

SESSION 6b

DISCUSSION

CAPE TULIPS

In reply to a question about the spread of cape tulip, it was stated that the increase in size of infestations was comparatively slow. The presence of stem cormils in hay, and the movement of stock were important factors in the spread of the weed. The opinion was expressed that delays in detecting the weed frequently gave erroneous impressions of rapid spread.

While biological control seemed to be impracticable because of the risk of attack on closely related plants of economic importance, it appeared probable that some degree of biological control existed in South Africa, where the weeds did not assume such serious proportions.

SOURSOP

Investigational work had commenced at Roseworthy Agricultural College following deaths in the College and neighbouring flocks. Lack of previous work had necessitated a great deal of preliminary investigation.

The plant was regarded highly by many farmers because of its growth early in the season, but it was not high in nutritive value, containing up to 95% of water.

Poisoning was either acute or chronic. The acute form was not so important, but was very spectacular. A condition of hypocalcaemia occurred which was easily corrected by injections of calcium borogluconate. In the chronic form the kidney became extremely hard and eventually ceased to function.

Young sheep seemed to be more affected than old. Sheep introduced from soursob-free areas were much more susceptible than those reared in infested areas. Some sheep seemed to be immune to soursob poisoning.

The most serious economic losses were not as deaths due to acute poisoning, but from kidney damage due to the chronic form. One problem which would be encountered was to convince the farmer that he was experiencing any loss.

NUT GRASS

Results of independent investigations in Queensland were in agreement, and had shown that respraying was not effective as unsprouted tubers were not killed. Cultivation prior to application halved the quantity of T.C.A. required; a 90% reduction in the first year was obtained.

Mr. Preston reported that C.M.U. at 50 lbs per acre gave complete control for 18 months. The effects produced were explained by the phenomenon of apical dominance discussed in the paper. Browning and later death of the foliage followed application. Six weeks later, new plants appeared but soon browned off and died. This was repeated after a further six weeks.