

The business of the auction is in the hands of a manager. He keeps in close touch with the farmers so that they will be thoroughly informed on everything done by the Board of Directors and the business staff, and will feel free to take an active part in the affairs of the association. There is an annual meeting of all members to discuss general business and to elect the Board of Directors. Details of finance and administration are handled by the nine board members.

Other egg auctions are held in Vineland, in the southern part of the state, a very productive poultry section; but the Flemington egg, poultry and livestock auction is today the largest of its kind in the world, and the first successful one.

The auction itself is very interesting to watch. It is held in a large room equipped with folding wooden seats, much like classroom chairs. The auctioneer stands on a platform in front of a large double blackboard. Behind him a clerk, writing as fast as he can----and he has to write pretty fast to keep up with the speed of the auctioneer---posts a list of the particular lot of goods that is being offered. The auctioneer talks so fast that, until one becomes accustomed to the sound, it is impossible to understand what he is saying.

The dealers sitting in the chairs facing him, to all appearances, are quite indifferent to the proceedings on the platform. But as one looks around, a finger will be seen lifted here and there to indicate that the bid has been raised. When the auctioneer is satisfied that he has received a fair price for the goods, he signifies the closing of the bid by clapping his hands together.

Meanwhile, another clerk is keeping a close watch on the audience to see which dealer gets the goods. When a dealer has completed his purchase he steps to the front of the room, receives a slip indicating the lot numbers of the eggs he has bought, walks to a window and pays cash, and then goes downstairs to receive the lot and take it away at his own expense. The whole proceeding is carried on with business-like efficiency and speed.

Before the establishment of this method of selling, the farmer sold his goods mostly through wholesale dealers, who in turn sold them to stores or route salesmen. The farmer received as little as 86 percent of the wholesale selling price. Retailers then added anywhere from 8 to 10 cents a dozen to the wholesale price; and the farmer had to be content with the difference. Now the auctioneer can hold the price up to meet the market price in the large cities, and all the farmer has to pay for the service is the actual expense of running the auction. In addition, he gets a return from the yearly profits of the auction. So successful has the cooperative idea proved that today about 70 percent of the eggs sold in New Jersey find their way to the market through this plan.