

ORCHARD DISEASES.

MR. EDWIN ASHBY, Mangatainoka, writes,—

I had several peach-trees this last season that blossomed well, but just as the fruit formed the leaves and twigs turned dark, the leaves and fruit fell off, and some of the young wood died. On several apple-trees also the leaves had brown spots, and the apples were very small and cracked across. If you could advise me what to spray with, and when, I should be obliged. I used Vacuum red oil on apple-trees last winter, but did not spray peach-trees at all.

The Orchards, Gardens, and Apiaries Division replies,—

The peach-trees are evidently attacked by peach dieback (*Clasterosporium carpophilum*). To control this disease the trees should be sprayed in the late autumn, when the leaves have just fallen, with the 10-10-40 formula of the Bordeaux mixture, and again in the early spring, when the buds are beginning to swell, with the same mixture. The apple-trees are apparently attacked by a fungus disease known as apple-scab (*Fusicladium dendriticum*). Spraying the trees in the early spring, when the buds are beginning to swell, with the 10-10-40 formula of the Bordeaux mixture, and later, if the disease appears, with the 4-5-50 formula of the same mixture, should prove effective. Red-oil spray is purely an insecticide for the control of scale, red spider, &c., and must only be used in the winter when the trees are quite dormant.

LUPIN ON SAND-AREAS.

“RETTAN,” “Orongohura,” Kawhia, writes,—

I propose endeavouring to stop drifting sand further encroaching on my property, and would be pleased if you would inform me the best time to sow lupin-seeds, and treatment of seeds previous to planting?

The Fields and Experimental Farms Division replies,—

Lupin is ordinarily sown in the spring, but for the purpose you intend it will be better to sow in the autumn, as there is less chance of wind blowing the sand over the young plants. The seed requires no special treatment previous to planting, but germination could be hastened by soaking in cold water for twelve hours.

PIG-REARING.

MR. T. OSBORNE, Ponsonby, Auckland, writes,—

Will you be kind enough to enlighten me on the following :—

1. Is pig-rearing a profitable business?
2. Which are the best pigs to breed, either for bacon or pork?
3. How many litters a year does a sow have, and what is the best time of the year for her to have them?
4. What is a fair average per litter?
5. If well fed, and well cared for in every way, what is an approximate time before they are ready for market?
6. Do you agree with me that pigs should be fed on root crops; if so, what kind of crops do you suggest? (I might suggest that I believe pigs should be fed on all kinds of crops, and that they should be given to them in various ways, such as a few mangels and carrots one day, turnips and potatoes another day, and a mixture of all the above chopped up small and cooked another day, with an occasional pick at the grass.)
7. If the above food is given, and no milk is available, what would you suggest by way of a drink?
8. What kind of land do you think is suitable, if run on the lines stated.

The Live-stock and Meat Division replies,—

1. Pig rearing and feeding is a profitable business provided the person engaged in the same has some knowledge of the management of pigs, also he must have sufficient land of good quality to grow some of the food required for the pigs. Pig rearing and feeding is the same as any other branch of farming: to be successfully