**MARKETING OF EGGS ACT AMENDMENT BILL 1957**

**House of Assembly, 28 August 1957, page 501**

Second reading

**The Hon. G. G. PEARSON (Minister of Agriculture)—**The purpose of the Bill is to extend the operation of the Marketing of Eggs Act for a further three years. If its operation is not extended, the Act will end on September 30 next. The principal Act was first passed in 1941. Its operation has been extended from time to time, the last time being in 1954. The marketing scheme created under the principal Act has become an important part of the egg industry. Under the scheme, the South Australian Egg Board markets all eggs produced by commercial egg producers. The board consists of six members—three representing producers, one representing wholesalers, one retailers, and the sixth member (the chairman) is the Chief Poultry Adviser in the Department of Agriculture. The board works through agents and collectors. Continuance of the legislation is of particular importance at the present time when our traditional export market in the United Kingdom is very difficult due to increased production resulting from the British Government’s heavy subsidies to its own egg producers. It is estimated that these subsidies last year cost the United Kingdom taxpayer £35,000,000 and that they have increased egg production in Britain from 556,000,000 dozen before World War II to 830,000,000 dozen in the year ended May 31, 1956.

Orderly marketing is especially important to the South Australian egg industry and to consumers in South Australia, where periods of surplus production alternate with periods of shortage. Without legislation, the market would show violent fluctuations, which would be embarrassing to both producers and consumers. Overseas exports of eggs are regulated by the Australian Egg Board, on which the South Australian Egg Board is represented. The export market, particularly for shell eggs, is on a consignment basis and it is frequently four to five months after the eggs have been received by the board from producers before the realizations for the eggs are known. To bridge this gap, the Australian Egg Board makes an advance payment to the South Australian Egg Board at the time the eggs are packed. Final adjustments are made at the end of the season.

The South Australian Egg Board is endeavouring to increase local sales of eggs. Advertising, window displays, recipes and other sales features are continually being utilized by the board towards this end. Some success can be reported. Last year, local sales of eggs increased by 10.85 per cent over the previous year, which in turn was 2.41 per cent higher than the preceding year. Local sales in 1956- 57 were 4,250,000 dozen and in 1955-56 3,750,000 dozen.

In the year 1956-57, the South Australian Egg Board received 11.37 million dozen eggs compared with 11.82 million dozen eggs in 1955-56 and 9.66 million dozen eggs in its first full year of operation, 1943-44. Net returns to producers last year for all eggs received were 3s. 2.46d. per dozen. The South Australian board’s handling costs at 6d. per dozen are considerably less than in other States. This handling charge includes agents’ charges and all costs of receiving, grading, testing and packing eggs and accounting to producers. The industry faces serious problems because of the great difficulty in placing eggs on the United Kingdom market. The Government believes that the industry should continue to receive the support of the legislation in the marketing of its eggs. I therefore commend the Bill to the House. It does nothing more than extend the existing provisions of the Act and the operations of the board for a further three years. It is a simple Bill and I commend it to the House.

Mr. TAPPING secured the adjournment of the debate.