattle Hides, Calf Skins.
(f) Percentage distribution of Base Aggregate for "All Groups (incl. Gold)" - applicable from 1936-37.
(g) Percentage distribution of Base Aggregate for "All Groups (excl. Gold)" - applicable from 1936-37.
(h) Revised.
(j) Nominal
(k) Subject to revision.
(l) Nominal pending new agreement.

II. THE MONTH-TO-MONTH INDEX : CHANGING WEIGHTS.

6. Australian products are not marketed regularly throughout the year. Wool and wheat are obvious examples of commodities which are marketed in relatively large quantities at certain periods of the year. In consequence, while the "fixed weights" index indicates satisfactorily the trend of the market, it does not, by itself, give an adequate indication of the significance of price movements as they actually affected current sales. This is shown much more clearly by the "changing weights" index given in the table below.

7. This index is designed to compare prices in any one month (or period of a trade year) with those in the corresponding month (or period) of the previous year. The weights used in its construction are the quantities exported in these two corresponding months (or periods). A full description of the method of computation can be found on page 434 of the Official Year Book of the Commonwealth No. 35, 1942 and 1943. A summary of movements in this index follows:-

(Base : Weighted Average Price Level in corresponding months (or periods) of preceding year = 100)

Month	Month stated compared with same month of preceding year	Period of trade year ending in month stated, compared with same period of preceding year
1948-49		
November	126	131
December	133	132
January	119	129
February	113	126
March	117	125
April	98	122
May	96	119
June	91	116
1949-50		
July	91	91
August	92	92
September	94	92
October	110	97
November	108	100
December	110	102
January	130	106
February	119	108
March	119	110
April	145	112
May	159	118
June	149	120
1950-51		
July	155 (a)	155 (a)
August	182 (a)	168 (a)
September	174 (a)	170 (a)
October	184 (a)(b)	175 (a)(b)
November	195 (a)	180 (a)

(a) Subject to revision. (b) Revised

This document is published by the Commonwealth Statistician, and contains statistics or abstracts thereof compiled and tabulated by the Commonwealth Statistician pursuant to the Census and Statistics Act 1905-1949.

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COMMONWEALTH BUREAU OF CENSUS AND STATISTICS

CANBERRA. A.C.T. 12TH JANUARY, 1951