

in farming in the North Auckland Land District shows that expansion has not been uniform throughout the district, for while the southern counties such as Franklin, Manukau, Rodney, and Otamatea have expanded in both fat lamb and dairy farming, Whangarei County has expanded in dairying, but not in sheep. Of the five remaining northern counties, Bay of Islands and Hobson Counties have expanded in both sheep and dairying, Hokianga and Mangonui Counties' dairy herds have increased, but their ewe flocks have declined, and Whangaroa County's dairy herds have increased, but its ewe flocks have remained static.

In all the counties there has been an increase in beef breeding stock, though the stock varies considerably in the proportion of breeding ewes to run cows. In Franklin County, for example, breeding ewes increased from 106,859 in 1946 to 172,741 in 1955, an increase of 65,882 in 9 years. Beef cows and heifers rose from 3552 to 5742, an increase of 2190. The ratio of increase was 30 ewes to 1 breeding cow. In Bay of Islands County breeding ewes increased by 19,373 and cows by 4138, or about 4.7 ewes to 1 cow in the same period. Franklin County has reached that stage of intensive sheep farming in which the price of land makes it more profitable or less trouble to buy in steers to fatten on surplus grass than to breed them.

The more northern counties in Northland have not reached the stage of fat lamb and beef farming and high-priced land, but are in the development stage with a surplus of store stock to be disposed of. Of course, some farms in every district produce fat stock for export and local trade.

Beef stock have been used to keep the steeper sheep and cattle country clear of fern, but now, after top-dressing, breeding cows and younger stock are used in place of 3-year-old bullocks. Provided the cows are not grazed hard for long periods, but are given a periodic spell on better pasture, this is as satisfactory a method if a little slower.

In this article the beef stock producing area discussed is the northern portion of the North Auckland Land District, or what many would consider to be Northland proper as distinct from the North Auckland Land District, and comprises the six most northern counties; that is the area above a line drawn from Waipu to Dargaville and including the Pouto peninsula on Kaipara Harbour.

The general trend of farming in this area can well be seen from Table 1, which gives the numbers of the three main kinds of breeding stock from 1946 to 1952.

TABLE 1—BREEDING STOCK IN COUNTIES\*

Year	Cows in milk	Breeding ewes	Beef cows and heifers	Cows in milk	Breeding ewes	Beef cows and heifers	Cows in milk	Breeding ewes	Beef cows and heifers
MANGONUI			HOKIANGA			WHANGAROA			
1946	29,350	34,645	5,375	21,441	49,317	7,825	4,498	14,406	1,388
1947	23,440	34,473	5,325	20,489	44,296	6,792	4,565	14,424	1,390
1948	25,043	29,836	5,133	22,174	44,584	6,700	4,915	14,648	1,521
1949	26,284	30,626	5,897	22,567	44,490	7,176	5,244	13,724	1,490
1950	31,618	29,063	5,537	23,102	40,974	6,692	5,815	14,165	1,599
1951	31,722	30,336	5,534	23,356	43,041	7,568	5,719	14,633	1,517
1952	33,398	31,730	6,396	24,277	41,180	8,488	6,497	14,242	1,814
BAY OF ISLANDS			WHANGAREI			HOBSON			
1946	23,480	62,151	9,005	58,907	97,277	13,873	33,546	77,773	10,465
1947	23,131	62,978	9,187	57,107	89,061	12,968	32,749	78,948	9,776
1948	24,538	64,766	9,360	60,751	89,576	13,460	35,223	79,176	10,316
1949	26,130	62,487	9,538	64,024	88,149	14,942	36,434	78,516	10,497
1950	27,232	60,278	9,481	68,981	90,333	14,299	39,189	78,849	10,884
1951	28,043	65,220	9,571	72,967	92,471	14,017	40,471	83,738	10,712
1952	29,453	67,354	10,141	74,521	90,823	16,417	41,570	81,122	11,842

\* Agricultural and pastoral statistics.

Description of Area

A brief description of the area is necessary. The eastern coastal side of Northland from Waipu northward to Whangaroa is mainly undulating to steep hills with only a small proportion of lower less steep slopes and alluvial flats along the rivers. These flats are very valuable in the dry summer and autumn for growth of pas-

palum. Unfortunately, development has been into dairying rather than sheep and cattle farming and the hills have reverted to danthonia or manuka scrub to a considerable extent.

Much of this country will respond to molybdenum and with aerial top-dressing could be greatly improved. Between Whangaroa and Mangonui is a large area of undeveloped coastal country, much of which is volcanic



Breeding cows on developed sand country on the west coast.