

FOURTH  
BIENNIAL REPORT  
OF  
FLORIDA STATE  
MARKETING  
BUREAU

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Report of L. M. RHODES, Commissioner  
Florida State Marketing Bureau, to  
Honorable John W. Martin, Governor  
of the State of Florida.

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THE BUREAU STAFF

L. M. RHODES, Commissioner  
Moses Folsom, Secretary  
Neill Rhodes, Senior Market Agent  
H. A. Maloney, Junior Market Agent  
(Temporary), Telegraph Operator  
Paul F. Koerber, Stenographer  
W. L. Jackson, Multigrapher  
E. M. Roberts, Assistant Multigrapher



## FOREWORD

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The Federal Government and thirty-six States have Marketing Bureaus. In no instance has a Marketing Bureau been abolished after being established. The writer believes that there is none better than the Florida Marketing Bureau. The wide range of activities that the problem of marketing presents calls for various duties on the part of the Marketing Commissioner and his office force. This Report presents these features of the work and deserves your consideration.

The fact that the business of the Bureau has steadily and consistently grown from year to year, and the number of people served has increased to such extent as herein shown, is proof of the need of the service it renders.

The timeliness of the information service is one of the essential features of merit of the Bureau. Printed reports do not answer the requirements of people in the daily markets with perishable products. The wire service furnishes the grower and shipper with the same information that the large dealers have. The personal contact of the Commissioner with the farmers of the State by responding to their calls is a means of getting information to them that cannot be presented so well by any other method of communication.

**NATHAN MAYO,**  
Commissioner of Agriculture.



FOURTH BIENNIAL REPORT  
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The Fourth Biennial Report of L. M. Rhodes, Commissioner Florida State Marketing Bureau, a Division of the Florida Department of Agriculture, respectfully submitted by  
Nathan Mayo, Commissioner Florida Department of Agriculture  
L. M. Rhodes, Commissioner Florida State Marketing Bureau

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To HON. JOHN W. MARTIN, Governor of Florida:

We are gratified to report that the entire period of the State Marketing Bureau's existence since July 1, 1917, has been one of growth and service, and that its greatest growth, expansion and development has been during the last two years.

All students of agricultural economics are agreed that marketing, with its many functions and diversities, is the most complex problem, the most difficult task, and the most intricate part of agriculture.

Farming is universally acknowledged to be the world's greatest and basic industry. Farm products are the paramount source of the world's commerce and trade.

No unit in the world's volume of agricultural merchandising has a greater diversity of problems, and no part in the farming area of the earth has a greater field in agricultural economics than Florida.

Certainly no state in the Union has a greater marketing problem than Florida, and no one of the thirty-six State Marketing Bureaus has a more difficult task than the Florida State Marketing Bureau. For the law requires of the State Marketing Bureau: "To do all that can be done in connection with the Commissioner of Agriculture to bring relief to and aid in the marketing and distribution of Florida products."

The following are some of the duties performed by the Bureau during the last two years:

### **Marketing Advice**

The Bureau carries on an average of from fifty to one hundred telephone conversations daily, and as many more letters, wires and personal conferences seeking advice and information covering every phase of marketing from the soil to the table. Among the points in discussion were: Information as to grades, packing, standardization, inspection, containers, transportation, routing, charges, refrigeration, warehousing, packing houses, cold storage, financing and contracting, economics, crop conditions, precooling, assembling, conditioning and processing, shrinkage, deterioration, classification, weather conditions, seasonal offerings, quality, variety, supply, demand, advertising, market reporting, diversions, market quotations, forecasted yields and conditions, destinations, passings, unloads, market preferences, loading, arrangement, how to ship, where to ship, reliability of consignees and buyers, conditions and prospects in competitive states, the shipping season in this and other states, foreign demand for Florida products, cost of production, general statistics on all phases of Florida production and shipments. The Bureau has its records conveniently arranged so that information can be given quickly and completely.

### **The Bureau a Clearing House For Information**

The average daily mail sent out by the Bureau is twelve hundred and thirty pieces, more than one hundred of which are typewritten letters giving information with

reference to marketing in general, concerning Florida from every angle, answering inquiries from every state in the union and more than two dozen foreign countries as to statistical reports, bulletins, market reports, etc.

### Records As to Carlot Shipments

The Bureau keeps a very complete and thorough record of the carlot shipments out of the state. Also the production, yield, acreage, cost, plant varieties, best adapted to various markets and a record thoroughly up-to-date on practically every phase of marketing in its many branches. These reports are distributed to the press of the state, and are given wide circulation throughout the entire country. The Commissioner makes an annual report which shows the seasonal carlot shipments of each Florida commodity, the report including all boat, rail, express and truck shipments. The Bureau has also a record of the unloads of the leading commodities in the principal markets of the United States.

### Market Charts

The Bureau has prepared charts containing complete, condensed accurate general information on each important Florida crop covering all the larger terminal markets. At a glance, on one page, the season's history of a commodity is told in pictures or chart work, the prices being based upon Federal-State quotations. The Bureau hopes to publish a series of the charts for the benefit of the Florida producers and shippers.

### Financial and Commercial Standing of Dealers

Information has been supplied by the Florida State Marketing Bureau as to the rating, financial and commercial responsibility of produce merchants and commission merchants in the United States, Canada, Cuba, and many points in foreign countries. This service is entirely free to the farmers of the state, and there is no excuse for any grower becoming connected with a dishonest manipulator if he will call upon the Marketing Bureau for a report.

The service given has been extensive and has served as a great protection to shippers against the crooked buyers and questionable dealers. The Bureau keeps a revised file of dealers in various lines, and carries perhaps the most complete line of commercial rating books of any office in the State of Florida.

### Collections

The Bureau has always been fair in any and every dispute between the shipper and receiver and has for this reason been called upon to arbitrate many controversies. The accounts adjusted and claims collected annually amount to many thousands of dollars. Many shippers have repeatedly proclaimed this feature alone well worth the entire appropriation allotted for the Bureau.

### Buying and Selling Service

As the name implies, the State Marketing Bureau is for the purpose of marketing or assisting in the marketing of products. It is not the policy or intention of the Bureau to make a specialty of direct selling, but instead of direct handling, to supply shippers with reliable connections,—either those handling consignments, those buying outright f. o. b. or for cash, those making cash advances or contracting for crops,—in any or all markets within reach of Florida products. It is the purpose and mission of the Bureau to do everything possible to secure profitable markets and returns for Florida products.

The Bureau has effected sales for practically every product in the State, has assisted in pushing to the front some products that were not so well and favorably known, has given advice and assistance in quantities from one crate to the equivalent of a trainload. The Bureau has given quotations upon, arranged sales or purchases for some 200 different supplies and articles. There are hundreds selling Florida products directly to connections established by the assistance of the Marketing Bureau, and the volume of this business would be enormous. It is not the purpose or mission of the Marketing Bureau to become directly and financially interested in any products, nor is the Market Bureau equipped with warehouse and storage

and delivery facilities to accept direct consignments. The Bureau can best serve the grower by advising the most reputable dealer specializing in the particular commodity offered, the best market for such a product, can secure offers and make sales or arrangements for shipments without direct billing or handling.

### For Sale, Want & Exchange Bulletin

One of the most important features of the Bureau's work is the For Sale, Want & Exchange Bulletin which is distributed regularly to all farmers and producers desiring it, and in which any articles used in the furtherance of agricultural pursuits may be advertised without cost. It is a medium by and through which a ready disposition is accomplished for a class of articles which cannot be sold in the same manner as fruits and vegetables, or perishable goods. The farmer is thoroughly posted as to the price he can ask and receive for his wares, can locate through the Bulletin columns practically any kind of equipment for farm or table from other farmers, knows what and where to purchase. It is one means of eliminating the middleman. The products and articles advertised in the Bulletin amount to an average of \$14,000 per day, and the business actually transacted through the Bulletin would amount to \$10,000 per day. About 6500 people advertise in the Bulletin per annum. It is hardly possible to definitely estimate the volume of business done by this medium, but it would run into millions. In addition to the advertising given, the front page is devoted each issue to a live, crisp presentation of important marketing information covering production, grades, standards, distribution, marketing, crop conditions, etc.

### Market News Service

The law requires the Commissioner of the State Marketing Bureau to work in co-operation and harmony with the U. S. Department of Agriculture. The Bureau is very fortunate in its relationship with this Department, particularly the U. S. Bureau of Agricultural Economics. The Commissioner of the Florida Market Bureau made the

initial movement for the leased wire circuit through the Southeastern States giving daily market information. At present the Bureau has a leased wire with the Washington Bureau from which they receive daily reports on all seasonal quotations and general market information in the main terminal markets. A daily report is published by the Bureau in co-operation with the Federal Bureau giving state shipments and destinations, prices of all miscellaneous vegetable offerings from Florida. The joint service is carried on also at Orlando on citrus, at Sanford on celery, at Ocala on cucumbers, tomatoes and watermelons. The reports from all offices are available to every shipper in the State desiring them, no charge made for any of this service. The daily reports help the farmer to know and keep posted on the markets, to have a clear picture of the production, movement, supply, demand and consumption of all seasonal commodities. They keep the shipper informed of the market with unbiased, accurate information. The reports advise as to daily condition of the market, conditions in competing areas, amount, rate and direction of the movement, quality and condition of shipments, export demand, prospect of imports, prevailing tone of the market, quantity in storage, weather variations, pest epidemics, and other useful data. It teaches the shipper what to not expect as well as what he may expect, what to provide for, and what to provide against. It is fundamental to intelligent action in the functions and processes of better marketing.

The Bureau gives a daily miscellaneous mail report to all the newspapers who will publish the information, has given a daily wire to daily papers, banks, associations and individual shippers covering only the crop in which they were interested. The volume of telegraphic work in the offices of the Bureau is astonishing to those who are not familiar with the details. The Bureau sends out and receives enough telegraphic market news, which if added to the regular messages sent out by the Bureau, to amount to 500 ten-word messages daily. The Bureau's daily market price list of all poultry and eggs, and fruits and vegetables are published in the Jacksonville papers. This has been of great benefit to Florida egg producers who use

the disinterested quotations as a basis upon which to form contracts and make sales. The cities down the state are guided more or less by a Jacksonville-plus price.

### Grades, Standardization and Shipping Point Inspection

Grading farm products is separating them into groups of uniform size, variety and quality. Proper grading at shipping point eliminates culls, damaged or diseased products, and saves labor, packing material, transportation and selling charges. Graded products always bring a better price than field or grove run or ungraded products, and are much easier sold. They result in continued and broadened markets and satisfied customers.

Standardization is making known the nature and character of the commodities included in the grades, or the defects excluded from the products graded. Standardization eliminates many of the difficulties in marketing. The Federal Bureau of Agricultural Economics, co-operating with the State Marketing Bureau, have established grades on potatoes, tomatoes, celery, peppers, cucumbers, pineapples, citrus fruits from Florida, and the co-operative service has made available a shipping-point Federal State confirmation of the grade and quality of the product in the form of a certificate which is prima facie evidence in practically all courts in the United States.

Federal-State cooperative shipping point inspection service involves an examination of products to determine whether they conform or fail to meet with the grade requirements and enables the shipper to make intelligent arrangements for the sale of his produce. It reveals qualities or conditions which qualify products for certain markets and disqualify them for others. It is a commercial service that is being practiced in three-fourths of the states in the union in marketing perishable products. Without the State Marketing Bureau this service could not be available to Florida growers, and with the cooperation of the Federal Bureau it has been available to Florida shippers, and 8,300 cars were inspected in the 1923-24 season. Perhaps twice that number of cars will be inspected in the 1924-25 season. The Bureau handles the finances and

keeps the records, files and certificates and renders every possible assistance in this work.

### **The Commissioner's Services**

Lectures on different phases of marketing are in great demand. As the Commissioner has made almost a life-study of marketing and cooperative organization, he is in great demand to attend the various meetings over the state and delivers an average of more than one hundred lectures annually at farmer's meetings, chambers of commerce, farm organizations, fruitmans' clubs, and various other gatherings in the state. If all the calls for lectures in the past seven years had been filled by the Commissioner, no time would have been permitted for office duties.

### **Conclusion**

The funds which maintain the Bureau are derived from the sale of fertilizer stamps. The farmers who buy fertilizer pay the fertilizer tax indirectly. The Bureau is not a burden on the general taxpayer, but is paid for by the farmers of the state who derive the greatest benefits from it. And even if there were no Bureau, the same taxation would prevail, and did prevail before the Bureau was created. The appropriation for the support of the Bureau is about one-twentieth of one per cent of the amount of business it touches in some way by its inspection service, market reporting, For Sale, Want & Exchange Bulletin, accomplishing sales and connections, on diversions and consignments, spotting buyers and claim work, and the various other duties. The activities of the Florida State Marketing Bureau touch in some way about \$50,000,000 worth of products annually.

Every phase of the work of the Marketing Bureau contributes directly to human welfare, to the correction of abuses, to the righting of wrongs, to the elimination of difficulties, to the rendering of assistance, to the increase of knowledge, to the furtherance of better understanding and business relationship among men. These things are basic in the advancement of civilization.

There are yet unmeasured possibilities of service and benefits to the people of Florida by this Bureau if it is properly supported, utilized and expanded.

## FINANCIAL STATEMENT

of the

Expenditures of the Florida State Marketing Bureau

July 1, 1923, to March 1, 1925

FOR PERIOD July 1, 1923, to July 1, 1924

Appropriated per annum-----		\$25,860.00
SALARIES: -----	\$14,100.00	
MULTIGRAPH: -----	5,000.00	
Upkeep and supplies. (Of this amount bills for \$205.80 contracted for in June, 1923, were included).		
ADDRESSOGRAPH: -----	125.00	
Upkeep and supplies.		
POSTAGE: -----	800.00	
For general office, semi-monthly bulletin, daily market reports, etc.		
TELEGRAPH: -----	1,365.00	
General office and leased wire.		
STATIONERY AND OFFICE SUPPLIES: -----	700.00	
Office fixtures, typewriters, stationery, ink, pencils, water, miscellaneous.		
TELEPHONE: -----	326.06	
TRAVELING EXPENSES: -----	2,000.00	
For the Commissioner, office personnel, and auto upkeep. (Of this amount, bills for \$381.14 contracted in June, 1923, were included).		
RENT: -----	1,380.00	25,796.06
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Turned back to State July 1, 1924-----		\$63.94

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FOR PERIOD July 1, 1924, to March 1, 1925

EXPENDITURES

Appropriated per annum_____		\$25,860.00
SALARIES: _____	\$ 9,400.04	
MULTIGRAPH: _____	3,492.91	
ADDRESSOGRAPH: _____	98.74	
POSTAGE: _____	541.84	
TELEGRAPH: _____	1,040.72	
STATIONERY AND OFFICE		
SUPPLIES: _____	654.13	
TELEPHONE: _____	172.90	
TRAVELING EXPENSES: _____	1,001.68	
RENT: _____	920.00	17,322.96
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Balance remaining four months Mar. 1 to July 1\_ \$8,537.04