

DAIRY INSPECTION.

During the year some amendments to the regulations under the Dairy Industry Act dealing with the inspection of dairies registered for the sale of milk for human consumption were introduced. These included provision for the requirement of proper sterilization of bottles in cases in which bottling of milk takes place on the farm.

This important phase of the Division's work has received special attention throughout the year, directed towards instructional service in improved hygienic methods of milking, and compliance with required sanitation of sheds, &c. As a result, a steady improvement in conditions tending towards a purer milk-supply can be claimed.

In certain municipalities bacteriological examination of milk-samples is conducted, and the information thus obtained regarding the production of milk at any particular dairy must be regarded as very helpful to the Dairy Inspector in his efforts to raise the standard of production.

Biological examination of composite milk-samples for the detection of tuberculosis was carried out at the Laboratory during the year, 707 samples being dealt with. Of this number, 8 (1·13 per cent.) were positive. The usual action regarding tuberculin testing of the herd was carried out in order to effect removal of tuberculous animals.

During the year the application of the tuberculin test to herds registered for local supply was largely increased. I would, however, advocate the compulsory tuberculin testing of all cows supplying milk for human consumption.

LIVE-STOCK STATISTICS.

The 1934 sheep returns, collected as at the 30th April, showed that sheep flocks in the Dominion increased by 893,072 to a total of 28,649,038. An increase of 359,290 occurred in the number of breeding-ewes. The number of sheep-owners has decreased by 263 to a total of 29,800. The number of cattle in the Dominion as at the 31st January increased by 109,105 to a total of 4,301,128. The number of dairy cows within the total shown increased by 86,539 to a total of 1,932,511. The number of pigs in the Dominion as revealed in the 1934 enumeration was 660,393, being an increase of 68,811 on the previous year's figures. Horses have continued to show a decline, the number being 273,906, a reduction of 2,991.

SLAUGHTER OF STOCK.

The number of sheep and lambs slaughtered show an increase on last year's figures. The total number of stock slaughtered at registered premises were: Sheep, 3,335,943; lambs, 9,690,054; cattle, 488,982; calves, 746,771; swine, 892,372.

The following table shows the stock slaughtered during the past year at freezing-works only, the previous year's figures being shown for comparison:—

Stock.				Year ended 31st March, 1935.	Year ended 31st March, 1934.	Increase.	Decrease.
Cattle	..	..	..	239,877	254,201	..	14,324
Calves	..	..	..	675,488	904,717	..	229,229
Sheep	..	..	..	2,569,573	1,972,678	596,895	..
Lambs	..	..	..	9,562,797	8,551,838	1,010,959	..
Swine	..	..	..	694,770	532,972	161,798	..

For further purposes of comparison the following table is given, showing the killings of sheep and lambs at meat-export slaughter-houses over four periods, 1st October to 31st March in each year, as indicative of the slaughterings from the beginning of each season to 31st March:—

Stock.				1931-32.	1932-33.	1933-34.	1934-35.
Sheep	..	..	..	2,614,378	1,649,363	1,293,617	1,735,237
Lambs	..	..	..	5,822,728	6,433,741	6,030,575	6,626,315

These figures show an increase of 595,740 lambs and of 441,620 sheep compared with the same period last year.

Following are the numbers of each class of animal slaughtered under direct inspection during the year ended 31st March, 1935: Cattle, 409,861; calves, 744,700; sheep, 3,128,324; lambs, 9,668,022; swine, 866,993.

The following table indicates the respective classes of premises at which these animals were slaughtered:—

Stock.				Abattoirs.	Meat-export Slaughterhouses.	Bacon-factories.
Cattle	..	..	..	169,984	239,877	..
Calves	..	..	..	69,212	675,488	..
Sheep	..	..	..	558,751	2,569,573	..
Lambs	..	..	..	105,225	9,562,797	..
Swine	..	..	..	132,028	694,770	40,195