

ANIMAL RESEARCH DIVISION

REPORT OF J. F. FILMER, DIRECTOR

There has been a steady development in the work of the Animal Research Division during the year and this has been accompanied by a marked growth of public interest in the Wallaceville, Ruakura, and Manutuke Research Stations. At Ruakura especially the number of visitors and the demands on the time of the research staff have become quite embarrassing. The collaboration of farmers' organizations is being enlisted with a view to arranging an annual farmers' week in addition to a few field-days to enable the maximum number of stockowners to discuss the investigations with research workers with a minimum disturbance of the work. In order to reach the much larger number of farmers who cannot visit the research stations, conferences of extension workers are held and these officers are then able to pass on the latest results of the investigations. During the year the second annual conference of departmental veterinarians was held at Wallaceville, the main theme being extension work. An extra-mural course of two weeks was provided at Wallaceville for eighteen final-year veterinary students.

DIAGNOSTIC SERVICES

There was a very marked increase in the work of the Diagnostic Section at Wallaceville, as shown in the following table, in which the 1947-48 figures are given in parentheses:—

NUMBERS AND TYPES OF SPECIMENS EXAMINED, 1ST APRIL, 1948, TO 31ST MARCH, 1949

Species.				Cases Submitted.	Samples Examined.
Cattle—					
Blood samples	..	..		419	1,978
Milk samples	..	..		217	1,558
Miscellaneous samples	..	..		705	1,659
Sheep	..	..		647	1,623 (599)
Pigs	..	..		194	464 (202)
Fowls	..	..		777	1,868 (1,302)
Horses	..	..		93	219 (109)
Dogs	..	..		90	145 (48)
Bees	..	..		..	126 (162)
Miscellaneous	..	..		275	574 (278)
Totals	..	..		3,417 (2,657)	10,214 (7,263)

The following vaccines were prepared and issued free, last year's production being given in parentheses:—

Blackleg vaccine—				Doses.	
Cattle	..	..	..	78,000	(70,000)
Sheep	..	..	..	172,500	(79,200)
“Scabby mouth” vaccine	..	..	..	470,000	(329,000)

The Diagnostic Section, in addition to assisting veterinarians in the diagnosis of ailments, is ideally situated to locate new diseases and make preliminary investigation of them. During the year the following observations were made:—

Toxic Heart-disease in Poultry.—Routine histological examination of heart muscle in cases of this disease showed the presence of intra-nuclear inclusion bodies, which suggest that the disease may be due to infection with a filterable virus.