

1904.
NEW ZEALAND.

AGRICULTURAL, PASTORAL, AND STOCK COMMITTEE:

REPORT ON QUESTION OF "BLACK-LEG" IN CATTLE, TOGETHER WITH COPY OF
CORRESPONDENCE.

(MR. LAWRY, CHAIRMAN.)

Report brought up on the 30th August, 1904, and ordered to be printed.

ORDER OF REFERENCE.

Extract from the Journals of the House of Representatives.

THURSDAY, THE 30TH DAY OF JUNE, 1904.

Ordered, "That Standing Order No. 218 be suspended, and that a Committee consisting of fourteen members be appointed to consider all matters pertaining to agricultural and pastoral industries and stock, with power to confer and sit together with any similar Committee which may be appointed by the Legislative Council, and to agree to a joint or separate report; the Committee to have power to call for persons, papers, and records; three to be a quorum: the Committee to consist of Mr. Bollard, Mr. Buddo, Mr. Hogg, Mr. Kidd, Mr. Lawry, Mr. Lethbridge, Mr. Massey, Mr. T. Mackenzie, Mr. McLachlan, Mr. Rhodes, Mr. Rutherford, Hon. Sir W. J. Steward, Mr. Symes, and the mover."—(Hon. Mr. DUNCAN.)

REPORT.

QUESTION OF "BLACK-LEG" IN CATTLE.

THE Agricultural, Pastoral, and Stock Committee, to whom was referred the correspondence on the question of "black-leg" in cattle, have the honour to report as follows:—

1. That it is expedient that effect be given to the recommendations of the Department as to the enforcement of quarantine in the district mentioned—viz., "the district lying between the Mokau and Wanganui Rivers, or within a larger or lesser area as circumstances may require."
2. That it is expedient that vaccination be enforced within an area to be described in the *Gazette*, being the area within which the disease is known to exist.
3. That in the area aforesaid prescribed, or any affected area, the owners be required to burn the carcasses of all animals found dead from disease.

Tuesday, 30th August, 1904.

FRANK LAWRY, Chairman.

CORRESPONDENCE.

Department of Agriculture, Head Office, Wellington, 26th July, 1904.

The Chairman, Joint Agricultural, Pastoral and Stock Committee.

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith a copy of correspondence in regard to the cattle-disease known as "black-leg."

The Government will be glad to have the Committee's opinion on the matter.

T. Y. DUNCAN,

Minister for Agriculture.

Department of Agriculture, Head Office, Wellington, 23rd July, 1904.
The Hon. the Minister for Agriculture.

Spread of Black-leg.

I REGRET to say that this disease is now more or less prevalent in the district lying between the Wanganui and Mokau Rivers. An isolated case has also appeared in the Auckland District.

Mr. Gilruth, Chief Veterinarian, recommends that the first-named area should be quarantined, and that no cattle under eighteen months old should be allowed out of the area except in accordance with regulations.

The Auckland outbreak can be dealt with without quarantining.

JOHN D. RITCHIE, Secretary.

For Cabinet.—T.Y.D. 23/7/04.

In Cabinet, 24th July, 1904.

RECOMMENDATION approved. Matter to be referred to Stock Committee.

A. WILLIS.

Department of Agriculture, Veterinary Division, Pathological Laboratory,
Wellington, 15th July, 1904.

The Secretary.

I ATTACH copy of a memo. to Inspector Brittain *re* black-leg at Pukekohe East.

In reporting this matter, Inspector Brittain states,—

“Mr. Comrie informed me that this is the second calf he has lost under similar circumstances, and that some of his neighbours have lost several young animals in the same way. I have made further inquiries, and found Mr. Alfred Ballard had lost four—one about three weeks ago, another on the 21st ultimo, one the other day, and another has died since. Mr. H. King has, I hear, lost two, and Mr. Wilkin, of Drury, told me he had lost four; the whole of the symptoms being identical with those of Mr. Comrie’s calf.

J. A. GILRUTH.

Department of Agriculture, Veterinary Division, Pathological Laboratory,
Wellington, 15th July, 1904.

F. H. Brittain, Esq., Inspector of Stock, Auckland (through Mr. Clifton).

Re specimens from a calf belonging to Mr. James Comrie, of Pukekohe East, in which you suspected black-leg, as per your description in memo. of 2nd instant:—

Microscopical examination of smears showed bacilli suspicious of this disease, while experiments conducted with the contents of pipettes prove the nature of the disease in question to have been black-leg.

At the present time we cannot vaccinate the calves belonging to the different owners of the affected stock, owing to lack of material. Every care should be taken, however, to see that the carcasses are burned or buried, preferably the former.

I shall be glad if you will make full inquiries and ascertain when the disease got into the district, and how it probably arrived—that is to say, the inquiry should be conducted particularly on the lines of ascertaining whether it was brought by young stock from Taranaki, or by imported bones, or otherwise. I understand from Mr. Young, in Taranaki, that occasionally a number of young stock are taken up to the Waikato.

Herewith I send you a leaflet on black-leg which was issued last year, copies of which are, no doubt, to be had in the Auckland office.

J. A. GILRUTH, Chief Veterinarian.

The Secretary.—For your information.—J. A. GILRUTH, Chief Veterinarian.

BLACK-LEG OR BLACK-QUARTER, ITS NATURE AND PREVENTION.

By J. A. GILRUTH, M.R.C.V.S., Chief Veterinarian.

Black-leg having now been ascertained to be the cause of very serious losses among young cattle in the Taranaki District, this leaflet is issued for the information of cattle-owners.

The terms used to denote the diseases are various, the following being the more common: “Symptomatic anthrax,” “quarter-evil,” “quarter-ill,” “carbuncular fever,” “black-leg,” “black-quarter,” &c.

Cause.

Black-leg is due to the entrance of a special microbe or germ into the system through scratches or abrasions of the skin, or through the food. These germs form spores, which are very resistant to all the common antiseptic forces of Nature. They are all capable of living in the soil for numbers of years, and can be carried from place to place by various agencies. This disease was formerly confounded with anthrax, but it has been demonstrated that the germs of the two diseases are of totally different species.

Symptoms.

The most notable symptom is the development of a characteristic swelling underneath the skin of one or more quarters—usually a hind-quarter, though the swellings may appear on the neck, shoulder, breast, loins, flanks, or rump. The animal is dull, feverish, and suffers from loss of appetite. Over the swelling the skin is tense, and when the hand is passed over it a peculiar cracking noise is heard, due to the presence of gas. When cut into, a little frothy, blackish,

bad-smelling fluid, with gas, exudes, while the flesh is blackish, and underneath the skin is a collection of soft dark brownish-red material, which has been aptly described as looking like raspberry-jam. Death usually occurs in from two to three days after the first symptoms are exhibited, though occasionally it results in a few hours.

The disease is chiefly found in cattle under two years of age, although older animals are sometimes affected, and even horses and sheep have been known to contract the disease. Rarely animals in poor condition contract black-leg.

Method of Introduction.

This it is impossible to satisfactorily prove at this date. The disease has been known in Taranaki for fifteen years, and appears to have originated on a farm at Tikorangi shortly after the importation of a quantity of Indian bone manure. As it undoubtedly spread from there, the probabilities are that imported bone manure is responsible for the introduction of this disease as well as of anthrax. That it is capable of being imported by this means is undoubted.

Means whereby Black-leg is spread.

There are two principal means. One is the movement of young stock from farm to farm either through sale-yards or direct; the other is the habit of leaving a dead animal to remain unburned or unburied for dogs or hawks to tear the flesh and carry it from paddock to paddock, and thus sow the germs over a large tract of country. The former has frequently been the means of introducing the disease to a clean farm, one or more animals dying a few days after being purchased. But, even when introduced in this way, were the carcasses carefully destroyed by fire, the disease would not secure a permanent foothold. That it has done so is, I am entirely satisfied, due to the carelessness of the farmer and his disinclination to do anything in the way of burning or even burying carcasses.

Treatment.

Curative treatment is rarely of any avail, the only sensible and scientific way of dealing with the disease being to prevent it.

PREVENTION.—The farmer's part in this treatment is *first, to burn all carcasses; and, second, to notify the Department* of any cases of the disease. We will do the rest.

VACCINATION.—This is accomplished by what is known as the Pasteur system of vaccination, which consists in the injection of a small dose of the specific germ the virulence of which has been artificially weakened, and, the animal system reacting thereto, the body becomes immune for a period of about six months. All other so-called systems of prevention have been proved ineffectual when put to the test. Proof that this method of vaccination is effectual has been obtained here during the past year, when over three thousand calves have been inoculated with gratifying results.

During the past few years over ten million cattle have been thus treated in the United States and Canada, and from both the Government Veterinary Officers and the farmers themselves reports show that the results have been all that could be desired. Here it is proposed to inoculate twice all cattle under a year old on farms where the disease has made its appearance—once during the months of December and January and again during the months of June and July, when definite arrangements will be made by the Veterinary Officer in Taranaki for carrying on the work.

Attached will be found an application-form which should be filled in by farmers desirous of having their stock treated. It should be torn from the leaflet (which is perforated for the purpose), and sent to the "Chief Veterinarian, Wellington." In this way proper arrangements can be made and the owners duly notified.

[Applications should be posted not later than the 7th November.]

Black-leg.—Application for Protective Vaccination of Young Cattle.

To the Chief Veterinarian, Wellington.

I desire to have inoculated with black-leg preventive vaccine my young cattle, consisting of head.

Signature:

Postal address:

Nearest Telegraph-office:

State if telegrams are delivered:

Date:

NOTE.—The following information should be given: Year when disease first appeared on farm:
 Number of cattle under eighteen months old on farm: Number affected
 during each year since disease first observed: Probable means by which disease was
 introduced:

Department of Agriculture, Head Office, Wellington, 18th August, 1903.

The Hon. the Minister for Agriculture.

It is desirable to prohibit the removal of cattle under two years old from the part of Taranaki that is affected with black-leg (symptomatic anthrax), and to enable this to be done it is necessary to add that disease to the schedule given in subsection (6) of section 8 of "The Stock Act Amendment Act, 1895." The definition of "disease" in section 3 of "The Stock Act, 1893," gives the Governor power to add to the schedule by Order in Council.

I recommend that the Solicitor-General be instructed to draw an Order accordingly.

JOHN D. RITCHIE, Secretary.

Approved.—T.Y.D. 19/8/03.

The Solicitor-General.—JOHN D. RITCHIE, Secretary for Agriculture. 20/8/03

Department of Agriculture, Pathological Laboratory, Wellington,
15th August, 1903.

The Secretary.

Re *Black-leg in Taranaki*.

As Mr. Young has ascertained by his inquiries that this disease has been spread to a certain extent from farms to farms not immediately adjacent in Taranaki through the sale of calves, I think it is extremely desirable to prohibit the removal of calves or cattle under two years old from the affected district.

I note on looking up the Act that this disease is not in the schedule. I recommend, therefore, that it be added thereto with the least possible delay.

J. A. GILRUTH,
Chief Veterinarian.

The Secretary.

17th February, 1904.

Re *Black-leg in Taranaki*.

THE gravity of this disease is increasing, as will be readily appreciated when I state that Mr. Young informs me in a report which I have just received that each year the radius of the disease is extending by from eight to ten miles. Therefore it behoves the Government to take urgent and immediate steps to prevent its further spread within the affected district, and thence to other parts of the colony.

As the most feasible means to this end, Mr. Young recommends that the removal of cattle from an area bounded by the Wanganui and Mokau Rivers to other parts of the coast be absolutely prohibited. He recommends particularly that the whole of Clifton, Taranaki, Stratford, Hawera, Patea, and Waitotara Counties be declared infected areas, out of which no cattle under the age of eighteen months may be removed (except for immediate slaughter) under pain of a heavy penalty.

I recommended prohibition of moving in my memo. to you of the 15th August last.

Within these infected areas, I think it would be wise to provide for the compulsory inoculation of all the young cattle, as this would tend to prevent the spread of the disease and its permanent location on farms which at present are free from disease.

In reference to this, Mr. Young says that, while the farmer who is a heavy loser yearly is only too anxious to have his herd inoculated, others whose loss is merely one or two animals treat the matter lightly, and are often liable to spread the disease by selling the remainder of their young stock.

The chief methods by which one may hope to prevent the further spread of the disease and minimise its ravages are (1) by declaring the aforementioned counties to be infected areas, (2) by compulsory and free inoculation, (3) compulsory notification.

J. A. GILRUTH,
Chief Veterinarian.

[Extract from *New Zealand Gazette*, 10th September, 1903.]

Declaring Black-leg (Symptomatic Anthrax) a Disease for the Purposes of "The Stock Act, 1893."—Notice No. 808.

RANFURLY, Governor.

ORDER IN COUNCIL.

At the Government House, at Wellington, this thirty-first day of August, 1903.

Present:

HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR IN COUNCIL.

IN pursuance and exercise of the powers and authorities vested in him by "The Stock Act, 1893," His Excellency the Governor of the Colony of New Zealand, acting by and with the advice and consent of the Executive Council of the said colony, doth hereby order and declare that the disease known as black-leg (symptomatic anthrax), which affects cattle, is a disease for the purposes of "The Stock Act, 1893," and shall be subject to the regulations made thereunder, and now in force. And it is hereby declared that this Order in Council shall come into force from and after the date of the publication hereof in the *New Zealand Gazette*.

ALEX. WILLIS,
Clerk of the Executive Council.

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