

MEAT INSPECTION AND SLAUGHTER OF STOCK

The standard of meat inspection has been maintained at a good level during the year. It was difficult, in fact impossible, in some cases for freezing companies to obtain the necessary assistance to carry out the incision of glands in mutton carcasses, as was the pre-war practice. Inspection of this class of carcass for evidence of lymphadenitis was therefore confined mainly to palpation methods.

Goats were killed in some numbers at two east-coast works, and the shipment of the meat was reported upon. Although only the best of the young goats were forwarded, it was disappointing to find that the resultant meat was not of a very high standard, but was suitable for manufacturing purposes. In the endeavour to increase our exports of meat to assist in meeting the famine position in Europe, goats are again being killed for export.

The grading of meat intended for local consumption has been carried out at abattoirs and freezing-works. Although in the main satisfactory, some difficulty is being experienced in a few centres through lack of proper facilities to enable graders to do the work as it should be done.

The total numbers of stock slaughtered at registered premises (rural slaughterhouses included) were: sheep, 4,997,229; lambs, 12,694,649; cattle, 736,717; calves, 981,730; swine, 715,383.

The table below shows the numbers of stock slaughtered during the past year at freezing-works only:—

Class of Stock.	Year ended		Increase.
	31st March, 1946.	31st March, 1945.	
Cattle	507,440	374,225	133,215
Calves	941,660	923,192	18,468
Sheep	3,939,750	3,105,782	833,968
Lambs	12,518,554	10,515,905	2,002,649
Swine	628,047	584,980	43,067

There has been a substantial increase in numbers in all classes of stock slaughtered. As will be seen from the above table, the numbers have increased all round. At the same time, one must take into account the peculiarity of the season, particularly the drought as it affected several parts of the North Island. Stock of all classes had to be forwarded to the works from the drought-affected areas, and large numbers of light-weight carcasses was the natural result of the rushed killing operations.

For further comparison the following table showing the killings of sheep and lambs at meat-export slaughterhouses for four seasons, 1st October to 31st March, indicates the stock killed from the beginning of each season to the 31st March:—

Stock.	1942-43.	1943-44.	1944-45.	1945-46.
Sheep	1,910,150	1,937,477	1,894,985	2,594,571
Of which were—				
Ewes	1,436,995	1,499,798	1,349,074	1,967,187
Lambs	8,341,624	7,407,317	7,119,633	8,735,367

The following table shows the number of stock slaughtered under direct inspection during the year ended 31st March, 1946, at abattoirs and meat-export slaughterhouses:—

Class of Stock.	Abattoirs.	Meat-export Slaughterhouses.	Total Slaughtering under Inspection.
Cattle	167,508	507,440	674,948
Calves	39,049	941,660	980,709
Sheep	824,151	3,939,750	4,763,901
Lambs	153,054	12,518,554	12,671,608
Swine	79,030	628,047	707,077