

present time (end of March) the prospects for winter feed in the greater portion of the district are poor. In some parts the rape and turnip crops were practically failures, and it is to be hoped that we shall have a mild winter so that stockowners may carry their stock through. Throughout most of the districts winter feed such as hay, turnips, mangolds, straw, and lucerne is provided. No unusual disease appeared among cattle during the year. The Inspectors of Stock have been active in giving attention and advice where trouble has been encountered. Deaths among dairy cattle from all causes during the year in the various Inspectors' districts are estimated as varying from 2 per cent. to 5 per cent., and would probably average about 3 per cent. for the whole district. The percentage of calves kept is estimated in the different inspectorates at from 5 per cent. to 95 per cent. Mortality among calves under one year varies from 1 per cent. to 5 per cent., the principal causes being improper feeding, parasitic gastritis, and want of shelter.

The health and the condition of sheep have in general been good. It is estimated that deaths from all causes among adult sheep varied from 2 per cent. on the plains to 10 per cent. on the high country. The percentage of deaths among hoggets varied from 3 to 10. Lambing percentages were higher this year than last, while deaths among lambs from all causes up to weaning varied from 3 per cent. on the plains to 12 per cent. on the high country. The wool, when compared with last year's regarding weight and condition, appears to have averaged slightly heavier and was in better condition. In the Rotherham and Waimate districts it was considered to be lighter than last year. The condition of flocks as regards lice and ticks was evidently better in general than last year. The Inspector for the Ashburton district reports that a good number of ticks were showing in the wool as a result of faulty dipping. The Inspector for the Christchurch district reports that the condition as regards lice and ticks is very satisfactory, and he considers the improvement is due to the fact that very few "travelled" sheep have been coming into the local sales. The Inspector for the West Coast reports that in some parts of his district the condition of sheep in regard to lice and ticks is not satisfactory, as dipping in many cases is carried out in a careless manner, and during the year he has had eight prosecutions for exposing lousy sheep for sale and two prosecutions for failing to dip. In the majority of districts the dipping of sheep is carried out in a satisfactory manner, but the Inspector for the Amberley district states that in his district it requires a considerable amount of watching. The Inspector for Ashburton remarks that sufficient attention is not paid to the mixing of the dip. The Inspector for the West Coast states that in his district dipping is not carried out in a satisfactory manner in many cases. On account of dry weather the condition of sheep pastures in general at the end of the year (March) was not good, except in the West Coast and Ashburton districts and the back country of the Rotherham district. So far as the health of sheep is concerned, there has been very little trouble this year. Parasitic gastritis was noted in a few instances in the Christchurch district, but did not cause mortality of any consequence. In regard to renal congestion of lambs, the Inspectors and Veterinarians were advised to keep in very close touch with this matter with a view to further investigation being made, but fortunately, although cases were reported from the Ashburton, Christchurch, Timaru, and Fairlie districts, the mortality from this cause was small. In September, on account of the rough wet weather, there was some mortality among the lambs.

The health and the condition of pigs have been good during the year, and no unusual disease has appeared among them. Two of the Inspectors of Stock report that owing to the high prices ruling, especially at the beginning of the year, a number of farmers gave the pig industry more attention, and the number of pigs increased in their districts; but in general this industry is not progressive.

Dunedin District.

The season on the whole has been a favourable one for feed, although in the spring and early summer, owing to high winds and dry weather, the grass was not very plentiful; still, the health of stock generally has been good and we had no special outbreak of disease to contend with.

Strangles has been prevalent throughout the district, and little care is taken by stockowners to prevent its spread, either by isolation or by ordinary sanitary measures. The most common type was that of the formation of an abscess under the jaw, &c., but in many cases the animals suffered from sore throat, slight nasal discharge, and œdematous swelling, and these were generally rather protracted in their recovery. There were several cases of purpura reported from Southland, following on strangles, but I understand all recovered under treatment. Osteoporosis appeared in a stud of thoroughbreds in the Oamaru district, affecting three two-year-olds. A change of location was tried, but the result was negative. Very few cases of navel ill have been brought under our notice, partly due to the fact that farmers have not been breeding so many horses as formerly. However, owing to the high prices, a large increase of foals is expected this year. Few societies take advantage of having horses and mares examined at the agricultural shows, the only show where this was done voluntarily being at Ranfurly, where only two horses came forward, one being rejected. At Dunedin Parade and Invercargill Show it is necessary to have the stallions examined, because this is provided for in the competition for a special prize, otherwise little interest is taken in the soundness of breeding-stock. This, I think, is to be regretted, and I hope to see the time when all stallions and stud mares will have to pass an examination for soundness.

Cattle have on the whole remained in good health and condition, and the number of tubercular animals is found to have been slightly less than last year; but if the tuberculin test were more generally applied, especially in dairy herds, the disease could be greatly reduced. I think it is to be regretted that dairymen do not take more advantage of this method of detecting the disease than they at present do. Probably if a higher rate of compensation were allowed for condemned cattle not visibly affected it would be some encouragement for them to do so. Usually the only owners who ask for a tuberculin test are those with small herds or privately owned cows, when tuberculosis threatens or affects some of the family. The number of cattle tested was 113, being 17 for export (compulsory) and 96 for owners at their own request. Those tested for export gave no reaction; of the others four were found affected and destroyed.

Generally the health and condition of sheep has been good. Very few cases of renal congestion were reported last season. I presume the climatic conditions in the spring tended to prevent it. The condition of sheep regarding lice affection is certainly bad. Farmers evidently take little trouble or care in dipping their flocks, with the result that lousy sheep are common in all the saleyards. Proceedings have been instituted in most cases where sheep in saleyards have been found affected with lice, and, in addition to consignments being dipped forthwith by order of the Inspector, seventy cases were taken to Court and fines ranging from 10s. to £10 inflicted.

ANIMAL-DISEASES.

Blackleg.—During the year some necessary alterations to the boundaries of the areas as defined in the Auckland District were made, but in other respects the regulations under the Stock Act affecting this disease remain as before, and were administered with the cordial co-operation of the owners of stock in the affected districts. The steady decrease of the past few years in the number of calves sent forward for inoculation has been again continued, being most marked in the Auckland District. The numbers of calves inoculated during the last four years ended 31st March are as follows :—

	1918.	1919.	1920.	1921.
Auckland	106,614	98,881	98,500	56,944
Taranaki	73,620	53,024	45,667	40,630