

The Department is conducting a survey of costs of production of pig-meat on dairy-farms at the request of the National Pig Industry Council.

*Grading.*—Without an effective grading system the industry lacks a very important plank in its policy of expansion and improvement. The National Pig Industry Council has so far failed to reach agreement on the subject of introduction of grading standards which will be more selective than those in operation to-day and which will enable a worthwhile premium to be paid on the desirable type of pig. A trial of the system recommended by a committee set up by the National Council for the purpose is being conducted at eighteen freezing-works this season, and it is hoped that all parties will agree to action being taken along the lines of introducing an effective system in the near future.

*Feed-supply.*—Although there has been an exceptionally good dairying season, the pig-feed supply has lacked balance because of the scarcity of concentrated foods. Although prices for barleymeal have been up to £22 per ton, it has still been economic to use limited quantities for creep feeding and generally for sows and other pigs in periods of shortage of dairy by-products. Much more would have been used had it been available. The change back to shipping more meat in carcass form has resulted in less meatmeal manufacture in the current meat year, and this has further affected supplies of pig-feed. The two lowest grades of tallow, "K" and "L," have been released for pig-feed over the winter, and will again be available over the coming winter. This will enable the successful wintering of many more pigs than would otherwise have been possible.

*Pedigree Sow Recording.*—Seventy-three litters were officially recorded during the year (excluding those withdrawn before completion). It is disappointing that the sow-recording scheme is not made use of by pedigree breeders to anything like the extent that is desirable. That it is a symptom of the general lack of interest in pig-production at the moment is no consolation to those who are trying to administer schemes to increase the efficiency of the industry. Field officers whose duties include the weighing of litters feel that the sporadic type of recording they are called on to carry out is of little value, and efforts are being made to indicate the need for more consistent and more widespread recording of pedigree stock to assist breeders in developing their improvement methods.

*Carcass-quality Scheme.*—This scheme, designed to assist both the breeder and commercial pig-raiser in the selection of breeding-stock of the most suitable type and the management of fattening pigs so that the most desirable carcass is produced, has suffered because of lack of incentive, which should operate through an effective grading system. The total number of pigs reported on during the year was 55.

*National Advisory Service.*—The National Pig Industry Council has continued to control the advisory service to producers through District Pig Councils. The decline in pig killings forced the Council to recommend an increase in the pig levy to 6d. per head, and this became operative from 1st October, 1948. It is hoped that the fund obtained from the increased levy will enable an extension of the work at present carried out.

*Survey Work.*—In the meantime, with the assistance of the Department, survey work is being undertaken in the industry. In addition to the survey of costs of production already mentioned, a husbandry survey aimed at discovering the main reasons why the industry over the past five years has produced only 9.3 fat pigs per sow per year is being carried out. District Pig Council Supervisors are carrying out the field-work of this survey, and the organization and analysis are the responsibility of the Department. This survey is planned as the first of a series of investigations into problems of the industry which can be tackled by the industry's own advisory service in co-operation with the Department.