

tuberculosis, about 180,000 head of dairy stock are affected and would need to be slaughtered. This immediately raises the question of cost as affected by the size of the staff required to undertake the testing of all cows in the Dominion and by the amount of compensation to be paid to farmers for the destruction of their stock.

The Commission is of the opinion that it would be impracticable, in one year, to test all the dairy stock and to eliminate those that reacted to the test. The initial eradication should be spread over a period of at least three years. On this basis it would require a staff of sixty men, of whom thirty would need to be veterinarians, to test one-third of the dairy stock in the first year. The estimated cost of the first year's programme, including the salaries of veterinarians and assistants, as well as travelling and administration expenses, is estimated to be about £60,000, allowing about £1,000 per annum as the all-inclusive cost for the services of a veterinarian and his assistant. In the second year, in addition to dealing with a further number of untested cows, all cows remaining over from the first year's test would need to be retested. This would necessitate increasing the staff to one hundred, of whom fifty would need to be veterinarians. On the same basis of calculation, the all-inclusive staff cost for the second year would be about £100,000. The requirements of the third year would necessitate a staff of one hundred and sixty, of whom eighty would need to be veterinarians, at an estimated staff cost of £160,000. The total approximate cost under this head would be £320,000 for the three years.

At the end of the initial three years of the campaign it would be necessary to continue the retesting of cows if it were desired to maintain herds free from tuberculosis, and to provide a continuous guarantee of the purity of our milk-supply. This would involve the retention of a staff of approximately one hundred and fifty men at an annual recurring cost of about £150,000. It is important to note, however, that, once the initial campaign was completed, this staff would be able to undertake work in connection with the control of such other animal-diseases as mammitis, contagious abortion, and temporary sterility. At this stage the annual estimated cost of £150,000 would become a charge for the control of all animal-diseases affecting stock on dairy-farms. This matter is referred to more fully in a later part of this section.

The other cost in a tuberculosis-eradication campaign is that incurred by way of compensation to owners of destroyed stock. The present basis of compensation is half the assessed value of the condemned animal, the maximum valuation being £12 and the Government receiving the value of the by-products. The Commission is inclined to the view that, regard being had to the present financial position of dairy-farmers, a fairly generous scale of compensation should be adopted. In Canada compensation is paid to owners up to two-thirds of the value of the animal, subject to a maximum compensation. In appraising the value of stock, a distinction is made between pedigree and grade stock, and allowances are made for "type and conformation," for "immediate usefulness," and for "age." The Commission suggests that the same or a similar method of compensation should be adopted in New Zealand, and estimates that the cost of compensation would approximate £700,000, to be spread over the three years of the initial campaign. The cost of the campaign for three years would therefore be in the vicinity of £350,000 per annum. If necessary, the eradication campaign could be spread over a longer period. This would reduce the per-annum costs, provided the value of stock did not materially increase in the meantime.

The Commission considers that the Government should provide the sum of approximately £1,000,000 required for the initial period of tuberculosis eradication. Thereafter, the costs of maintaining herds in a disease-free condition should be borne by the industry, except in so far as the State finds it expedient to provide compensation for the destruction of condemned stock. In the opinion of the Commission this arrangement would equitably spread the costs of the campaign over both farmers and taxpayers, and give due weight to the private and national interests respectively involved.

240. Suggested Method of Conducting Campaign for Eradication :

The chief difficulty connected with the campaign will be the provision of adequate veterinary supervision. At present there are twenty-six veterinarians on the veterinary staff of the Live-stock Division. These officers are engaged in meat-inspection, the supervision of meat-inspection, veterinary laboratory and research work, or on general veterinary field-work. Of this number, possibly eleven could be utilized on the work of tuberculin testing.

Of the private veterinary practitioners, it is estimated that twelve might be willing and able to assist in the work of tuberculin testing. Private practitioners, however, would be available only in their own districts, and probably only for a limited period of the year, since, at certain seasons, their time would be fully occupied by their private professional duties. Even if they were able to devote the whole of their time to tuberculin testing, seven additional full-time veterinarians would be required to make up the full complement of thirty needed for the first year of the campaign. In subsequent years the staff would need to be built up to the strength previously indicated. The assistants to be provided for the veterinarians could, it is thought, be drawn from the stock-inspection staff of the Live-stock Division.

The Commission desires to emphasize the point that proper veterinary supervision is essential to the success of any tuberculosis-eradication campaign. Without such supervision the campaign would not receive recognition from other countries, but would be criticized as unreliable and unofficial. Moreover, since the scheme will inflict some initial financial hardship on farmers, it will be resented unless an assurance can be given that the work is being professionally and competently carried out. Finally, the taxpayer, who is asked to provide the main costs of the initial campaign, should be equally assured that every precaution is taken for the efficient conduct of the work.