

Grading.—Because of prevailing conditions in the trade it has not been possible to secure strict adherence to the baconer grading standards, and the methods in practice are somewhat lenient. Of the baconers slaughtered, 83 per cent. were graded P1, 13 per cent. P2, and 4 per cent. second quality. Porkers were graded 94 per cent. prime and 6 per cent. second quality.

Feed-supply.—It is not possible to import grain at an economic figure for pig-feeding, and supplies of meat-meal available after requirements of other stock are met are insufficient for the needs of the pig industry to supplement home-grown crops for winter feeding and the whey supply in cheese-producing districts. The shortage of feed has contributed in part to the decline of the pig industry in recent years, and the position will have to be more satisfactory before any considerable improvement can be expected.

Pedigree Sow Recording.—The number of sows nominated for recording shows a slight improvement on recent years, but is still regrettably low at 144 for the year ended 31st March, 1948.

Carcass-quality Evaluation Scheme.—By agreement with the National Pig Industry Council and district councils, an effort was made during the year to revive the work carried out under this scheme, which is aimed at discovering strains which are performing particularly well under ordinary farm conditions. All those concerned with the operation of the scheme were circularized at the beginning of the season. The response, unfortunately, has not been all that was expected. Of 245 pigs marked, 209 have been identified in the works and reported on.

National Advisory Service.—Good work continues to be done by the District Pig Councils in securing the improvement of conditions for pigs on farms. Supervisors' annual reports indicate that, despite shortage of materials, piggery improvements are progressing steadily and between £45,000 and £50,000 has been spent in this direction by farmers on the supervisors' advice during the past year.

However, critical analysis of the results accruing from the use of various types of housing has not been attempted, mainly because the National and District Pig Councils have felt that all energies should be devoted to improving conditions under which pigs are kept on as many farms as possible. The suggestion is now being put before all Councils that a modification of this policy, involving the carrying-out of some survey investigational work coupled with the advisory service, is desirable.

Crop-subsidy Scheme.—In company with other subsidies, this scheme was discontinued in favour of a direct price increase of $\frac{1}{2}$ d. per pound on all pig-meats. The amount paid in subsidy in the last year of operation of the scheme was £129,134, bringing the total paid for the three years of operation of the scheme to £340,464.

Pig-meat Prices.—Subsequent to the increase in lieu of crop subsidy, a further increase of $\frac{1}{2}$ d. per pound was granted as from 5th January, 1948, from which date the schedule price for prime porkers and baconers in the North Island has been 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. per pound.

MEAT INSPECTION AND SLAUGHTER OF STOCK

At all abattoirs and meat-export slaughterhouses a satisfactory standard of meat inspection has been maintained throughout the year. Many extensions and improvements at several of the meat-works are being carried out. When completed, the buildings will facilitate the slaughter of increased numbers of stock under less congested and more hygienic conditions. Better accommodation was required at several centres for both animals and men, and so far as material is available an attempt is being made to overtake the building arrears accumulated during the war years.