

CHASE & CO.
SANFORD, FLORIDA

June 13, 1933.

Mr. S. O. Chase,
P. O. Box 25,
Asheville, N. C.

Mr. J. C. Chase,
414 Manheim St., Germantown,
Philadelphia, Pa.

Gentlemen:-

FARMERS MARKETING SYSTEM.

You will probably recall that a meeting was called in Orlando for 9:30 this morning by a state committee of growers to put before the growers and shippers of the state the Farmers Marketing System.

Mayer S. Y. Way, of Orlando, welcomed the audience of about four hundred growers and shippers. I would say that there were about 100 or more people there representing shippers, or connected with shipping organizations. Mr. A. E. Pickard, of Orlando, acted as Chairman, and enthusiastically indorsed this new marketing system. He was so enthusiastic in his indorsement that it would lead one to believe that he not only had fruit to sell but had hopes of helping sell somebody elses; that is it would appear that he possibly had a job in view.

Mr. Pickard introduced Mr. H. H. Stockfeld, Vice President of the Company, claiming that Mr. Stockfeld had called on Mr. Andrew Mellon, and without any introduction to Mr. Mellon had secured, without collateral, a quarter of a million dollars for the promotion of this new selling scheme that was to help the farmers and growers of the United States. The Chairman also stated that Mr. Stockfeld had brought the Austin car to the United States, and that in spite of the pessimism of many of his friends had put the deal over and made the people of this country like it. He was also introduced as being the man who had introduced non-shatter glass in this country, first to Mr. Ford then to other automobile concerns. From the above the writer gathered that Mr. Stockfeld had not delt with highly perishable goods, such as vegetables and citrus fruits.

Mr. Stockfeld in beginning his talk stated what he had accomplished in Australia, in organizing the retail grocery men in a town of about 300,000 people. I do not recall the name of the town. He did not go into the details of this accomplishment, and only spoke in generalities; therefore it was not possible to base an opinion, except that it was a wonderful success.

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Mr. Stockfield informed the audience that Mr. L. B. Nutting, Chairman of the Board, had contributed \$100,000. for the promotion of this marketing system, for which he did not ask any security or free stock, or the return of principal or payment of interest. I wish more men free with their money to this extent could be found and brought to Florida. Mr. Stockfield then went into some detail as to the way the system was to work. The fruits or vegetables first should be prepared for loading in the car, and a government inspector should pass on the grade and pack and issue a certificate as to his findings. This certificate, with the amount of vegetables or citrus would be sent to an office of the Company where it would be sent to the different markets by the wonderful teletype machine. This teletype machine, so Mr. Stockfield informed the audience, was instantaneous, and could do everything but actually talk. On receipt of this information in the different markets, of which there would be sixty or more as against the present nine or ten auctions, the information would be cataloged and made ready for the buyers to use in bidding on the cars the following morning. These bids would be simultaneously flashed to all parts of the country where teletype machines were in use in their offices. In this way if a car of vegetables or citrus was being bid on in more than one market all markets would be advised as to what the others were bidding; also the office where the grower was waiting to see how much his fruit or vegetables would bring. Mr. Stockfield later gave us a demonstration of the way the teletype machine worked with three they had set-up in the Municipal Auditorium. In other words he held a little game of auction, and to some of the growers it might just as well have been auction bridge. After the demonstration of these machines the Chairman invited the people to ask any questions they wanted to. One person asked the question if it would be possible to withdraw his fruit, and not sell it, if the price was not satisfactory. To this Mr. Stockfield answered "Yes", that a grower could withdraw his fruit, and refuse to accept the offer any time he felt the price was not high enough. Another person asked when they would get their money, and if they would have to let the fruit go out of their possession before they received the money. To this Mr. Stockfield replied that the money would be available to them within a few hours after the sale, that the fruit would not have to leave their possession before they received the money. Another person asked where the fruit would be held in the meantime, and if it was not sold the first day it was ready to be loaded in the car where it would be held. These last two questions were not answered directly or indirectly, but were very skillfully evaded. Mr. R. P. Burton, from Lake County, asked Mr. Stockfield what would be the outcome if a car of fruit was sold, and on arrival in the market the buyer found that it did not come up to government inspection which was made in Florida, due to decay or some other conditions which the buyer did not have any control over. To this Mr. Stockfield answered

that it would be entirely up to the buyer, and they would not necessarily have anything more to do with that car of fruit, as they would already have secured the money for it, and turned same over to the grower. There were a number of other questions asked during the meeting up to about twelve o'clock, but most of them were not answered, but evaded by a continuous line of talk and reading of telegrams and recommendations that had been received prior to the introduction of this new system in Florida.

People were given the impression that Mr. Attaberry, President of the Pennsylvania Railway, indorsed the system very enthusiastically; that the American Telephone & Telegraph Company indorsed the system very highly. All of these recommendations seemed very natural. In answer to some of the questions letters of recommendation were read rapidly, and without informing the people who they were from, other than that they were prominent, had been in business for a number of years, and understood the situation. The more Mr. Stockfield talked the more obvious it became that he knew very little, if anything, concerning the subject on which he was talking.

Just as the writer was leaving, and before the crowd broke up, Mr. Stockfield advised Mr. Burton that he had a negative mind, and that only people with negative minds could not grasp the opportunities which this new system made possible to the producers of the state. He said they were in a position where they could begin operating as quick as four days from the time they decided to begin. One grower became so excited, and talked so fast, that he very nearly lost his set of teeth on the floor, but managed to catch them and replace same, and continue his talk.

The whole program seemed to be one of promotion. Any one using that system would have to purchase one share of stock. The price of this one share was not named. It is really ridiculous to think that well educated, sound thinking, people could fall for any such scheme, but there are some who really believe in this new marketing system.

I believe this about sums up the matter, with the exception of many generalities which were dealt with by Mr. Stockfield, and which meant little or nothing to any one who is familiar with the handling of fruits and vegetables from the field to the market.

Yours very truly,

