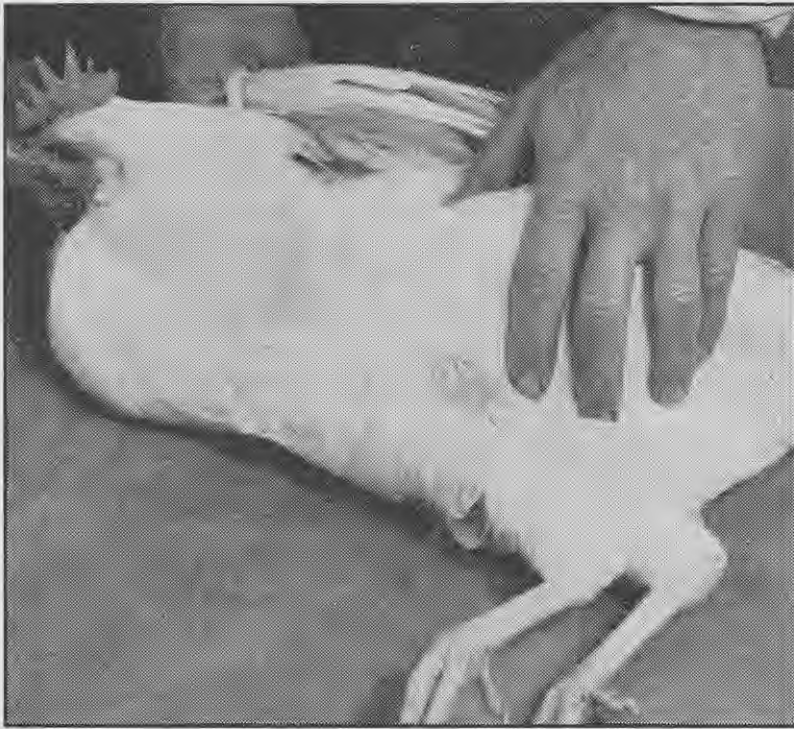


CONTROL OF FOWL POX



A bird prepared for vaccination with pigeon-pox virus by the removal of a few feathers from the outside of the thigh and the rubbing of the skin to redden it.

the diluting fluid and shaken to ensure thorough mixing. A few feathers are removed from the outside of the thigh and the bare area rubbed with such an instrument as that on the left of the photograph on the previous page. Sufficient rubbing to produce a reddening is all that is necessary. The area is then painted with the vaccine with the brush provided. A slight local reaction may be detected in about 7 days. The vaccine is supplied on application, with brush but without scraper, at a cost of 1d. per dose. It is packed in 250 dose lots, as packing it in a smaller quantity is not practicable.

Therefore, if fowl pox breaks out in a flock, all affected birds should immediately be collected and isolated in an effort to limit the spread of infection. These should not be vaccinated, as they are already developing immunity as a result of the disease. Dry-mash feeding should be stopped and birds put on to wet mash, as flakes of dry mash, sticking to the mouths and nostrils of affected birds, are pecked at by others, so facilitating the spread of infection. It is also of advantage to put outside the doors of houses receptacles containing disinfectant into which boots may be dipped when entering or leaving so as to reduce as far as possible the spread of infection from house to house.

In addition, all non-affected birds on the farm above the age of 8 weeks should be vaccinated immediately with pigeon-pox vaccine in the manner described. Immunity will develop in about a week, and until then birds should be

shielded from gross infection as far as possible. The immunity conferred is neither solid nor lasting but is sufficient to tide the birds over the outbreak. Vaccination with pigeon-pox virus does not produce any violent reaction in the birds treated, so that egg production is not affected.

In Australia and elsewhere overseas vaccination is practised not with pigeon-pox virus but with a weakened or attenuated strain of the virus of fowl-pox itself. This has the advantage that birds so treated are solidly immune for life, as they would be after an attack of the disease, but the great drawback to this method is that a reaction is set up in birds older than about 3 months, and if it is applied to birds in lay, they are put out of production for several weeks. Fowl-pox vaccine is therefore not suitable for checking an outbreak, but is extremely useful as a purely-preventive measure by the routine vaccination every year of all young stock between the ages of 8 and 12 weeks. However, care has to be exercised in the use of fowl-pox virus, as careless handling might result in an outbreak of the disease, and so far its use on a general scale has not been permitted in New Zealand. However, last year the stock on one or two farms were vaccinated by this method with vaccine prepared by R. Salisbury, Veterinary Research Officer, Wallaceville Animal Research Station, and if results prove satisfactory and facilities become available for the production there of fowl-pox vaccine on a

sufficiently-large scale, it is hoped to make this service available for general use under reasonable supervision.

Action if an Outbreak Occurs

To summarise, if fowl pox breaks out on a farm—and during the next few months is when it is most likely to occur—the following steps should be taken:—

The owner should make sure that it is fowl pox with which he is dealing. In cases of doubt the nearest Veterinarian or Poultry Instructor of the Department of Agriculture should be consulted, or the carcasses of a few typically-affected fowls should be sent to the Wallaceville Animal Research Station, Private Bag, Wellington, with a letter giving the name and address of the sender and any information about the outbreak which is considered to be of importance.

Sick birds should be isolated immediately.

If the existence of the disease is definitely established, all unaffected birds older than 8 weeks should be vaccinated with pigeon-pox vaccine, obtainable from Wallaceville. If the owner does not know how to do this, a Veterinarian or Poultry Instructor of the Department will help.

Wet-mash feeding should be substituted for dry, and troughs removed and cleaned between feeds.

Receptacles containing disinfectant into which boots can be dipped should be put at the entrances to all fowl-houses.

One final word of counsel: Some owners of flocks affected with fowl pox spend many hours dipping the heads of unfortunate birds into solutions of disinfectant and other noxious liquids. Such efforts are a waste of time, and birds which recover do so despite the treatment and not because of it. Affected birds should be handled as little as possible so as not to carry infection to others which may be healthy.

Award for Poultry Husbandry Research Work

AN international award recently inaugurated by the Poultry Association of Great Britain, and known as the Tom Newman Memorial Award, consists of a medal and cash prize of about £50 annually for the best piece of research work of benefit to poultry husbandry performed in any country. The Poultry Veterinary Officer of the Department of Agriculture, Wellington, has agreed to act as corresponding secretary for New Zealand in connection with the award, and anybody wishing to enter or desiring further information should communicate with him.

The prize is open to any person of either sex without restriction as to occupation. Papers describing the work which it is desired to enter for the 1949 award should be in the hands of the corresponding secretary by January 1, 1950.