

Cutaneous Myiasis (Sheep Blow-fly).—Owing to the excessive amount of wet weather from November to January, blow-fly strike was more serious in Canterbury than it has been for some years. The majority of sheep were affected with “body strike,” with withers and rump being common sites. The strikes followed fleece rot, the latter being accentuated by the prolonged wet weather. Lambs, two-tooth ewes, and aged ewes were infested by the maggots, but the mortality from the strike was low. In practically all cases where the wool was shorn from the struck area recovery followed and restrike was exceptional. The fly was more active in North Canterbury than in other districts.

Foot-rot.—This disease was reported in many parts of Canterbury throughout the year. In other districts the incidence was lower than in other years.

Lice and Ticks.—The inspection of sheep at sales and fairs has been carried out during the year. The reports show that although a few small lines of lousy sheep have been detected at these centres, there has been a big improvement in the control of the sheep-tick. It appears as if satisfactory dipping has been carried out in most instances, and the control of tick has been effective.

PIGS

The number of pigs slaughtered for the season 1946–47 at premises under inspection was 579,638, a decrease of 127,439 over last year's figures.

Inspection of the carcasses at time of slaughter revealed that 78,589 carcasses were found to be affected in varying degree with tuberculosis, the percentage being 13·56 per cent. This is a decrease of 0·4 per cent. as compared with last year.

Diseases of Pigs

Tuberculosis.—This is one of the chief causes of condemnation of pigs on inspection. The incidence of this disease is naturally somewhat higher in North Island dairying districts, where milk by-products form such a large part of the diet of the pig. On the other hand, although large numbers of pigs are not raised in Canterbury, it is interesting to note that the incidence of tuberculosis in pigs in this area is distinctly lower. Grain-fed pigs are not so subject to infection.

Suipestifer Infection.—This infection is fairly widespread and at times causes a very serious mortality.

Sarcoptic Mange.—One case of sarcoptic mange in pigs was recorded during the year, the number of pigs affected being three.

Kidney-worm Infestation (Stephanurus Dentatus).—Two sows were found to be infested with this parasite at time of slaughter. The history of these pigs is being inquired into, with a view to tracing the infestation to its source, to prevent any spread.

Swine Husbandry

A review of the activities of the Department in relation to the pig industry is as follows:—

Production figures for the season ended September, 1946, are the lowest on record for the past twelve years, and killings for the year ended March, 1947, show every indication of being 150,000 carcasses below those of March, 1946. With the termination of hostilities it was envisaged that production of pig-meats would increase, particularly as the lifting of restrictions on the sale of pork for local consumption would permit a return to normal practice, that of producing more light-weight pigs giving more scope and incentive to pig-producers.