

Contagious abortion: Although this disease has been very prevalent in some districts, the reports of the District Superintendents seem to indicate that on the whole there has been a diminution. This has been particularly the case in Otago and Southland, where in the previous year the trouble appeared to be on the increase. The vaccine treatment carried out in some herds in Otago where a large percentage of the herd had aborted has given some encouraging results.

Vaginal catarrh, or vaginitis: A very appreciable number of cows have been found to be suffering from a form of sterility, and on investigation vaginitis has been found to be responsible for a considerable proportion of the cases.

Tuberculosis: An examination of the statistics showing the results of the examination of stock on slaughter at meat-export works and abattoirs indicates very little change, there being a slight increase as regards cows found affected, while other classes of cattle show a very slight decrease when compared with the previous year. Swine show an increase on last year's figures of 1.70 per cent., which indicates a position not satisfactory, although the returns show the greatest increase as being among those only slightly affected with the disease. In the matter of the condemnation of cattle by Stock Inspectors in the field for tubercular infection on clinical examination, and on account of the application of the tuberculin test, the total of such condemnations during the past year was 4,448, as against 3,703 for the previous year, thus showing an increase of 745, equal to 20.11 per cent. Some of this increase is attributable to the fact of a greater use of the tuberculin test among the herds, but the situation cannot be regarded as altogether satisfactory, even after making full allowance for the increased number of cattle in the Dominion.

Actinomycosis: The number of animals found affected by this disease is still considerable, although a small decrease in the South Island is indicated.

Cattle-tick: The regulations under the Stock Act designed to prevent the spread of ticks among cattle have been administered in tick-infested districts. The Department's energy has been specially concentrated on the provisions regarding the protection of clean districts, and as complete arrangements as are reasonably possible to meet requirements have been made and are being carried out, including the stationing of watchmen at the various exits from the affected areas. During the year a further eleven dips were completed, making a total of forty-nine dips for which the Government subsidy has been paid.

The Mamaku Farm and "Bush-sick" Area.—Experiments carried out during the past season at the Mamaku Farm have given promise of good results, and the Department is now in a position to carry out the original idea of determining whether or not dairy-farming can be profitably undertaken on "bush-sick" country. With this object in view a number of cows will be bought whose milk-production has been previously observed. These will be placed under ordinary farming conditions, and a correct account kept of everything in connection with the dairying operations. Favourable results are looked for.

Slaughter of Stock for Export.—The following table shows the position as regards the numbers of cattle, sheep, and lambs slaughtered at meat-export works during the year ended 31st March, 1923, compared with the previous twelve months' slaughtering:—

	31st March, 1923.	31st March, 1922.	Increase.	Decrease.
Cattle	155,881	97,907	57,974	..
Sheep	1,927,317	3,071,255	..	1,143,938
Lambs	4,410,895	4,876,555	..	465,660

Three of the freezing-works did not open for operations during the season, and another, after opening for a short period, ceased operations for the remainder of the season. The above figures show a decrease in the sheep-killings, which was only to be expected seeing the largely increased slaughtering that had taken place in sheep and lambs during the previous two seasons. A decrease has also been shown in the number of lambs slaughtered, but it should be pointed out that for the period under review part of two slaughtering seasons is included, and the figures may show differences according to whether the seasons are early or late. So that the position may be the better understood for comparison, the killings of sheep and lambs for the two periods from October to March, 1921-22 and 1922-23, are given, as follows:—

	1st October, 1921, to 31st March, 1922.	1st October, 1922, to 31st March, 1923.
Sheep	2,091,840	1,244,490
Lambs	3,011,695	3,128,415

These figures, it will be noted, indicate a small increase in this season's lambs slaughtered up to the 31st March, as compared with the same period of the previous year, but do not materially alter the position as regards sheep.

Inspection of Meat.—The inspection of all carcasses of animals slaughtered at meat-export works, abattoirs, and bacon-factories was carried out satisfactorily during the year. The following are the total numbers of each class of stock slaughtered under direct inspection during the year ended 31st March, 1923: Cattle, 281,364; calves, 32,124; sheep, 2,617,614; lambs, 4,520,151; swine, 221,773.