Grass Staggers.—A cold spring was experienced with an absence of any flush feed conditions, and it is noteworthy that the incidence of grass staggers and other calving troubles was much lower than in some previous years. Experience in past years has shown that where hay is fed out during the spring to supplement a rather tardy growth of pasture there is less tendency toward grass staggers and also to milk-fever.

The dairy herds are beginning this winter in poor condition owing to the drought, and with an absence of winter feed the position regarding next calving season gives rise to much anxiety on the part of herd-owners in the affected districts.

Milk-fever.—Owing to the absence of flush pasture growth in spring months this disease of dairy stock was not nearly so prevalent last spring. The good results obtained from the use of injections of suitable calcium salts have been so marked that very few owners nowadays use the old udder-inflation treatment. This is noticeable in seasons when the disease is prevalent, the demand for calcium gluconate being very high.

Ngaio Poisoning.—During a severe storm last winter many ngaio trees were blown down on Banks Peninsula. Herd-owners in the area affected lost a number of cattle owing to ngaio poisoning. A total of 73 head of cattle died, and some cattle which showed symptoms of poisoning made a slow recovery. Ngaio poisoning in stock has been reported on several previous occasions.

Parasitic Disease in Young Cattle.—The rearing of young dairy stock for herd-replacement purposes is an important part of farming in factory-supply herds. Although calf-scours and red-water take their toll of the very young calves, the later infestation of weaned calves due to parasitic attack is frequently the cause of more serious loss. Reports indicate that better feeding in autumn and winter go a long way toward helping to carry the calves through. Many owners are now using phenothiazine in the treatment of calves for worms, and although more expensive, there is no doubt that this worm medicine has superseded bluestone solution and most other worm medicine. Even with the best available treatment, young, sturdy, well-boned dairy stock cannot be produced unless the best animal-husbandry practices are followed in the sound feeding and management of this class of animal. The past season, on account of drought conditions in many parts of the North Island, tended to lessen infestation with worms, but it is feared that the scarcity of winter feed will prove severe on young stock.

SHEEP

The winter of 1945 was favourable to the sheep-breeder. The ewes wintered well and the lambing percentages were very good, creating a record. The weather at lambing-time was favourable, but lambs did not do well in the spring and early summer, the weather being cold and pasture growth rather slow. Later, dry conditions set in, constituting a drought in many parts of the Auckland Province and on the east coast. This resulted in lambs being sent forward for slaughter at lighter weights, even in the good districts. In the affected districts many unfinished and even poor lambs had to be killed, as no feed was available and the outlook for rape or other fattening crops was poor.

Some losses in ewes were experienced on high-country stations in Canterbury, and where loss did not take place the check caused by the snow was responsible for an increased incidence of pregnancy toxæmia. Otherwise, in the South Island generally, the loss from this disease was below normal, an early spring growth in Otago being a preventive factor.

The wool clip for the year will probably be lighter in North Island districts affected by the prolonged spell of dry weather, particularly in east-coast districts, where dry weather was experienced from September, 1945. The wool was light in condition, deficient in length, with many cotted fleeces in the clip. Tick stain is still bad in some districts, but is improving.

Dipping presented difficulty in the drought-affected areas, but, considering all factors, the shearing and dipping operations were carried out satisfactorily. Some dipping losses were experienced, and there is evidence to show that infection is picked up in