

LIVE-STOCK DIVISION.

REPORT OF W. C. BARRY, M.R.C.V.S., DIRECTOR.

HEALTH OF LIVE-STOCK.

HORSES.

The general health and condition of horses has been well maintained throughout the year. Interest in the breeding of draught horses continues as a result of the increasing demand for good-class animals of this type, and reports indicate a definite increase in the breeding of draught horses. The economic value of the draught horse when compared with mechanical traction is admitted, and is reflected in the noticeable trend towards increased numbers. The interest displayed in the Clydesdale classes at our principal shows is a further indication that farmers are alive to the possibility of increased revenue through the breeding of good-class draught horses. Referring to the lighter types of horses, it must be admitted that very little interest appears to be taken in selective breeding to-day, and the position with respect to suitable remount horses is almost disquieting.

CATTLE.

Tuberculosis.—The total number of cattle condemned in the field as a result of clinical examination and the application of the tuberculin test amounted to 5,875. The total number of cattle, excluding calves, examined at abattoirs and meat-export slaughterhouses was 409,861, an increase of 862 over last year's figures. Of these, 22,703, equal to 5.54 per cent., were found to be affected with tuberculosis in varying degrees.

Actinomycosis.—The number of animals condemned and for which compensation was paid totalled 655.

Malignant Growths.—The number of animals condemned and for which compensation was paid was 286.

Blackleg.—The incidence of this disease was considerably less than in the previous year, this being particularly marked in the Auckland District. The total number of calves vaccinated in the blackleg areas during the year was 27,462.

Johne's Disease.—An increase in the number of farms on which cases of this disease have occurred has to be recorded. Johne's disease is as yet known to occur only in Taranaki and the Waikato Districts. Dissemination of information to farmers respecting this disease has been increased by the field staff, and it is to be hoped that stockowners will, in their own interests, report suspicious cases, so that control-measures might be instituted. The insidious nature of the disease and the economic loss which it is capable of producing render a consideration of more drastic measures in effecting its control desirable. This aspect is at present receiving attention.

Anthrax.—Freedom from this disease has to be recorded.

Cattle-tick.—In the infested areas the presence of the New Zealand cattle-tick (*Haemaphysalis bispinosa*) is not now regarded by stockowners in the serious light in which it was viewed some years back. Whilst the presence of tick on any farm is undesirable, the tick is not in any way a dangerous stock parasite. Individual effort is very necessary in limiting the development of cattle-tick, and much good can be accomplished by periodical spraying of cattle during the season, hand-picking of ticks, and, more important still, the burning or destruction of cover which affords protection to seed ticks during the winter. In the North Auckland District a concession was permitted during the past season regarding the movement of fat cattle from the "A" area, and this has so far apparently worked satisfactorily.

Mammitis.—The incidence of mammitis in dairy cows was less than that of past years. This may have resulted from the dry summer influencing the occurrence of the disease through the effect of a diminished milk-yield. The importance of hygienic measures in the control of mammitis is receiving greater recognition by dairy-farmers, and the mammitis-control scheme introduced a few seasons back by the Department appears to be appreciated, more particularly in the Waikato District, where encouraging results are claimed by its adoption. In this procedure the monthly milk examinations as carried out by the Veterinary Laboratory have proved a very valuable service to the dairy-farmer.

Contagious Abortion.—The year was not marked by any undue incidence of abortion. Nevertheless, as stated in previous reports, the infection is widely disseminated throughout the dairying districts. An increase in the occurrence of this disease in dairy herds in Canterbury is recorded, and the activities of field officers of the Division in this district have been directed towards the dissemination of advice to farmers regarding the adoption of control-measures. This is most important in a district in which the disease has not previously assumed high proportions, and dairy-farmers would be well advised to take precautionary measures to lessen its distribution in such instances. The use of the agglutination (blood) test as carried out at Wallaceville affords a valuable diagnostic method of determining the existence of infection, and should be more extensively availed of.

Sterility.—Reports on the occurrence of temporary sterility indicated rather a decreased incidence of this seasonal trouble. Further investigation and research work has been conducted into this condition, particularly with reference to the bull as a factor. Some important observations on the influence of high protein feeding in male animals on the sterility aspect are in progress and indicate the desirability of further pursuing this point.

Typanitis (Bloat) in Cows.—This condition was the subject of inquiry during the spring months, when the trouble is most experienced. Mr. Marshall, Veterinarian, Hamilton, carried out observations on its occurrence on several farms in the Waikato and Bay of Plenty Districts. It was noted that