



# CARCASS QUALITY

## Importance of Producing Better Baconers

[Sparrow Industrial Pictures photo.]

**P**AYMENT for pig-meats on a quality basis has been the active principle behind the progress made towards building up a sound and economic pig industry. Baconer competitions have been one of the means of educating the producer. The recent competitions held at Hastings, Patea, and Westfield have provided a striking example of the keenness shown by producers to meet present-day requirements. That there is still plenty of room for improvement is evident, but by comparison with standards of 10 years ago New Zealand has come a long way towards the improvement necessary to meet competition on the overseas market.

**T**HE row upon row of bacon carcasses left on the killing floor of the Westfield Freezing Works on the completion of the recent baconer competition represented the work, thought, and patriotic feeling of scores of farmers. The country's appreciation of this effort was admirably expressed by speakers at the luncheon held at the works—it was a grand job and well done.

The carrying of these 2,000 pigs to bacon weight by July, when they would have either been slaughtered as pork or carried through the winter as stores, has resulted in a gain of some 60 tons of pig-meat when it is desperately needed. The real gain will be even greater, as the animals entered for competition in most cases were the pick of a number kept on the farm for the purpose of selecting the best four or eight representatives.

To produce 60 tons of pig-meat requires in the vicinity of 360 to 400 tons of meal or meal equivalents, plus hard work—growing crops, harvesting them, and feeding the results to the animals. To fatten any baconer in the winter is hard enough; to produce a superior carcass demands especial

care in feeding and management. Even then a prize-winner cannot be developed out of an animal that is inherently poor in the qualities demanded of a prize-winning pig.

vided him with a signpost, directing his future breeding and feeding operations along lines destined to correct the weaknesses shown in his exhibit.

The industry as a whole should note the results of such competitions, because they expose our weak points as well as our strong ones. For this reason a survey of the measurements and points awarded on all carcasses entered in the recent baconer competition at Westfield is presented in this article.

The table below sets out the average marks awarded per entry of four pigs for the various characters. For comparison the points awarded to the winning entry and the maximum points possible are included.

### Evenness of Weight:

In this character the average was high, but 66 entries not shown in the above summary showed a weight range in excess of the 26lb. allowable to gain the minimum allowance of two points. Over and above this many pigs were underweight, reflecting, no doubt, the difficulty some owners had in providing sufficient food for their animals through the difficult final months.

### Balance and Depth of Side:

The average shown here is unfortunately low. This character is most important, points being awarded according to the ratio of the depth through the deepest part of the chest to the length. The balance of side has a real effect upon the appearance of the roll to be cut into rashers by the retailer. Good balance means a neat roll—less waste and more rashers

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### Signpost for Breeders

However, not only has each farmer who raised pigs for this competition done his country a good turn, he has, if he is prepared to use his score card intelligently, done himself a good turn. Expert judges have pro-

**TABLE I—ANALYSIS OF JUDGING CHARACTERISTICS.**

	Evenness of Wt.	Length.	Balance Side.	Back-fat.		Hams.	Shoulder.	Loin.
				Loin.	Shoulder.			
Av. pts. awarded	.. 7.07	39	22	47	26	39	25	21
Winning entry	.. 10	63	36	72	27	45	30	32
Possible pts.	.. 10	80	40	80	40	60	40	40