

# Saving the Young Lamb Crop



Little lambs should be provided some place where they can feed separate from the rest of the flock.

An increasing number of farmers are getting into sheep each year. The number in Western Canada during the last two years has been remarkable. Very few valuable breeding sheep have been sent to market and most of these as well as many scrubs have been sent back to the country. Prices have risen to "previously unheard of heights for breeding sheep and wool especially. This sheep boom has naturally resulted in scores of farmers keeping sheep who have no previous experience in this important branch of animal husbandry.

In old localities where sheep have been kept for many years it is a common thing to hear farmers say, "I never had any luck with sheep and got out of them." Generally luck has little or nothing to do with such failures but ignorance and mismanagement are the real causes. Many men think because sheep do not require such close attention as some other farm stock that they require none at all. Such an idea is absurd. Sheep need some protection and care like any other stock if proper returns are to be had from them. Perhaps the time when this care is most needed is during the spring when green feed is scarce, lambs are coming and weather is cold and damp.

In handling sheep care and gentleness are absolutely necessary. Rough usage, cursing, kicking, etc., doesn't go. Especially is care needed in the springtime when young lambs are coming. There are few things more tender than a new born lamb. To the man who knows nothing of sheep getting some little lambs through the first few days of their life is a most aggravating job especially if the weather is bad at that time and the trouble increased through chills, close housing, etc.

## Separate Newly Lambed Ewes

Ewes should be carefully watched during lambing time. Not only should they be watched during the day but they should also be seen occasionally at night. The profits in the years operations will largely depend on the care at this time.

For the man with a small farm flock it is good practice to separate the ewes that have lambed from the rest of the flock. Such ewes need more feed and special feed for a few days and if allowed to run with the whole flock ewes with twins or triplets often disown one of the lambs. A new born lamb often wanders away and the ewe which has no other means of knowing her lamb than the senses of smell and voice often gets confused and disowns the lamb. This more often happens to the lamb born first which may wander off while the second lamb is being born. Any simple contrivance of a few boards or a hurdle in the barn or pen will do if there is not otherwise enough room. They can be left in this place for a couple of days until the mother becomes familiar with her lambs. Disowning of lambs often arises from ewes not having enough milk. Such ewes should be fed specially some grain and sloppy milk-producing feeds like bran-mash. Until there is enough milk the lamb should be helped out with some cow's

## Some Practical Suggestions on Getting the Maximum number of Strong Lambs and Feeding them

milk but this should be done very carefully.

When lambs are born weak and unable to suck they need some very careful attention. Such a lamb should be lifted up to its mother's udder, the teat placed in its mouth and some milk drawn for it. This should be done until the lamb gains sufficient strength to help itself. It is well to clip any long wool from around the udder so that the lamb will not have much difficulty finding the teat. This getting young lambs to suck is the most trying job in handling them and nothing but patience will get results. Too many men if they don't succeed immediately throw up their hands and let the lamb die, with the excuse that it will die anyway. When a lamb comes, showing few signs of life, action is needed immediately to save it. All phlegm should be cleaned out of its mouth and lung action started by blowing several times into its open mouth. One successful sheep raiser advises laying it on its belly and beating it gently with the hands, one on each side of its heart

and some strips or slats three feet long and one inch thick by four inches wide. The strips are nailed on the two six-inch boards. They should be put just far enough apart to let the lambs through and keep the old sheep out. A small trough can then be put in the lamb's compartment. Now is the time to put growth on the lambs for if stunted now they can rarely make up the loss in growth.

At the Wisconsin Experiment Station, where Frank Kleinheinz, one of the most successful shepherds in America, has been in charge for many years, it has been found that a grain mixture in the proportion of two pounds of wheat bran, one pound of oats (crushed oats are best), one pound of finely-ground corn meal and one-half pound of oil meal, has proven an excellent ration for young lambs. Here the ration could be used without the corn meal and even without the oil meal, while the bran and crushed oats might be made equal parts. There is nothing finer if they are available than a little pulped roots like turnips or some fine alfalfa hay.



A Good Farm Flock in Northern Alberta

Shearing time will soon be here. Sheep should be shorn before the weather becomes too hot. Most of the wool will be sold co-operatively this year and farmers should count on marketing it that way.

girth, back of the shoulder. This should be repeated until some action is got. Where a lamb has become chilled the quickest and easiest way to warm it is to put it in a pail of water as warm as the hand can nicely bear. It should then be wiped thoroughly dry and a circulation of the blood thus set up. Placing near a warm stove will then help and a little warm milk given as soon as it comes to. Such chilled lambs easily become constipated and it may be necessary later to give half to one teaspoonful of castor oil. Where lambs have to be taken from one ewe and given to another care and patience is required. The ewe should be held every two or three hours to let the lamb suck and the ewe is quite likely to own it in less than a week. Some ewes give more milk than their one lamb may require and in such cases they can often well be held for another lamb to suck occasionally. Sometimes a lamb only sucks on one side and unless attended to the other side may go bad. Such ewes or heavy milking ones should be carefully watched.

When udders become caked they should be bathed with hot water. After drying warm melted hog's lard should be rubbed well into the udder. This should be done two or three times a day. The udder should be thoroughly milked out each time before applying the lard.

After the lambs are two weeks' old they should be given some extra feed in the way of grain and fine roughage in a separate creep. A creep can easily be made of two one-inch boards of the necessary length about six inches wide

The length of a ewe's gestation period is about 146 or 147 days. Some of the fine wools like Merino require from 150 to 154 days. When a ewe carries her lamb from five to seven days over time the lamb is usually weak.

## Providing Summer Pasture

When the flock is put out to pasture fresh water, salt and shade are essential. The providing of suitable pastures where grass has dried up in the summer is one of the most important things in keeping the flock in good condition. There should be some nice fresh pasture to put young lambs in when the time comes to wean them. Some peas and oats sown in June or early July or fall rye sown about the same time would be very suitable. There is nothing better than a piece of rape sown early in June. This should be well grown and nearly matured by early August. No better fodder could be had for lambs and the same is true for all classes of sheep. It also produces an enormous amount of feed per acre if the crop is good and is not only good for lambs but is most useful later in the fall for flushing the ewes and putting them in the best condition for breeding and going into winter quarters. It may be sown either broadcast or in drills about 30 inches apart. More feed can be grown the latter way but somewhat more labor is required. There is this advantage however in that the lambs or sheep walk along between the rows and do not tramp down the rape so badly. It is also a good idea where a flock of sheep is being carried over winter to grow a small patch of turnips for sheep not only like them in winter but they are very valuable in keeping the whole flock in good condition.

There is one thing about grazing sheep part time on a sown crop of the kinds mentioned and that is the freedom from parasites. The importance of keeping salt before sheep cannot be over-estimated. If it is not supplied the digestion of the sheep is not so thorough. If it is given only occasionally they eat too much and then drink excessive amounts of water, which leads to scouring.

Speaking of sheep-raising, an old and experienced shepherd gives the following secrets to beginners in sheep-raising:—

1. The shepherd must be kind at all times to his sheep.
2. He must practice cleanliness, which means to keep troughs clean and sweet and not let them become filthy with manure, thereby causing a disagreeable odor.
3. He must be punctual, which means keeping regular feeding hours.
4. He must feed liberally and not hold the idea sheep can live on little or nothing.

Every sheepman should inform himself on sheep-raising in every possible way. There are a few books annually good on this subject. The best is "Sheep Management, Breeds and Judging," by Frank Kleinheinz, of Wisconsin Experiment Station. It is intensely practical. "Sheep Farming in America," by Joseph E. Wing, is another valuable work. Both may be had through The Guide's Book Department.



"Good Luck" with sheep means good care and attention. A 100 per cent. or more lamb crop should be secured where proper management has been given and the season is not unusually unfavorable. This is also an Alberta flock.