

Although the disease is preventable by vaccination, it is disturbing to sheep-owners to find that more vaccination of their flocks has to be carried out if losses from this disease are to be controlled. In his report on this disease the Live-stock Superintendent, Dunedin, writes :—

The disease is widespread throughout the district and particularly in the West Otago, South Otago, and Southland areas, in localities where the concentration of sheep is highest.

Losses in both hoggets and older sheep have occurred associated with crutching, shearing, lambing, and dipping. Other cases do occur unassociated with any of these operations where no visible macroscopic lesion is seen. In these cases small microscopic lesions could be present, dental changes may be responsible, and there is also the possibility of so-called idiopathic cases of blackleg.

Large numbers of sheep have been vaccinated with the blackleg vaccine supplied by the Animal Research Station, Wallaceville, and though the vaccine has not been used under exact control conditions, results have been apparently good. Several thousand sheep were vaccinated. The exact figures are not available, but as an example 18,000 were vaccinated in the Tapanui district, 19,000 in the Balclutha district, and 11,000 in the Gore district.

With the extension of this work it is obvious that vaccination will have to be done largely by the farmers themselves. Every endeavour will be made by field officers to hold demonstrations of the procedure and to assist in other advisory ways. Considerable care is necessary to avoid losses due to infection at the time of vaccination.

Tetanus.—This anærobic infection of lambs has increased at marking-time. Although tetanus infection was always a risk when lambs were being marked and docked, field reports tend to show that larger numbers of lambs have died on infected farms. Further inquiries require to be made into the incidence of this infection.

Transit Tetany.—A rather unusual incidence of this disease affecting lambs is described by the Live-stock Superintendent, Christchurch, as follows :—

A line of lambs brought from Kaikoura and sold in Addington saleyards were railed to Ashburton. When they were taken off the train they were kept overnight in the railway yards. When driven on the roads next morning quite a number went down, a total of 33 being affected. Eight died, and of the remainder that were treated with calcium borogluconate by subcutaneous injection 21 recovered.

PIGS

The number of pigs slaughtered for the season 1948-49 at premises under inspection was 615,148, a decrease of 9,475 on last year's figures.

Inspection of the carcasses at time of slaughter revealed that 84,570 carcasses were affected with tuberculosis in varying degree, the percentage being 13·7. This is an increase of 0·4 per cent. as compared with last year.

Diseases of Pigs

Suipestifer Infection.—This disease of pigs crops up year after year on many properties. No very serious losses have been suffered by individual pig-owners, but collectively the disease is responsible for a lowered output of pigs.

Tuberculosis in Pigs.—One or two heavy incidences of tuberculosis in pigs were found on meat inspection, and inquiry at the source tended to show that the producers concerned had been feeding inadequately-cooked garbage and offal.

The susceptibility of the pig to tuberculosis has been stressed on numerous occasions and all producers must know of the risk involved when pigs get access to food of doubtful quality. If there is any reason to suspect garbage or other food, it should be sterilized by boiling before use or eliminated from the food-supply for pigs. It is an offence under the Meat Act to allow pigs to be fed with any diseased meat or to allow them to be fed with any part of the carcass of any animal that has not been boiled. The boiling of garbage before use is also compulsory as a protective measure against pig diseases.

Kidney-worm Infestation.—Examination of specimens at the Wallaceville Laboratory showed that 2 sows out of 21 on one property were harbouring this parasite.