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Winter Quarters for Sheep

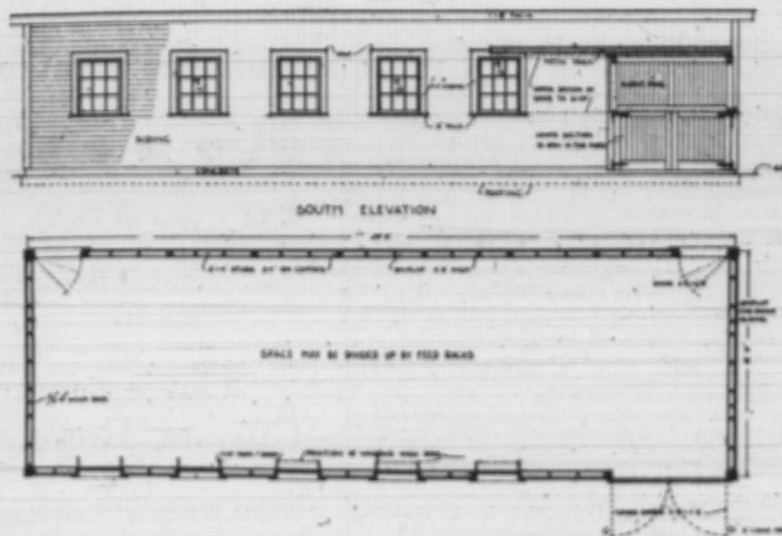
Sheep can be housed more cheaply than any other class of livestock. They do not require elaborate buildings. Winter quarters for sheep should be of such a kind that the sheep are dry above and underfoot. Therefore, when a sheep barn or shed is built it should be properly located. If possible, a spot of elevated ground should be selected to provide good drainage on all sides. There should never be a time when water runs in to the sheep barn during heavy rains or when snow is melting rapidly in winter. When sheep are forced, contrary to their nature, to lie down on a wet floor in a barn rheumatism and stiffness in legs and body will soon set in. Though sheep like dry quarters in winter they do not prefer too warm a place, as their coat of wool

is not too much room for each breeding ewe. Of course the amount of space allowed each ewe will depend somewhat on the size and breed.

Most sheep breeders provide a separate enclosure in the sheep barn which is divided up into several small pens called "lambing pens." In these are placed the mothers with their newly born lambs, each family by itself. These lambing pens are of great value when lambs are born in the cold winter months, February or March, and prevent much annoyance from ewes disowning their lambs.

A Suitable Plan

In the accompanying illustration is shown an inexpensive building which



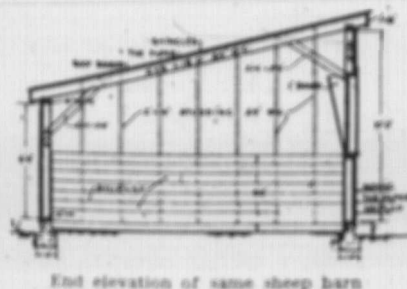
Ground plan and front elevation of sheep barn suitable for 100 ewes

keeps them sufficiently warm. Another important factor leading to the welfare of the flock is to avoid all draughts. Coughing, running at the nose, and lung diseases are often due to draughts sweeping thru the barn or shed. The barn should be dry, airy, and well ventilated, but must be free from draughts. It should also be well-lighted, since sheep prefer the light and thus do not thrive so well in a dark place. The barn must have wide doors, so that the sheep do not get jammed and injured by rushing thru too narrow doorways. The results of narrow doorways are broken-down hips, the squeezing and crushing of little lambs, and the abortion of ewes heavy with lamb. Again, plenty of room should be pro-

vided will be found suitable for the keeping of sheep. It is simply a frame building 16 x 50 feet without any interior fittings, not even fixed mangers or feed racks, so the entire floor-space can be used for shelter. The windows are arranged to open in, and should be open at the top most of the time, as also should the door, to amply provide for fresh air. The inside of the wall is covered with shiplap to a height of four feet to eliminate draughts. The barn should be built on a knoll, or at any rate, where ample drainage is afforded. If the interior is filled with earth to a height of several inches above the outside soil a dry floor is assured. This is an essential point, as sheep will not thrive when forced to live in buildings with damp floors.

No provision is made for feed overhead, the idea being to haul roughage from stacks and to feed it during a large part of the time from racks out in the open on the south side of the sheep-barn. With this method of feeding a hundred ewes can be wintered comfortably in a barn of this size.

Plenty of light is provided by the windows on the south side; the north wall being left windowless. A large door on the south side at one end makes it easy for the sheep to pass in and out without crowding. If a large yard is provided on the south side of a building such as this, first-class winter quarters will have been provided for the animals.



End elevation of same sheep barn

pregnant ewes. Some authorities say that from eight to twelve square feet voided for sheep. A close, cramped condition is very dangerous, especially for

In experiments carried on at the Wisconsin Experimental Station very cheap gains have been made by feeding rape previous to placing the sheep in the feed lot. Lambs pastured on rape but fed no grain, made as large gains as others on good grass pasture and fed one pound of grain but no rape. In other words one pound of grain was saved by each lamb daily and the lambs on rape made just as much gain as the other lambs that received one pound of grain. It was also learned that in finishing both lots off on dry feed that the lambs which had received rape previously did considerably better than the other lot not receiving rape before being put into the feed lot.

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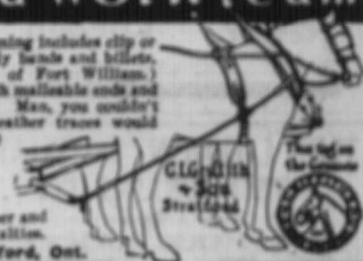
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