

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

Stock.				1932-33.	1933-34.	1934-35.	1935-36.
Sheep	..	..	..	1,649,363	1,293,617	1,735,237	1,287,331
Lambs	..	..	..	6,433,741	6,030,575	6,626,315	6,269,694

These figures show a decrease of 447,906 sheep and of 356,621 lambs compared with the same period last year.

The following are the numbers of each class of animal slaughtered under direct inspection during the year ended 31st March, 1935 : Cattle, 478,963 ; calves, 1,072,456 ; sheep, 2,463,183 ; lambs, 8,664,134 ; swine, 968,275.

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

Stock.				Abattoirs.	Meat-export Slaughterhouses.	Bacon Factories.
Cattle	..	..	..	173,095	305,868	..
Calves	..	..	..	86,311	986,145	..
Sheep	..	..	..	580,737	1,882,446	..
Lambs	..	..	..	99,652	8,564,482	..
Swine	..	..	..	143,527	768,976	55,772

Stock slaughtered at ordinary slaughterhouses during the year ended 31st March, 1935, was as follows : cattle, 84,525 ; calves, 2,200 ; sheep, 211,371 ; lambs, 21,402 ; swine, 26,564. Carcasses of pork killed and dressed by farmers, sent into butchers' shops and small factories, and examined by departmental officers, numbered 30,151.

In connection with the animals shown in the above tables as slaughtered at meat-export slaughterhouses, the following numbers are returned as having gone into consumption within the Dominion : cattle, 35,473 ; calves, 23,831 ; sheep, 170,041 ; lambs, 93,266 ; swine, 111,479.

DAIRY INSPECTION.

This important phase of public health work which forms part of the Division's duties, has been maintained during the year as satisfactorily as staff conditions would allow. It is apparent, however, that at many centres a strengthening of the staff is necessary in order that more time may be devoted to dairy-inspection work, which of necessity involves considerable instructional service in the bringing about of improved hygienic methods in the milking-shed, and other details of improved milk-production in the effort to generally raise the standard of the public milk-supply.

A noteworthy feature is the trend of public opinion in the direction of a tuberculin-tested milk-supply. This is indicated by the requests of certain local authorities to have all cows supplying milk for human consumption inside their areas subjected to the tuberculin test. There can be little doubt that this requirement will extend, and it would appear that its application generally throughout the Dominion as a compulsory measure is not far off. In my report of last year I advocated its adoption, and I am convinced that it must be regarded as a sound forward movement in the interests of public health.

LIVE-STOCK STATISTICS.

The 1935 sheep returns, collected as at the 30th April, showed that sheep flocks in the Dominion increased by 427,716 to a total of 29,076,754. An increase of 361,729 occurred in the number of breeding-ewes. The number of sheepowners has increased by 438 to a total of 30,238. The number of cattle in the Dominion as at the 31st January, 1935, decreased by 7,629 to 4,293,499. The number of dairy cows within the total shown increased by 19,583 to a total of 1,952,094. The number of pigs in the Dominion as revealed in the 1935 enumeration was 762,755, being an increase of 102,362 on the previous year's figures. Horses have continued to show a decline, the number being 272,986, a reduction of 920.

COMPENSATION PAID FOR STOCK AND MEAT CONDEMNED.

Compensation to the amount of £10,544 was paid out during the year for animals condemned in the field for disease under the provisions of the Stock Act, and £24,654 for carcasses or parts of carcasses condemned for disease on examination at the time of slaughter at abattoirs, meat-export slaughterhouses, &c., under the provisions of the Slaughtering and Inspection Act.

IMPORTATION OF STOCK.

The following stock was imported during the year : cattle, 56 ; sheep, 409 ; pigs, 12 ; horses, 17 draught and 13 racehorses. Of the above animals, the following were placed in quarantine for the respective periods required : cattle, 56 ; sheep, 36 ; pigs, 8 ; horses, 7 (racehorses) ; and, in addition, 2 dogs.