



Industry's Value Could Be Doubled

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THE high praise given New Zealand pigs in London recently, reported in the February, 1946, issue of the "Journal," should encourage New Zealand farmers to breed and feed for the requirements of the British market. That the figure of 680,000 pigs produced in the year ended September, 1945, could easily be doubled without attaining the goal of one pig per cow shows that the best economic use is not being made of dairy by-products in the production of pig meats.

The more intensive instructional work of District Pig Councils has been aimed at a continuous expansion of pig production, and in this article broadcast talks on pig breeding and management by District Pig Council Supervisors during the past year are summarised.

FROM their introduction into New Zealand pigs were looked upon as scavengers, and were treated accordingly. Poor accommodation was provided, little attention was given to them, a minimum expenditure was incurred on them, they had a maximum nuisance value always, and they produced to about half their capacity, but they showed such profits that they compelled interest. As awareness of their value developed, and as the slowing-up of the dairy cow development left more time for attention to pigs, pigs and cows became inseparable. Today pigs are kept on most farms where skim-milk, whey, or buttermilk is available, as pigs are the obvious users of this most valuable but too often despised feed supply.

Expansion of the industry began in real earnest in 1928, and has continued with slight interruption until the present. In the last 15 years, except for a period during the war, production has more than doubled. This development can be attributed only to the effort and interest of farmers themselves, but it may not be

out of place to mention a number of factors that actually stimulated the interest of many who have made outstanding successes of pigs, especially since 1928. In that year pig recording began and created a mild sensation by advocating the production of 40lb. weaners, and suggesting that at 16 weeks pigs were 2½ times their eight weeks' weaning weight. Information about what constituted good management, adequate feed, and quality in pigs was collected by the recording clubs; breeders became more interested in quality, and ultimately, to meet the demand for instruction and advice, the National Pig Industry Council was formed. This body, composed of and controlled mainly by pig producers and allied interests, now advises on questions of pig production, and is largely responsible for instructional work on pigs. In every district there is a supervisor, whose services are at the disposal of producers on all matters relating to pigs.

Possibilities with Feed Supply
Information collected from all kinds of sources makes it clear

that at least £4 worth of pigs can be produced per cow each year. If this were done by all, the industry would be turned into a £5½ million a year venture—just double its present value.

Dairy by-products equivalent to the milk from 1,400,000 cows are available for pig feeding. Any increase in pig production can be brought about only by providing and using the appropriate supplements to skim-milk. One cow's milk alone, fully used, could produce about £2 worth of pigs a year. Because of the seasonal way in which milk is produced, milk cannot be fully utilised when used alone, and because of its high feed value it is wasteful to use it alone except for fattening pigs. It is necessary to provide other feed when milk is absent, or to make the milk spin out. Roots or paddock feeds fill the bill, but to make the best of these some meal should be used with them when milk is absent. The ideal combination of pig feeds is skim-milk, meals, and roots or grazing.

Skim-milk provides between 600 and 650 million gallons of high-quality pig feed. Because it is not available in equal amounts each month, and because it is not easily stored, its use presents a difficulty that only the most progressive have overcome. Most people waste some of it at some time of the year, and even when it is all fed to pigs some is still wasted, because pigs are sometimes overfed and at other times underfed. If a pig is ultimately underfed, previous feeding represents the biggest waste.

Skim-milk fed alone produces an excellent carcass, and older pigs can grow naturally on skim-milk only. Fattening pigs, therefore, require no supplement of meal if milk is abundant. Any meals fed with skim-milk should be fed to pigs under 4 months old, or to make up for a shortage of milk in the off-season.

Whey supplies the equivalent of 80 to 90 million gallons of skim-milk. It