

Cutaneous Myiasis (Sheep Blow-fly).—This was less troublesome in the Nelson and Marlborough districts during the year. In Hawke's Bay and parts of the Auckland District—i.e., Te Kuiti—the fly menace was more prevalent than in previous years. In the Canterbury District outbreaks commenced in December and have continued in confined areas. Back strike is undoubtedly the most serious form and the main cause of death. It is the most difficult type to treat. Research is being continued on this problem.

Foot-rot.—This disease continues to give a good deal of trouble to sheep-farmers, particularly in Canterbury and Southland. Wet seasons are blamed as being responsible for the greater number of sheep affected. It has, however, been found that thoroughness in the eradication of the disease during a spell of dry weather is not sufficiently exercised, that chronic carriers are left in the flock, and that the disease then spreads rapidly in wet weather.

During the year an amendment to the Stock Act was passed which it is hoped will have the effect of preventing the exposure and sale of badly infected sheep, and thus afford a measure of protection in regard to the spread of the disease.

Lice and Ticks.—A careful inspection of sheep at saleyards was carried out by the stock-inspection staff. Although it was necessary to prosecute in some cases, the sheep were found to be in good condition in regard to these parasites.

PIGS.

The number of pigs slaughtered for the season 1937–38 at registered premises was 1,012,836. Those slaughtered on holdings and examined at butchers' shops numbered 18,951, making a total of 1,031,787, a decrease of 76,401 on last year's figures.

Of 984,502 coming under inspection, 191,642 carcasses were found to be affected in varying degree with tuberculosis, the percentage of infection being 19.46, an increase of 1.05 per cent. as compared with last year. Meat-export works, 805,006; abattoirs, 179,496; ordinary slaughterhouses, 28,334; shops, 18,951: total, 1,031,787.

Swinepestifer Infection.—This disease is responsible for considerable mortality in young pigs. Improved sanitation, drainage, shelter, and general conditions of cleanliness in housing and feeding are being constantly advised, and there is evidence that good results are being obtained.

Mr. W. T. Collins, District Superintendent, Auckland, reports:—

“For the six months ended 31st March last the percentage of total condemnations was 0.4 lower than over the same period the previous year. For the year ended June, 1937, the percentage of pigs rejected for export was 12.3; for the following year the percentage was 8.1; for the nine months ended 31st March last the figure stands at 6.5 per cent. This is very gratifying, as it clearly shows that more care and attention is being paid to a very important industry.”

Although this shows a big improvement in regard to a reduction in preventible pig diseases, there is still room for further care.

Pleurisy.—The number of rejections under this cause is still too high, and there is room for more improvement in the housing and feeding of very young pigs.

Wounds and Bruises.—This is a cause of rejection which is still too high, and calls for more careful handling of the pigs on the farm, on trucks, on rail, and at the works.

Sarcoptic Mange.—Outbreaks of mange occurred in the Auckland and Otago districts during the year. The outbreaks were successfully cleared up and the disease eradicated on each farm.

Swine Erysipelas.—No cases of this disease were recorded during the year.

Necrotic Ulceration of the Skin.—This continues to be a cause of the rejection of pigs for export. The amendment to the Stock Act intended to include this disease in pigs when exposed for sale will assist in preventing the spread of the disease.

Swine Husbandry.

The report of Mr. M. J. Scott, Superintendent of the Swine Industry, is submitted herewith:—

“The season just ended marks the completion by the Department of most of the projects recommended during the last few years by those interested in the development of pigs. A service that embraces most of the problems associated with pig-production is now in operation, and can be of value in assisting the industry just in proportion to the use that is made of it by individual farmers.

“Pedigree-sow recording was introduced in October, 1936, pig census in May, 1937, national instruction service in August, 1937, grading of baconers in February, 1938, carcass-quality scheme for baconers in October, 1938, and a performance-record scheme for pedigree pigs is now ready. In addition, a bulletin on “Modern Methods of Pig-production” has been printed and sold to dairy companies at cost for distribution to their suppliers. Approximately twenty-seven thousand copies have been distributed to date; and a bulletin on the housing of pigs—designs of houses and lay-outs, running into about thirty pages—is in course of preparation.

“Departmental films on different aspects of breeding, sanitation, and disease have been shown by Mr. Peirson, Extension Officer in Pig Husbandry, in eighty centres to highly appreciative audiences. Mr. Peirson has also given approximately seventy demonstrations at field-days all over the North Island.

“*Progress of the Industry.*—During the year ended September, 1938, there has been a decrease of approximately 2.2 per cent. in the number of pigs slaughtered, and a further estimated decrease of 4 per cent. for the year ending September, 1939. The corresponding decrease in cow-production of approximately 5 per cent. for the year ended 1938, and a still greater one for 1939, indicates that the level of pig-management and the efficiency with which the dairy by-products are used for pig-feeding are still improving.