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This paper is from the New Zealand Society for Animal Production online archive. NZSAP holds a regular annual conference in June or July each year for the presentation of technical and applied topics in animal production. NZSAP plays an important role as a forum fostering research in all areas of animal production including production systems, nutrition, meat science, animal welfare, wool science, animal breeding and genetics.

An invitation is extended to all those involved in the field of animal production to apply for membership of the New Zealand Society of Animal Production at our website www.nzsap.org.nz

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PRESIDENT'S OPENING ADDRESS

I think I had better open this meeting with a few words regarding the beginnings of this Society.

Last June a small band of enthusiasts gathered together in Wellington to consider the advisability of forming a new society on the lines of the American Genetic Association. This is an incorporated organisation devoted to promoting a knowledge of the laws of heredity and their application to the improvement of plants, animals, and human racial stocks. After considerable discussion, the original proposal was abandoned, and in its place it was decided to form the New Zealand Society of Animal Production on the general lines of the American Society of that name.

As convener and chairman of the preliminary meeting, it now falls to my lot to take the chair at this, the first annual general meeting of the new Society.

We are now assembled to confirm or amend the proposed constitution, and to finalise other matters in connection with the formation of the Society.

The organising committee appointed at the preliminary meeting is to be congratulated on the very fine programme that has been drawn up and which has, so far, been so successfully carried out.

We have with us here tonight, and I hope they will become permanent members of our new Society, some gentlemen whose chief interest lies in matters which one would not, at first thought, connect with animal production. In the old Roman Empire all roads led to Rome. In animal production all roads lead back to the soil, and so I hope the Animal Production Society will embrace as wide a field as possible. We need information from the geologist, the soil chemist, and plant research workers in connection with many of our problems. Especially in the field of genetics is this true. Animal genetics is closely linked with plant genetics, and the animal breeder may learn much by familiarising himself with the methods of the plant breeder.

The man who is primarily concerned with animal production is, of course, the farmer, and he can only improve his animal production by better attention to the health of his stock, by better feeding and management, and by breeding better animals. In all these matters the time-lag between new discoveries and their application has to be admitted.

It appears to me that our new Society can perform a most useful service to the farming community if the results of workers, in this and other countries, in the fields of animal health and husbandry are immediately brought before the public.

In addition, there is the matter of animal breeding to be considered. The farmer required improved pedigree animals, for by the use of pedigree sires most of our high-producing grade herds are ranking level in production with the pedigree stock that have been used to grade them up. In these herds no further improvement along these lines can be expected till improved pedigree stock are available.

For this improvement we must look to the breeder, but look in vain unless there are placed before him clearly, and in a manner that he can easily understand, the results of the workers in recent years in the field of animal genetics.
For instance, I have suggested to the Conference the title, "Should a Breeder Tell?", for my own paper, and a member has already asked whether the title ought more aptly to be "Does a Breeder Know?". Perhaps the purpose of the Society can best be interpreted in the title, "Should a Breeder be Told and How?".

The value of our Society here becomes apparent. Here is a body that can review operations as at present being conducted, pick out what is faulty, and suggest remedies.

How to hammer home this advice is a very important problem which requires our immediate attention. By arriving at some method of reducing the aforementioned time-lag we shall be doing a service to our country.

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