

*Abscesses.*—An analysis of the monthly returns of the Inspectors at the various freezing-works shows that a considerable number of pig carcasses are condemned either in part or as a whole for abscesses, particularly in the scrotal region. The loss sustained from this cause alone is considerable, and, seeing that it could be avoided, it is to the interest of every pig-breeder to do so. These abscesses are caused by organisms gaining entrance either at the time the operation is performed or subsequent thereto. The greatest care should be exercised to see that the hands of the operator and the instruments used are thoroughly cleansed and made sterile. After the operation is finished the wounds should be dressed with a suitable antiseptic and the animals kept under the cleanliest conditions possible until the wounds have healed completely. If care were exercised in this direction it would obviate the necessity for condemning many pig carcasses which in every other respect are capable of being made into a first-class article.

*General.*—A few other minor ailments were in evidence, but in no case did they assume serious propensities or call for special action. During the past season the health of pigs generally has been satisfactory.

LIVE-STOCK STATISTICS.

After many years of steady increases the sheep flocks of the Dominion dropped (in 1931) by 1,048,771 to a total of 29,792,516, which number, however, still constitutes the second highest total in the history of the sheep industry. In spite of this decrease in the total number, it is some satisfaction to note that a decrease did not take place in the number of breeding-ewes, and that actually an increase of 44,554 was recorded. A heavy slaughtering of sheep and lambs is taking place this season, as shown in the slaughtering figures recorded elsewhere in this report, and this will undoubtedly be reflected in the enumeration for 1932. The number of sheepowners is increased by 767 to 30,789.

The number of cattle increased in 1931 to 4,080,525, being an increase of 314,857. Of this increase, 161,312 are dairy cows, the number of such being 1,601,633.

The number of pigs in the 1931 enumeration was 476,194, a decrease of 11,599 on the previous year's figures.

Horses have continued to show a decline, the number in 1931 being 295,743, a reduction of 1,452.

SLAUGHTER OF STOCK.

The numbers of sheep and lambs slaughtered during the year were again very heavy. The total numbers of stock slaughtered at registered premises were : Sheep, 4,464,894 ; lambs, 8,689,196 ; cattle, 322,942 ; calves, 593,029 ; swine, 430,914.

The following table shows the stock slaughtered during the past year at freezing-works only, the previous year's figures being shown for comparison :—

Stock.				Year ending 31st March, 1932.	Year ending 31st March, 1931.	Increase.	Decrease.
Cattle	..	..	..	131,624	124,323	7,301	..
Calves	..	..	..	537,003	504,222	32,781	..
Sheep	..	..	..	3,430,176	2,636,820	793,356	..
Lambs	..	..	..	8,459,244	7,896,328	562,916	..
Swine	..	..	..	246,048	273,489	..	27,441

For further purposes of comparison the following table is given, showing the killings of sheep and lambs at meat-export slaughterhouses over four periods, 1st October to 31st March in each year, as indicative of the slaughterings from the beginning of each season to the 31st March :—

Stock.				1928-29.	1929-30.	1930-31.	1931-32.
Sheep	..	..	..	1,421,741	1,982,550	1,671,493	2,614,378
Lambs	..	..	..	4,093,750	4,431,424	5,331,021	5,822,728

These figures show an increase of 942,885 sheep, and 491,707 lambs compared with the same period last year.

Following are the numbers of each class of animal slaughtered under direct inspection during the year ended 31st March, 1932 : Cattle, 266,848 ; calves, 591,464 ; sheep, 4,218,221 ; lambs, 8,658,621 ; swine, 409,225.