

IMPORTATION OF STOCK

The following stock were imported during the year: cattle, 16; sheep, 343; pigs, 26; horses, 64 (including movements of thoroughbreds between New Zealand and Australia). Of those animals, the following were placed in quarantine for the periods required: cattle, 16; pigs, 26; sheep, 64.

EXPORTATION OF STOCK

During the year under review the following animals were exported: cattle, 145; sheep, 1,419; pigs, 92; horses, 263. The movement of thoroughbred horses to Australia accounted for 250 of the animals.

DAIRY INSPECTION

The past season has been very trying for the town-milk producer. The hot, dry summer and scarcity of feed resulted in a reduced yield of milk from many herds, so that supply authorities had to go farther afield to acquire milk during the summer. During the very warm months producers found difficulty in cooling milk, and this type of weather was also a severe test of the keeping-quality of the milk.

The temperature of the water normally used for cooling milk rose markedly during the warm weather and the provision of refrigeration is not easy on many farms. Many producers have provided efficient cooling plants to cope with all conditions.

In general, the standard of town-milk production on the farm has been good, the premises and milking plants being maintained in a satisfactory condition. Where complaints have been investigated, it has been found that a number of factors have been involved, some of them difficult to rectify during the warm summer months. If the cooling or the system of collection was at fault, every endeavour was made to rectify it. The handling of a perishable product like milk during warm weather requires a co-ordination of effort at all stages with expeditious delivery to the consumer. Delay or breakdown at any one stage might have very serious results. The handling of stale milk during such a period is extremely risky.

Many improvements to existing premises have been carried out during the year and a number of new sheds have been erected. The hot-water supply to dairies has not always been satisfactory, as many depend on electric current for heating.

New cooling systems and refrigeration plants are on the market, and in large sheds some of these would prove most valuable in cooling milk and thus ensuring the keeping-quality of the product even during hot summer weather.

POULTRY

Eggs have remained in short supply during the year, particularly in the main centres, and limited poultry-food supplies have not permitted any programme of increased production. Though it is impossible to quote accurate figures, the Department is not of the opinion that poultry flocks have been reduced substantially during the past year, with the possible exception of Canterbury flocks. Some commercial producers have broken up their flocks and sold their buildings, but new flocks have been established and others increased in size. On the other hand, there are indications that egg-production in general has been adversely affected by the food shortage, mainly as the result of the forced changes in rations fed because of irregularity with which food-supplies have come forward. Unfortunately, supplies of food, more particularly of wheat, have not warranted any programme for increased flocks and increased