

there are evidently marked differences of opinion among sheepowners as to the advisableness of this. There is a good deal to be said on both sides, but, whatever is done regarding animals of this class, there can be no two opinions as to the necessity for maintaining a high standard in purebred stock intended for export.

INSPECTION OF MEAT.

The meat-inspection service of the Live-stock Division has been carried out efficiently. Details of the stock inspected both at meat-export slaughterhouses and local abattoirs will be found in the divisional report.

INSPECTION OF MILK-SUPPLIES.

The Live-stock Division undertakes the inspection of milk-supplies to cities and boroughs, so far as the dairy farm is concerned, and the efficiency of this service has been well maintained. Special measures are taken to maintain freedom from tubercular contamination of milk, and numerous samples of the mixed milk of dairy herds are examined at the Department's and other laboratories for the purpose of determining whether this is present. Throughout the year only five affected samples were found, and in each case the herd was taken in hand by the field officers of the Department and the source or sources of infection removed.

Apart from these special measures, general sanitation has, generally speaking, been well observed, and dairy-farmers co-operate well with the inspecting officers.

LIVE-STOCK INSPECTION.

The stock-inspection service has functioned well, and the general control of disease has been maintained on good lines, this being rendered easier consequent upon the willingness of farmers to meet the requirements of the departmental officers, who in turn are able to give a great deal of advice and assistance in connection with disease prevention, control, and treatment, together with stock-management, all of which is valuable towards maintaining farm animals in good health and profitable condition.

THE RABBIT PEST.

A great improvement has taken place in the position throughout the Dominion as regards rabbits, these being less in number and better under control than has been the case for many years past. Rabbit Boards, where established, have done very good work, and, so far as their districts are concerned, are to be congratulated upon the results attained. Those officers of the Department responsible for carrying out the provisions of the Rabbit Nuisance Act may also be commended, as the present good position must be held to be largely due to their efforts over a period of years of onerous and often unpleasant work. A much greater spirit of united effort between farmers and Inspectors is noticeable, and this is very satisfactory from all points of view.

NOXIOUS WEEDS.

The Noxious Weeds Act, always difficult of administration, has given cause for much thought as to the best lines to adopt in dealing with weeds on abandoned properties. In some cases, in order to reasonably protect adjoining occupiers, the Department itself has taken steps to clear the weeds, and a good deal of similar work has been done on Crown and Native lands. The question of amending the Act in order to place more responsibility upon mortgagees and others in the case of abandoned or unoccupied farms requires careful consideration, especially as regards mortgagees, as bringing them under its provisions might constitute undue hardship. It is hoped, however, that an amending Bill may be brought down during the current session.

The Empire Marketing Board has made a special grant of money to aid in the control of certain noxious weeds, including blackberry and ragwort, by means of insects. The work in connection with this is being carried out under the direction of Dr. R. J. Tillyard, Entomologist to the Cawthron Institute, with whom the Department's Entomologist, Mr. D. Miller, is co-operating so far as circumstances render it necessary. The result of this undertaking is being awaited with much interest, but efforts at control by present known methods are being continued as vigorously as is possible under the conditions existing.

The Department has carried out a series of experiments in the control of blackberry by chemical sprays, and the result of these is being embodied in a report about to be published.