

Bull Fertility Testing Service

RESULTS are now available for the first year's work in the bull fertility testing service, the initiation of which was described in the September, 1940, issue of the "Journal." Semen samples were submitted by veterinarians and stock inspectors from 138 bulls, and for seven of these repeat samples were forwarded to check the result of the first examination. The bulls were classified as follows:—

Good	48
Moderate	49
Unsatisfactory	21
Bad	6
Sterile	7
Useless samples	7
Total	138

During the past few months data have been collected from owners which

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have enabled the performance of 69 of these bulls to be tabulated against their classification by semen examination. The results are shown in the following table, in which only bulls with data for at least ten services have been included.

Performance percentages of fertile matings.	Good 100-70 per cent.	Moderate 70-50 per cent.	Unsatisfactory. 50-30 per cent.	Bad. 30-10 per cent.	Sterile. 10-0 per cent.
91-100	2				
81-90	5	2			
71-80	5	5	3		
61-70	6	3		1	
51-60	5	2	1		
41-50	2	1	2		
31-50	1	2	2		
21-30	4		1	1	
11-20	1	2	1		
1-10	2	1			1
0			2	1	2
Total:	33	18	12	3	3
Average per cent. fertility.	58	57	38	31	0.3

Results of the first year's work have shown that the bull-testing service is of real value in detecting the bull of low fertility. Steps are being taken this year to increase the efficiency of the service, which is available free of cost to all dairy farmers in New Zealand.

"Good" and "Moderate" Bulls

It will be noted that a number of bulls appear in both the "good" and "moderate" columns whose fertility was below 50 per cent. It should be explained, however, that the performance of these bulls was reckoned by calculating the percentage of successful services on all cows, including those which remained empty. This, of course, does not give a true index of the bull's fertility, as it is not possible for any bull to fertilise a cow whose reproductive organs are in an unsatisfactory condition.

Two herds may be quoted in this connection. In one of them, a bull was classed "good," but only two out of 39 cows held to the first service. The owner, however, reports that he has had trouble in the herd during the past 20 years. In the other case, samples were examined from three bulls, and all were classed as "good," yet their performances were only 0, 6, and 16 per cent. respectively. The fact that three bulls all failed in the same herd would appear to indicate that the trouble lay with the cows. It must be emphasised that the bull is not the only factor in producing

a bad calving record, and where an owner is experiencing trouble and the bull is classed as "good" or even "moderate," steps should be taken to obtain veterinary advice concerning the reproductive efficiency of the cows. The figures 58 and 57 considerably underestimate the respective average percentage fertility of the "good" and "moderate" bulls.

"Unsatisfactory" Bulls

Altogether, 21 bulls were classified as "unsatisfactory." Four of these are shown in the table as having performances of more than 50 per cent. One, however, recorded only 51 per cent. Of the three with performances between 71 and 80 per cent., the sample from one was very unsatisfactory for examination; a second examination of the semen sample from another indicated that it had been graded rather harshly, and "moderate" would have been a more accurate assessment; the

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