

Stock.**Washing Sheep.**

Our cut of sheep washing this month represents the mode generally practiced by farmers. A running stream or pond of clear water, with a gravel bottom, should be obtained if possible, but where this is not obtainable, the floor of the washing place should be paved with stones; also the path leading into the water and the one leading out. Special care should be taken not to let the water become muddy, and for this reason a running stream is preferable. Where a small running stream is of easy access, farmers will find it profitable to construct a place especially for sheep washing. This may be done in a variety of ways, varying with the size of the stream; but where the stream is not more than 12 or 15 ft. in width, a good plan is to sink a large cedar post a few feet below the bed of the stream, on each side of it, and exactly opposite to each other. They should be let into the banks of the stream so that their outside may be just even with the sides of the bank, which should be cut down square. And it will be found necessary to drive down pieces of board or sink plank or stones a few feet in the bank from each post, to hinder the water from washing around the posts. When this is done a ditch about a foot wide should be cut in the bed of the creek between the posts, and extending from one to the other, and should be sunk into the hard bottom of the creek to prevent the water washing beneath it. In this a two-inch plank, long enough to extend from post to post, must be inserted; it is the best plan to have a groove 3 inches wide, and about 4 inches deep, cut in each post, and into these grooves slip the ends of the plank, pounding it down firmly to the bottom of the ditch. Its upper side should be about 12 or 18 inches above the level of the bed of the creek, and if not wide enough itself, another plank should be added. The ditch should then be firmly filled with gravel, clay, etc., to prevent any possibility of the water washing under the lower plank. Other planks should then be cut the proper length to reach from post to post, and made to slip into the grooves of same, as the lower boards did, and should fit evenly on the top of same boards, so as to be water tight. A sufficient number of these boards should be cut so as to raise the water somewhat, making it deeper than the sheep is high. The highest plank of the lot should have a piece sawed out of the centre about four inches deep and four feet wide; into this place a piece of board two feet wide and four feet long, nailing the same horizontally and projecting down stream, thus making a shoot over which all the water will flow. It will be found necessary to place braces on the under side of this shoot, or the weight of the water may break it down or cause it to be unlevel, and thus not carry the water in an equal volume. Pieces of board may be nailed on the ends of this shoot to prevent the water from running over the ends. When the stream is thus dammed and the

water flowing evenly over the shoot, which should be about eight inches to one foot higher than the backs of the sheep to be washed, the animals may be led under this flow of water, and by conveniently laying boards on posts or logs prepared for the purpose, the washers need not even get their feet wet, and the sheep can be thoroughly washed, being well rubbed while the water is flowing on them, which has the advantage of always being clear. Care must be taken not to let the water fall on them from too great a height, or it will damage the appearance of the fleece. It is best also to turn the sheep up when first putting it under the water; this will thoroughly wash the belly without wetting the washers. A clean and easy path should be provided for the sheep both to and from the water.

When the washing is completed all the boards may be removed but the bottom ones, which have been sunk in the trench between the posts; these must remain permanent. The other boards, after being removed, should be put away for future use.



SHEEP-WASHING.

Such a dam will last for years if properly constructed, which it may be at a trifling expense.

Clean quarters must be given the sheep after washing until shearing is done, some time being allowed after washing for the yolk to raise, which adds to the weight and quality of the wool. The time allowed between washing and shearing varies in different localities. Where the sheep are in high condition, and continuously grain fed, a large amount of yolk will be up in a week. But if we had a clean run for our sheep, such as an old sod field or some place where they could not get into the dust, we would prefer to let them go two or three weeks, and we believe farmers would find it profitable to feed grain to their sheep for a month before shearing, as the yolk would be in much greater quantities, thus making an advance both in weight and quality.

After shearing, the atmosphere affects wool considerably; when it is raining or the atmosphere is moist, it will weigh sometimes as much as 10 per cent. more than it does when the air is dry and has been so for some time. This change will take place to a greater or less extent, no matter how well the wool is protected. Again, if wool is kept in an underground apartment, or piled against a

stone wall, it will weigh more than it would if kept in an enclosure above ground.

There is a variety of opinions concerning the gain or loss by washing sheep, but different conditions produce different results. If your sheep have been very highly fed for a long time, and are in high condition, such as show animals, etc., and the buyers will not deduct any more than one-third of the gross weight, then it is better, all things considered, not to wash them, especially in the combing wool varieties. But otherwise we consider it preferable to wash, allowing ample time and advantage for the yolk to rise.

Canadian wool, like Canadian butter, suffers from a want of system in buying good and bad qualities, being indiscriminately bought at about one price; the only distinction being made is between the washed and unwashed. This is clearly unfair, taking the just due from the careful farmer who produces a good article, and the shiftless ones reaping a partial benefit from his labors. It has also an injurious tendency on the quality of the wool production of our country; for if the wool were bought according to quality, farmers would then be emulated to produce the required article, thus improving the general quality of our wools, to which insufficient attention is now paid.

Green Peas and Oats for Cows.

The following article from the National Live Stock Journal assumes greater importance from the partial injury done to our clover crop by the very unusual winter through which we have passed. A mixed crop of oats and peas, as stated below, will aid in supplying the deficiency:

Fodder-corn is raised to feed cows while on short pasture in the fall, and is so valuable an addition to their food that every dairyman should raise about one-eighth of an acre of it for each cow kept; but it should also be remembered that cows require a variety of food. It is not good economy to depend upon one kind of green food, and especially one containing so little albuminoid matter as fodder-corn. Clover and a mixture of meadow grasses may be relied upon alone, but corn should always be fed with some more nitrogenous food. It does very well with half pasture, for the grasses will supply the albuminoid matter.

There are other green crops that should be raised to be fed with corn; and we know of none better than peas and oats, sown together—one-third oats and two-thirds peas—three bushels of the mixed seed per acre, with a drill. On land in good condition a large crop may be raised, having a value second to no other. Peas and oats are equal to clover, and may be raised on a great variety of soils—a most important consideration. We have raised twelve tons of this green food to the acre, and this would feed twenty-four cows ten days, without any other food. The pea is rich in caseine—just what is required to make milk—and the oat is also rich in the elements of milk. These two crops grow well together, for the oats hold the peas up and prevent them from lying too flat on the ground. They mature so near together that they are both ready to cut at the same time. But the crop should always be cut when the pea pod is full and the grain in the milk. It is then very succulent and palatable, and will produce as much milk as any food we know of, aside from a large variety of pasture grasses in their most succulent state.