

## SUSCEPTIBILITY OF SHEEP TO PARASITISM

In the struggle for existence parasites flourish where conditions favor them most. The body of the sheep offers so much that is essential to the well being of many of the lower forms of animal life, that no less than fifty-eight distinct parasitic creatures attack it successfully unless control measures are instituted by the shepherd.

The thin skin, well nourished by blood and carrying a warm covering of wool, offers a bountiful and well protected feeding ground, to the surface feeding parasites as ticks, keds, lice and mange mites. The blood vessels and skin supply the necessary nourishment to the parasites. The wool makes a well protected home in which countless generations of young parasites can be reared from very small beginnings. The wool of the sheep is a dense medium from which it is quite impossible for the sheep to cause dislodgment of the parasites. In this regard the sheep is at a greater disadvantage than the other domestic animals, the bodies of which are covered with a coating of hair that is shed twice a year along with its attached inhabitants.

The alimentary tract of the sheep, particularly the stomach, the small intestine, and the large intestine with their moisture, even temperature, wealth of digested food and vascular easily penetrated lining membrane, offer conditions highly satisfactory to the growth of the stomach worm, the hook worm, the tape-worm, the nodular worm and the whip worm. The lungs with their spongy delicate tissue, richly supplied with blood and lymph, offer a home that fills all requirements demanded for the growth of the three varieties of lung worm attacking sheep.

The practice of herding sheep in flocks or large bands, in buildings, enclosures or on the ranges that have been long used for sheep, expose them to the accumulative affect of the parasitic plagues. The continual mixing of the infested individuals with the other sheep that are susceptible tends to bring about a like condition of infestation throughout the flock.

(The failure of many stockmen to destroy the carriers of parasites, usually the poorer individuals, has done much to bring about the continued increase of sheep pest in this country.) The susceptibility of the sheep is so great and the parasitic trouble so wide spread, that very few lambs escape infestation. Parasites make miserable runty lambs and hard "ratty" looking sheep, that can neither be a pride nor a profit to any self respecting farmer.