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 intro­
ducing 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.

It is not proposed to dwell on the physiological mech­
anisms regulating the Body and Skin temperatures of cattle, or
their reactions to heat and humidity, as excellent essays on
the subjects are available. Findlay and Beakley (1954) give
an admirable account of the Environmental Physiology of Farm
Mammals, while Brody, et al. (1948) and Blincoe and Brody (1951)
give good accounts of changes in blood composition at temp­