

The existence of the disease at Johnsonville was confirmed on the 12th May, and from then to the 7th July, when the final slaughterings took place on a farm in the Lower Hutt area, thirteen pig-farms were discovered to be infected. All affected and in-contact pigs, totalling 1,920, were slaughtered, and buried in deep trenches dug for the purpose. All piggeries were demolished and destroyed by burning, compensation being paid on stock and buildings according to valuation.

The cases met with in the Lower Hutt in July proved to be the last, as, although careful inspection was still maintained in the quarantined areas (Hutt and Makara Counties), no further evidence of swine fever was discovered. The first restocking with pigs took place in January of this year, and by the end of March five of the previously affected pig-farms had resumed operations. Regular inspections of those premises have been maintained, and it is satisfactory to record that all pigs introduced have remained healthy. The outbreak was successfully stamped out in a short period of time, thus removing the existence of a disease which, had it persisted, would prove a menace to the pig-breeding industry. The work involved in the control of the outbreak, including slaughter of pigs, digging of trenches, burning of piggeries, &c., added to the intensive inspection of all farms where pigs were kept throughout the Makara and Hutt Counties, threw a tremendous amount of work on the field staff of the District Office, Wellington, who performed very excellent service in quickly handling the position. In this respect a special word of praise is due to Mr. J. E. McIlwaine, Veterinarian (at present Acting District Superintendent, Wellington District), and to Messrs. Wilson and Sim, Stock Inspectors, Wellington; also to Mr. B. Grant, Stock Inspector, Palmerston North, who carried out an intensive inspection of farms in the Levin and Otaki districts. Credit is also due to the Wallaceville Laboratory staff for the expedient manner in which laboratory diagnostic work in connection with the outbreak was performed.

Pasteurellosis and Suipestifer Infections.—An increasing number of mortalities in young pigs have to be recorded. Investigation has shown these to be associated with certain infections giving rise to (a) infectious pneumonia (pasteurellosis), or to a type of infection referred to as (b) suipestifer (paratyphoid), in which severe inflammation of the intestines is frequently observed. The occurrence of these diseases has led up, through investigational work carried out at Wallaceville, to the very strong assumption that the nature of the food-supply is a strong contributing factor. Skim-milk alone does not contain the vitamin content necessary for young growing pigs, with the result that they are prone to those infections. Correction of diet and management enters largely into preventive methods. Further work into this inquiry is in progress. I have to place on record the excellent work performed by Mr. D. Marshall, Veterinarian, Hamilton, in connection with disease in pigs in the Waikato. This officer's sound observations and his study of the conditions are much appreciated.

Mange.—The position in regard to the occurrence of sarcoptic mange in pigs is satisfactory. Cases have been dealt with in the Waikato, Wairarapa, and the Manawatu districts, and two outbreaks recorded in the Southland area. In each instance the disease has been eradicated. Dipping in crude petroleum has proved a very effective means of eradication on infected farms.

Necrotic Ulceration of the Skin.—This skin disease of pigs is very prevalent in the dairying districts. Insanitary conditions are a predisposing factor. A new line of treatment recommended by the Department for this condition is proving very successful.

DAIRY INSPECTION.

This feature of the Division's work has received close attention during the year. The importance of the purity of the milk supplied to the public for human consumption cannot be gainsaid, and it has been the aim of the Department, through its inspectorial staff, to definitely improve the hygienic production of milk. In a period of economic depression and low prices for the dairyman it is not always easy to enforce structural alterations to dairy premises, nevertheless it can be stated that steady improvement has been maintained respecting the sanitation of dairies registered for town supply.

The matter of production of clean milk does not, however, end with the provision of a sanitary shed and dairy; the personal element enters largely into it, and failure on the part of the milker to observe the ordinary rules of hygienic milking and handling of milk might easily result in a product of high bacterial count, notwithstanding the fact that the shed itself be quite an up-to-date one. It is apparent, therefore, that the Dairy Inspector, in the performance of his work, not only must see that regulations are complied with, but has an important instructional and advisory function to perform. Inspection of the cows in registered dairies has been well maintained, the tuberculin test being applied to any suspected animals. In many instances tuberculin testing of the whole herd is carried out at the owner's request. Biological examination of composite samples of milk for tuberculosis is conducted at the Laboratory. During the year 587 such samples were dealt with, of which 11 (1.87 per cent.) proved to be positive. When a positive reaction is obtained the herd is at once tested and tuberculous animals removed. The use of the sediment tester by Dairy Inspectors still continues. This appliance has been found most useful in demonstrating neglect of proper precautions as to cleanliness in milking.

LIVE-STOCK STATISTICS.

The 1933 sheep returns showed that sheep flocks in the Dominion decreased by 935,822 to a total of 27,755,966. An increase of 146,637 occurred in the number of breeding-ewes. The number of sheep-owners has decreased by 386 to a total of 30,063. The number of cattle in the Dominion has increased by 119,640 to 4,192,023. The number of dairy cows increased by 143,898 to a total of 1,845,972.