

A COMPARISON OF THE RECTAL AND SKIN TEMPERATURES
OF SOME DAIRY HEIFERS IN TRINIDAD.

As far back as 1908, when Friesian and Ayrshire bulls were imported into India (Fraser Darling 1934), cattle breeders have tried to improve the production of their herds by introducing European stock. This is considered by many people to be a questionable 'short cut' to greater production and what is really wanted is the improvement in breeding and management of local acclimatised stock. As if to bear out this point work with a Zebu herd in New Zealand from 1919 to 1943 (Colonial Advisory Council 1953) has shown that 57.5% of the increase in milk yield over this period was due to better management, while breeding changes accounted for a further 26.2%. Selection for high yielders and culling low producers were responsible for the remaining 16.3%.

Trinidad is not in the same position as the African tropical territories for until introduction by European settlers there were no cattle on the island. Many breeds, both Zebu and European, have been brought in for milk and draught purposes so that the local stock are very mixed in blood. In recent years the Friesian has been most favoured as a milking breed so that the characteristic black and white, and brown and black, can now be seen on most small holdings. It is with this type of grade Holstein that the project is concerned in an effort to formulate a managerial policy suitable for dairy herds in the West Indies.