

COMPENSATION PAID FOR STOCK AND MEAT CONDEMNED.

Compensation to the amount of £15,715 was paid out during the year for 5,199 animals condemned in the field for diseases under the Stock Act, and £13,963 for carcasses or parts of carcasses condemned for disease on examination at time of slaughter at abattoirs and meat-export slaughterhouses, &c., under the provisions of the Slaughtering and Inspection Act. The aggregate of these amounts shows a decrease on the previous year's figures of £1,205.

IMPORTATION OF STUD STOCK FROM ABROAD.

It is to be regretted that owing to the continued prevalence of foot-and-mouth disease in England breeders of stud stock have not been permitted to make fresh importations of stud cattle, sheep, and swine from the United Kingdom for some years past. It is recognized that the necessity to impose strict prohibition has greatly inconvenienced breeders in their breeding operations, but the necessity to prevent by every precautionary measure the introduction of this disease into the Dominion left no alternative. The position in regard to the disease has improved, but it is not considered advisable to be too hasty in the matter of withdrawing our restrictions. Breeders may, however, rest assured that whenever it is deemed quite safe to do so the question of lifting the prohibition will be recommended, with such additional precautions in regard thereto as may be considered advisable in the circumstances.

A few dairy cattle have been imported from Canada, swine from Australia, and also some sheep (principally merinos) from Australia.

The following is a summary of the various classes of animals which have entered into quarantine during the year: Horses, 4; cattle, 13; swine, 51; dogs, 120.

EXPORTATION OF STUD STOCK.

The exportation of stud stock (principally sheep) from New Zealand has again shown a promising advance. The following are the numbers of stock exported for stud purposes during the year: Sheep, 5,327; cattle, 57; horses, 16; swine, 5.

DESTRUCTION OF THE KEA.

The subsidy of 5s. per beak paid for the destruction of the kea totalled £766 15s., being equal to 3,067 birds, or a decrease of 830 on the previous year. The payment of this subsidy for some years past has accounted for a considerable number of keas being destroyed, and the damage which they have been credited with in the destruction of sheep should as a result be minimized.

INSPECTION OF DAIRY PREMISES SUPPLYING MILK FOR DIRECT CONSUMPTION.

The work connected with the inspection and registration of dairy premises supplying milk for direct consumption entails constant and careful supervision on the part of the Inspectors employed in the work, in order that the desired standard may be achieved and maintained. The work throughout the year has been carried out successfully, and I am pleased to report that, on the whole, the dairy premises are being maintained in a satisfactory condition. Some difficulty (financial and otherwise) naturally exists in a number of cases in getting all done that is required to bring the premises up to the required standard, and in these cases we have had to be satisfied with such improvements as could be effected.

The amendment to the Dairy Industry Act which was passed and came into force during the year will enable the difficulty which has previously existed in regard to farms held on short tenancy to be overcome, in that the landlord is required to bear a share of the cost of improvements in proportion to the unexpired term of the lease.

In addition to the inspection of dairy premises, where special attention is given to cleanliness, methods of handling, and cooling of the milk, &c., a careful clinical examination of the cows is carried out, and any showing evidence of disease are destroyed; also suspicious cases are subjected to the tuberculin test, and if a reaction is shown they, too, are destroyed. Numbers of composite samples of milk are also collected and subjected to biological examination at the Veterinary Laboratory at Wallaceville and elsewhere, with an exceedingly small number of positive results.

Greater use has been made during the year of the N.Z. patent sediment-tester, further testers having been supplied to officers for use in addition to those previously supplied for the large centres. These testers are of value in affording direct ocular evidence of the condition of the milk in regard to dirt content, and I propose to further extend the supply of them to other districts.

THE VETERINARY LABORATORY.

During the year additional assistance was provided for the Wallaceville Veterinary Laboratory. Mr. D. A. Gill, M.R.C.V.S., D.V.S.M., on account of his aptitude for the work, was transferred from his duties in the field to assist at the Laboratory, and with this assistance the volume of research work carried out has been considerably increased. Some of the diseases on which investigation is in progress, such as renal congestion in lambs, braxy-like disease of sheep, &c., are seasonal, and the time at the disposal of the research officers for field observations in combination with laboratory work is limited in some instances to a few weeks in the year, which of necessity prolongs the work.