

METHODS OF DOCKING.

Docking, carefully performed, is seldom followed by bad results. True, a little bleeding may occur when a knife is used, but it does not usually attain dangerous or serious proportions. Generally a lamb when released after docking will run to its mother and commence sucking. This shows that the operation is by no means severe. Bleeding may be prevented by searing the end of the tail or, where the knife is used, by tying twine, which may be removed eight or ten hours after the operation, tightly around the tail above the wound. The most favourable age for docking is, in the instance of ewes, at ten to fourteen days old and, with rams, five to seven days after castration. Castration and docking may be done at the same time, but it is better in the case of small flocks to have an interval between the two operations.



Position of the pincers in docking lambs.

The tail should be severed at the third joint of the vertebrae. Docking should be performed in the morning, so that excessive bleeding will be detected and remedied before night.

There are two methods of docking, firstly, by using a knife, and secondly, by the aid of pincers. The first method consists of placing the lamb between the operator's legs, its rear end in front of him, and of simply cutting through the tail from the underside at the desired joint with an ordinary heavy jack-knife. The joint can be found by feeling on the underside of the tail. The skin on the underside of the tail should be drawn up toward the body of the lamb, so that when the tail is severed