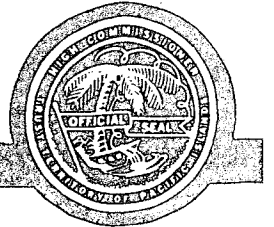


PRESS RELEASE



TRUST TERRITORY OF THE PACIFIC ISLANDS

Office of the High Commissioner

Saipan, Mariana Islands

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Marianas

MICRONESIAN DEVELOPMENT COMPANY CATTLE DISEASE PROBLEM ON TINIAN

Trust

Ponape

Marshalls

Yap

Palau

Saipan, Mariana Islands, Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, Jan. 1 . . . Mr. Kenneth T. Jones, President, and Mr. George Nakanishi, Manager, reported that during the last two months the Micronesian Development Company on Tinian, which operates the largest cattle ranching project in the Trust Territory, has had serious cattle disease problems with stock from the 912 cattle of Black Angus and Hereford breeds introduced from New Zealand last July 1966. The company has sustained losses of approximately 12 per cent up to the present time. Although there are over a hundred local cattle pastured next to the New Zealand cattle on Tinian, none of these animals have been affected so far. Diseases involved include Pink Eye, caused by a variety of bacteria and other external factors; Piroplasmiasis or cattle tick fever caused by a Protozoa and transmitted by cattle ticks; Anaplasmosis, cattle fever caused by a Protozoa and transmitted by ticks; and suspected Leptospirosis caused by a bacterium agent and carried by dogs, rats, or flies. The Director of Agriculture M. N. Sproat states that local ranchers should not become overly concerned since their animals have been exposed to and are in most instances immune to these diseases. Records of similar losses of animals imported in the past indicate that the above mentioned diseases of cattle

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were probably present on Tinian at the time the New Zealand cattle were introduced. All these cattle diseases have been known to cause problems in the Northern Mariana Islands in the past years. It is assumed that these cattle diseases were accidentally introduced to the island of Guam and other islands of the Trust Territory prior to and since World War II. The cattle tick is the carrier of the fevers.

Captain R. Sullivan, DVM, U. S. Department of Agriculture Collaborator, stationed with the Air Force on Guam and E. G. Ongert, DVM of the Animal Health Division, Animal Research Service, U. S. Department of Agriculture stationed in Hawaii have been assisting the Micronesian Development Company on Tinian with measures to bring the disease problem under control and to recommend action in regard to restrictive measures if these are needed on a continuing basis.

The situation of the Micronesian Development Company on Tinian is that which may be expected in the normal acclimatization process of any cattle herd introduction to islands of the Trust Territory from cattle fever-free areas such as New Zealand or the United States. While young animals with a percentage of Brahma blood are very resistant to the cattle fever diseases, introduced animals have to go through a period of adjustment to local climate, feed, and diseases. Strong, well-fed, tame animals adjust quickly and survive. Weaker animals may recover after a period of debilitation. The weakest animals usually die. The percentage of survival of any group of cattle will depend on the breed,

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availability of good feed and water, their state of tameness, available facilities for ease of handling, presence of qualified veterinary personnel, and available medicines for treatment of animals.

In the case of the Micronesian Development Company on Tinian, the combination of some of the factors listed above probably caused the loss of about 12% of their New Zealand herd. The majority of these cattle that are presently pastured on Tinian appear to be adjusting well and may have passed the critical stage of acclimatization and will probably survive to become excellent breeders and a great asset to the cattle industry in the Trust Territory Islands.

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